

Virginia Commission for the Arts
Minutes
October 28, 2005
Renaissance Hotel, Washington, DC

Members Attending: Dr. Lucius Ellsworth, Chair; David Briggs, Gary Grant, Susan Hirschbiel (first day only), Bonita Lestina, Roddy Moore, Jackie Stone, Rod Taylor, Beth Temple (unable to attend entire meeting), Will Trinkle, and Deborah Valentine (first day only)

Members Absent:, E. A. McMath and Eve Wilson

Staff Attending: Peggy Baggett, Tatjana Franke Beylotte, Foster Billingsley, and Amy Krawczyk

Guests: Jonathan Katz, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies; and Steve West, American Music Stage

Introduction

Dr. Ellsworth, Chair of the Commission, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. He stated that the joint meeting on the previous day with the boards of the Maryland and D.C. state arts agencies was informative and lively. He thanked the Commission staff for organizing the joint meeting. He thanked Sharon Gee of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies for her work in coordinating the logistics of the reception on October 27th and the Commission meeting on October 28th.

Gary Grant and Will Trinkle talked about the value of the joint meeting on the previous day with the boards of the Maryland and DC state arts agencies and recommended that there be similar meetings again in the future.

David Briggs noted two changes in the minutes of the June, 2005, meeting and made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Dr. Ellsworth introduced Steve West of American Music Stage and invited him to address the board of the Commission. Mr. West thanked the Commission for its support of American Music Stage but said that the organization would not submit a grant application on the next application deadline. He stated that the organization has grown steadily over the years but that the Area IVA panelists appear biased against it. He gave several examples of this bias. He asked if the organization could by-pass the panel review and be reviewed solely by the board of the Commission. Dr. Ellsworth responded that the Commission does not have a procedure in place for accepting applications outside of the regular grant review process. If any members of the Commission are interested in creating such a procedure, there will be an opportunity later in the meeting when the board discusses the guidelines for funding.

Report on the Annual Meeting of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Lu Ellsworth and members of the Commission staff reported on the annual meeting of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies in early September in Boise, Idaho. Dr. Ellsworth noted that he increases his knowledge and skills at every national meeting, as well as building relationships with other state arts agency leaders from around the country. The focus of this year's meeting was how to define the public value of the arts. Dr. Ellsworth commented that he feels the board of the Virginia Commission for the Arts is good at implementing its programs but needs to spend more time on big picture issues.

Will Trinkle recommended that all new members of the Commission should be strongly encouraged to attend a NASAA conference in the first two years of their terms.

Presentation by Jonathan Katz

Jonathan Katz, Executive Director of NASAA, then led a discussion about defining the public value of the arts. He reported on new approaches being taken by the 13 state arts agencies that participated in the Wallace Foundation START initiative. He talked about models from around the country in building creative economies and attracting knowledge workers. He recommended that state arts agencies conduct joint strategic planning with its citizens advocacy organizations to develop a common vision for the arts in each state.

Lu Ellsworth made the suggestion that the Commission use a portion of the unallocated grant funds to conduct a public relations audit of the way the Commission communicates to its constituents and to the public. The Commissioners agreed with this suggestion by consensus.

Advocacy

Lu Ellsworth reported on recent advocacy efforts, including the meeting with the Governor about funding in the next biennium, meetings with the gubernatorial candidates, and the candidates survey undertaken by Virginians for the Arts.

Fellowships in Sculpture

Rod Taylor, who observed the sculpture fellowship panel, stated that the panel was one of the best that he had observed. Amy Krawczyk presented the panel recommendations. David Briggs made a motion to accept the panel recommendations. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Fellowships in Playwriting

Jackie Stone, who observed the playwriting fellowship panel, stated that the panel was well prepared and thoughtful. She explained that the panelists had a difficult time in making their final recommendations. The panelists were unanimous in selecting the four top writers but struggled with the choice between emerging and more established and polished playwrights. They asked the Commission to consider awarding a fifth fellowship in 2005-2006 and establishing a separate category for emerging playwrights in the future. She sympathized with their concerns but said that it will always be difficult to award a limited number of fellowships with a large pool of talented artists.

