

**Minutes of the
LOUISIANA STATE ARTS COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Monday, March 27, 2000
10:00 a.m.**

WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Dan Henderson, chairman, opened the quarterly meeting of the Louisiana State Arts Council, which was held at the State Library of Louisiana, at 10:20 a.m. The following members were **present**:

Dan Henderson	Christine Weeks
Jean Hurley	Laura Jeter Weems
Mary Terrell Joseph	LeAnne Weill
Beth Kaplan	Beverly Wilson
Sally Perry	

Council members **absent** from the meeting included:

Cynthia Ardoin	Quincy Hilliard
Leah Chase	Kay Kellogg Katz
Beverly Covington	Carolyn McLellan
Ken Ferdinand	Raelene Pell (proxy to Beth Kaplan)
Colleen Fletcher	Charlotte Walter
Sara Herrington (proxy to Mary Joseph)	Cynthia Warner (proxy to Dan Henderson)

Staff members of the Louisiana Division of the Arts (LDOA) in attendance were:

James Borders
Lisa Green
Charles Hunt
Ann Russo

Also present were Anne Price, Arts Editor, Baton Rouge Advocate; Mary Frey Eaton, East Baton Rouge Metro Council member; and several individuals representing the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts: Pam Atchison, Denise Bankovic, Amy Baskin, Pam Breaux, Pam Captain, Naomi Cordill, Karen Edwards, JoAnn Eiswirth, Kip Holloway, Mary Kahn, Cathy McCallister, Rodney Miller, Penne Mobley, Buddy Palmer, Freda Powell, Joycelyn Reynolds, Genny Nadler Thomas, Tommy Usrey, Darren Woods, and Martha Yancey.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion to accept the minutes of the December 6, 1999, meeting was proposed by Ms. Joseph and seconded by Ms. Wilson. The motion carried unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. FY01 Budget Projection

Mr. Borders reviewed with the LSAC the LDOA FY01 Preliminary Budget Summary. The state is in the midst of a fiscal crisis. As a result of this year's expected shortfall in the budget, the LDOA budget was reduced by \$200,000. LDOA's actual FY00 state appropriation was \$5,035,139, but with the reduction this leaves \$4,837,876, as shown in the revised budget column. Fortunately, LDOA was able to offset those funds with \$58,649 from unused federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and royalty income from book sales. The bottom line is that LDOA's net loss for FY00 is \$130,000.

The budget for FY01 is based on the preliminary budget that's going over to the Legislature. Looking at the current figures for FY01, the total income for LDOA is \$5,567, 243. This amount is down from the original projection of \$5,615,770 for FY00, a reduction of approximately \$50,000 from state appropriations. Our total income from the NEA for FY01 is \$577,600: Basic State Grant, \$382, 600 (down \$7,300 due to the reduction of funds available through the NEA); Arts-in-Education grant, \$55,500 (an increase of \$18,500); Outreach to Underserved Communities, \$97,000 (basically remaining the same); Folklife grant, \$42,500 (down \$7,500). While we were funded at the maximum level for our NEA Folklife grant last year, we knew that it would not be the same this year. It was noted that our Folklife-in-Education project is ranked as the nation's most outstanding project in that category. Last, but not least, our state appropriation for FY01 is targeted at \$4,989,643.

The budget does not show any royalties from *Swapping Stories* for FY01, although some amount is anticipated. LDOA did receive \$6,770 in royalties for FY00. For those who may not recall, four years ago the LDOA entered into a co-publishing agreement with the University of Mississippi Press for the book *Swapping Stories: Folktales from Louisiana*. LDOA initially invested \$18,000 and to date has received that same amount in royalties and sales are continuing. All funds received as royalties go back into the Folklife program.

LDOA had intended to seek a \$2 million increase for the upcoming year but in the current fiscal climate, this will not be the case. Our funding is virtually at a stand still and LDOA anticipates continuing to support its grants programs, Decentralized Arts Funding included, at the current level and absorb the costs internally. What specifically has been changed? The \$50,000 for Cultural Tourism has become a low priority, and LDOA is fortunate not to have to schedule printing and design for new guidelines or the touring directory. These publications are in place for the next couple of years.

