

**Virginia Commission for the Arts
Minutes, December 2, 2004
Blue Ridge Institute of Ferrum College**

Members Present: Dr. Lucius Ellsworth, Chair; David Briggs; Gary Grant; Susan Hirschbiel; Roddy Moore; Beth Temple; Rod Taylor; Will Trinkle; and Deborah Valentine

Members Absent: E. A. McMath and Eve Wilson

Staff Present: Peggy Baggett, Foster Billingsley, and Amy Krawczyk

Guests: Vaughan Webb

Introduction

Dr. Ellsworth, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. He welcomed Amy Krawczyk to the staff of the Commission. He thanked Sally and Roddy Moore and Dr. Jennifer Braaten for their hospitality on the previous evening.

Roddy Moore welcomed the Commissioners to the Blue Ridge Institute and gave an overview of the purpose and programs.

David Briggs made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2004, meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Harrison Museum

Peggy Baggett presented the pending General Operating Support grant application from the Harrison Museum of African-American Culture in Roanoke. After the application deadline in the spring of 2004 the Museum had encountered financial difficulties and scaled back its operations considerably. The board of the Museum provided a revised budget and schedule of activities for 2004-2005 to be reviewed by the Commission at the December meeting.

In the discussion the following points were made.

- *The Museum is well respected and a valuable asset to the community.
- * There is concern that the supplemental materials were not more specific, such as not including the type of performances or names of the performers for the public events over the past two months.
- * Since the financial crisis, the Museum appears to be more of a performing arts presenter than a museum.
- * It is difficult for people in Roanoke to find out when the Museum is open to visitors.
- * The current volunteers for the Museum do not appear to have the appropriate qualifications for running an arts organization.
- * It is good to see that the Museum leadership is discussing a possible affiliation with Center in the Square.
- * The Museum is in a fragile state, and the Commission should provide support for at least one more year.

David Briggs made a motion to award a General Operating Support grant to the Harrison Museum as a Priority 2 organization for 2004-2005. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Report on the Local Arts Agency Study Group

Peggy Baggett reported on the status of the local arts agency study group. The full group met in August and September. A subcommittee is meeting on December 8th to develop specific recommendations of strategies to achieve the goals of the study group. The study group will not meet the goal of completing its report in the fall of 2004.

Lu Ellsworth reported that there is much diversity of opinion on the issues before the study group. He also stated that there is the need for a statewide network of local arts agencies but that this network should be under the umbrella of an existing organization in light of the limited resources. Gary Grant agreed, stating that many good ideas have been suggested but there are not enough resources to implement the ideas.

Report on the NASAA Leadership Institute

Will Trinkle, Foster Billingsley, Peggy Baggett, and Lu Ellsworth reported on the NASAA Leadership Institute in Orlando. All found the meeting to be engaging and thought-provoking, particularly the discussions of how state arts agencies can present the public value of the arts. It was encouraging to learn that the Commission has already put into place many of the best practices described at the conference. Lu Ellsworth and Foster Billingsley commented that many state arts agencies apparently do not have a good working relationship between the staff and the board. It is important for the staff and members of the Virginia Commission to maintain the current positive relationship. Foster Billingsley reported that he had attended a session on electronic grants and discussed his concern about the technology leading to increased barriers between the Commission and its grantees.

Training on the Conflict of Interest Act

The Commissioners viewed the DVD on the state conflict of interest act prepared by the Office of the Attorney General. There is now a requirement that all state board members be trained on the provisions of the law.

Report from the NASAA Board

Lu Ellsworth, who serves on the board of directors of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, reported on the recent board meeting.

*There will not be a third joint conference with Americans for the Arts as the NASAA membership is not finding the joint conferences to be of as much value as other leadership development opportunities.

* With the initiative of Americans for the Arts to provide advocacy support at the state level, it is important to maintain a common advocacy message and a common voice.

* There will be a 10% increase in the NASAA dues beginning in fiscal year 2005-2006.

2005-2006 Special Recognition Awards

Peggy Baggett reviewed the policies and procedures of the Special Recognition Awards. Will Trinkle made a motion to invite the four organizations to apply again for 2005-2006 - the Blue Ridge Institute, the Virginia Performing Arts Foundation, the Virginia School of the Arts, and Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Report of the Arts in Education Committee

Beth Temple reported on the meeting of the Arts in Education Committee that had taken place immediately prior to the Commission meeting. The Committee approved the reviewers' recommendations on the additions to the Artist Roster. The Committee approved the panel

recommendations on the 2004-2005 Teacher Incentive Grants with the addition of a \$300 grant awarded to Elaine Lyons.

In addition, the Arts in Education Committee will oversee an evaluation of the arts in education grant programs. The current programs were designed before the changes in Virginia schools resulting from the statewide testing on the Standards of Learning. The evaluation will take place in the spring and summer of 2005 with any changes affecting the 2006-2007 programs.

Folklife

Vaughan Webb, Deputy Director of the Blue Ridge Institute, gave a presentation on the folklife field - how it is defined and how folklorists conduct their work - as well as showing slides of folklife projects from around the state.

Advocacy

Lu Ellsworth reported on the meetings with Governor Warner and the two likely gubernatorial candidates in the next election. He encouraged all of the Commissioners to contact the Governor and their representatives in the General Assembly as soon as possible to ask for increased funding for the arts over the next three years. He also urged the Commissioners to speak at the public hearings on the state budget.

Susan Hirschbiel reported on the events planned in New York surrounding the first performance by the Richmond Ballet at the Joyce Theatre. The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the Virginia Opera, and the Virginia Arts Festival will also be showcased.

Lu Ellsworth and Susan Hirschbiel reported on the proposal to the General Assembly for a bond package for cultural facilities.

Old and New Business

David Briggs presented materials and described the new Arlington County public art program.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.