Amy Krawczyk presented the panel recommendations for four fellowships and two alternates. Rod Taylor made a motion to accept the panel recommendations. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2006-2008 Guidelines for Funding

In the absence of Beth Temple, Chair of the Arts in Education Committee, Peggy Baggett presented the recommendations of the Arts in Education Committee for changes in the arts education grant programs. The proposed changes include the following.

- C Elimination of the Curriculum Development category.
- C Change the minimum time required for an eligible artist residency to three full school days. Schools and other residency sponsors may continue to apply for longer residencies.
- C Elimination of the requirements of studio time for the resident artists and an activity open to the general public for residencies of less than 10 days. The required components of a residency will continue to be core group workshops on each day of the residency, general workshops for larger student groups, and at least one teacher workshop. Residencies of more than 10 days will have additional required components of studio time for the resident artists and an activity that is open to the general public.
- C Allow a portion of the residency activities to take place after school. If the after school activities take place at a location other than school property, transportation to the site must be provided.
- C The Commission will continue to maintain a Roster of artists interested in working in the schools and who have been pre-screened on the basis of artistic quality, professional credentials, and ability to carry out an effective artist residency. Residency sponsors, however, may propose working with artists who are not on the Commission Roster. In those cases, applications will be reviewed, not only on the basis of the quality of the proposed residency, but also on the qualifications of the proposed artists.
- C Elimination of the deadline for artists to apply to be listed on the AIE Roster. Applications will be accepted throughout the year. Three times a year a review panel will evaluate the new applications received to date and make recommendations to the Commission. The Arts in Education Committee of the Commission will have final approval of these applications. Artists will be added to the online Artist Roster as soon as possible after Commission approval.

Gary Grant, Chair of the Policy/Planning/Budget Committee, then presented the recommendations of the Policy Committee for changes in other parts of the guidelines as follows.

- C Change the minimum budget size of the major arts institutions to \$1 million.
- C In General Operating Support change the language about youth groups to include all organizations whose purpose is the arts education, thereby extending the existing policy for youth groups to community schools of the arts.

- C Add a new category of General Operating Support for Local Arts Agencies using the same funding formula as in the current General Operating Support guidelines.
- C Add language that for 2006-2007 General Operating Support grantees cannot apply for Project Grants.
- C Add language to Project Grants that applications from colleges/universities must be for activities not otherwise available in the community.
- C Change the amount of assistance in Technical Assistance to \$1,000 per grant up to an annual total of \$2,000. Eliminate the separate funding level for small budget organizations.
- C Add the category of Technology Enhancement Grants and delete the purchase of computer hardware and software from eligible activities under Technical Assistance.
- C If funding is available, begin a special initiative for emerging local arts agencies.

The floor was opened for discussion, and the following points were made.

- C As proposed by the Policy Committee, the Commission will continue to track the costs of independent financial audits and consider raising the budget minimum for required audits in the future.
- C As recommended by the Policy Committee, local arts agencies can be viewed as one of many tools to expand the reach of the arts in communities and thus it is appropriate for the Commission to add new local arts agency programs for 2006-2008. In establishing these new programs the Commission is not mandating that new local arts agencies be formed in communities around the state but is providing a vehicle to encourage the establishment of local arts agencies when a locality so desires.
- C While continuing to provide operating support for private local arts agencies in the coming biennium, the Commission will defer action on providing operating support for public local arts agencies, as recommended by the local arts agency study group, unless there is significant additional grant funding in the 2006-2008 state budget.
- C The Commission will continue over the next two years to evaluate the role of local arts agencies in their many forms and work with Virginians for the Arts to build a climate throughout the state that recognizes local arts agencies as one of the many ways that the arts can be effectively supported in the Commonwealth.

A number of suggestions were also made for improvements in the wording of the guidelines.

David Briggs then made a motion to approve the text of the guidelines, including the

modifications discussed during the meeting, for review by the public. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

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