LDOA and the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts (LPA) must continue to work together to increase funding for the arts, or at the very least sustain the current level of funding. LDOA appreciates all of those who have made support for the arts possible. It was noted that approximately 88% of LDOA's budget is used for regranting and the remainder goes toward publications and other services that help to strengthen all of LDOA's programs.

B. *Schedule of Spring Grants Review Panels*

Mr. Borders reported that spring grants review panels will be held April 25th through May 23rd and LDOA encourages LSAC members and applicants to attend.

Ms. Perry voiced concern regarding the panels receiving the same set of instructions and information, along with the realization that their participation is important and that they should come prepared. LDOA should increase its efforts in clearly communicating the adjudication process to panelists and audience members. Mr. Borders replied that LDOA staff members have discussed these matters, and will continue to do so for the next couple of days, to ensure that the same set of instructions will apply to each panel and that the moderation and facilitation practices for each will be the same. When will panelists receive their packet of information? The packets are generally mailed at least three weeks in advance, allowing for three weekends of review. Has there ever been any type of follow-up with panelists prior to their panel date to ensure that they have received all information, that they have reviewed each grant, and that they understand what they are being asked to do? LDOA is revising the panelist packets and part of the revision is re-emphasizing the importance of reviewing the grants in advance and the importance of the process, illustrating a common set of expectations and communicating the overall goal of the program. Does LDOA conduct panelist evaluations afterward regarding their contribution, verbal input and preparedness? Each moderator makes notes regarding each panelist, but there is no official evaluation.

It was mentioned that the panels are generally comprised of nine members--individuals representing each of the eight economic development regions of the state and one from outside of the state--but sometimes it's not always possible to recruit panelists from all regions all the time.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Panelists for Spring Grants Review

LDOA previously sent the LSAC a listing of individuals recommended to serve as panelists for the spring grants review process. Please note that as the panels draw near, some of these individuals may change due to cancellation and replacements will have to be made. A motion to accept the list of panelists as recommended was proposed by Ms. Wilson and seconded by Ms. Kaplan. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Endorsement of Mini-Grant Selections

LDOA received a total of 95 applications for the spring round of artist mini-grants. LDOA staff adjudicated the applications and 37 grants were awarded. A total of \$47,500 was requested and \$18,500 awarded. LDOA was originally scheduled to award 35, but because of new performance indicators specifying that a certain number of grants be made to individual artists, two additional awards were made this round because two fewer fellowships were awarded during the fall grants round. LDOA is committed to awarding 95 grants to individual artists each year.

It was noticed that Regions 6 through 8 comprise less than 20% of the applications received. How can these numbers be improved upon? LDOA has sought to implement tactics to address this issue and one thing that has been done is increasing the number of grants workshops in those areas. Participation at each workshop varies. It was stated that because of the number of grants that are awarded in relation to the number of applicants, some artists feel that the process is too competitive and that there is too much paperwork involved to receive a \$500 grant. But is it not worth the time and effort for a \$5,000 fellowship? Another issue is that, for some artists, it can be too costly to produce high quality CD's, videotapes, slides, etc. to be submitted with their application. If they feel that they cannot be competitive enough, then they will not apply. Also, some artists may not want to be held accountable for itemizing every dollar received. LDOA must continue to communicate that funds are available for individual artists and try to find other methods for encouraging artists to apply. LSAC encouraged LPA members to continue to promote LDOA arts programs and the funds available in their communities.

A motion to accept the mini-grant selections as listed was proposed by Ms. Perry and seconded by Ms. Weill. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Borders reviewed with the LSAC the grants synopsis comparison sheet for last year and this year. For the spring grants round, overall LDOA received a total of 234 applications for its arts education, folklife apprenticeship, general operating support, local arts agency, and project assistance grant categories. Although there are 10 fewer applications than last year, and the ceiling for project assistance was lowered from \$25,000 to \$20,000, the amount requested (\$6,489,623) is higher. LDOA anticipates awarding \$1,775,000.

Other items in the LSAC packets include:

- 1) *State Arts Agency Funding Sets Another Record*, a press release from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), announcing that total funding for the 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies increased to \$396.5 million for FY00. Mr. Borders noted that although federal funding is diminishing, individual state governments have increased their support for the arts.
- 2) *National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Fact Sheets* giving information about the NEA's economic impact, youth arts programs, cultural tourism, arts education programs, ArtsREACH program, the National Millennium Project appropriations history, growth and outreach, and its Challenge America program.
- 3) A letter from Senator John Breaux regarding Senate Resolution 128, introduced by Senator Cochran, to designate March 2000 as Arts Education Month. The resolution passed with unanimous consent on March 2nd.
- 4) *A New Orleans Original*, an article in the February 2000 issue of *Gourmet* magazine, highlighting Dooky Chase's restaurant, owned by fellow council member Leah Chase.

STATE ARTS COLLECTION UPDATE

Ms. Russo stated that the appraisal for the State Arts Collection came in at over \$175,000 and there are still seven pieces yet to be appraised. LDOA contracted with Taylor Clark to do the appraisal of the collection. It was also mentioned that photographic documentation is being done in order to keep track of the pieces in the collection. There are only 15 pieces which remain to be photographed and this is scheduled to be done in April. It was noted that of the 125 pieces, 12-15 are missing and have not been accounted for.

LDOA hopes to begin its partnership with the Alexandria Museum of Art (AMOA) this coming fiscal year. AMOA will be responsible for conservation, maintenance, exhibition, housing and leasing the collection for a term of at least three years.

There have been no purchases made for the collection since the early 1980's and all pieces shown during the slide show presentation were produced prior to that time.

OTHER COMMENTS

Mr. Henderson commented that a couple of months ago letters were sent to LSAC members who were not regularly attending quarterly meetings asking them to consider resigning from the Council or renewing their commitment to serve and be an active member. Although LDOA has not received any official written response, we were informed that Ms. Cox submitted her resignation to the Office of the Governor and to Boards and Commission. Also, Ms. Katz indicated that she would resign now that she is a State Representative, but she has been asked to stay on. Mr. Borders spoke with Mr. Ferdinand who indicated that he would resign, and LDOA has not heard anything from Ms. Chase or Ms. Fletcher. What more needs to be done, what actions should LSAC be taking? It was suggested that Mr. Henderson contact these individuals once more in an effort to finalize this matter. LSAC proposed that LDOA draft a resignation letter that could be sent to each of these members. The letter should consist of two suggestions, one for resignation and the other for renewal of commitment, and they would sign under the corresponding statement and forward it back to LDOA. Couldn't we simply send a letter stating that if we do not hear from them, then that will be considered as their resignation? It was mentioned that LSAC has no control over them submitting their resignation. LSAC members serve at the pleasure of the governor and only he can remove them, or they can remove themselves by personally submitting their resignation. Perhaps LDOA should send a letter indicating that they need to communicate with the Office of the Governor about their commitment to serving on the LSAC.

This matter has been discussed for an entire year and hopefully we can get this resolved by the next LSAC meeting. LDOA needs to get all necessary information to Mr. Henderson so that he can make phone calls and inform these members that this is an urgent matter and we need their response as soon as possible. If their intentions are to resign then let them do so and new appointments can be made.

REMARKS BY PAM ATCHISON, CHAIR, LOUISIANA PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ARTS (LPA)

On behalf of the LPA, Ms. Atchison thanked the council for the continued work that they do to promote the arts in our state, to represent their regions and to advocate for arts funding. LPA looks to continue its partnership with LDOA and LSAC to support and sustain the arts in Louisiana.

Also, LPA's regular meeting will be held Tuesday, March 28th from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. at the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge. In an effort to thank legislators for their past and future support, LPA is sponsoring a Legislative Luncheon afterward at 11:30 a.m., also at the Arts Council. Thus far there has been good response from the legislators for participating in the luncheon. LPA encouraged LSAC members to attend.

Please note that the LPA will also meet on May 18th, the morning of the Governor's Arts Awards program.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and adopted. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.