



Wednesday, March 26, 2014

Minutes

Center for the Arts at Virginia Tech – Blacksburg, Virginia

Commissioners in attendance: Lisa Alderman, Faye Bailey, Willie Dell, Charles Ellis, Ronald Fabin, Wanda Judd, Sharron Kitchen Miller, Ann Edwards Rust, Marcia Neuhaus Speck, Marcia Thalhimer, Ann Bondurant Trinkle, Shelley Kruger Weisberg

Commissioners absent: Tina Lea

Staff in attendance: Foster Billingsley, Cathy Welborn

Guests: Russell Allen, President/CEO of Virginia Opera Association, Margaret Vanderhuy, incoming Executive Director for the Virginia Commission for the Arts, Ruth Waalkes, Executive Director of the Center of the Arts at Virginia Tech

Introduction:

Lisa Alderman, Chair of the Commission, called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

Ruth Waalkes, Executive Director of the Center of the Arts at Virginia Tech, welcomed the Commission and gave a brief background of the new Center of the Arts at Virginia Tech.

Approval of Minutes:

Willie Dell made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2013 meeting at Second Street Gallery, Charlottesville, Virginia. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Grants Budget:

Foster Billingsley presented a draft of the Commission's 2014-2015 grants budget. He presented two possible options for the Commission's grants budget depending on the outcome of the State budget. The Commission's 2014-2015 grants budget will be approved at the June 11-12, 2014 board meeting in Richmond, Virginia.

The budget contains a line item with an additional \$137,000 to the Virginia Commission for the Arts for fiscal year 2014-2015. This is to provide grant funding to address facility maintenance for performing arts organizations in Central Virginia. If the additional funds remain in the Commission's budget the board will need to decide how the funds will be administered.

Henley Street Theatre/Richmond Shakespeare:

Foster Billingsley gave background information on the merger of Henley Street Theatre and Richmond Shakespeare. On March 19, 2013, Henley Street Theatre and Richmond Shakespeare executed a Memorandum of Understanding outlining a plan to merge the operating management of the two theatres. The two organizations currently share Artistic, Managing, and Education Directors.

Henley Street Theatre and Richmond Shakespeare submitted identical general operating support grant applications for 2014-2015. The applications show that both organizations will co-produce year-round main-stage plays and educational programs. Richmond Shakespeare's finances for 2014-2015 will be taken over by Henley Street Theatre.

Charles Ellis made a motion to approve Henley Street Theatre's general operating support application for consideration of funding in 2014-2015. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Strategic Plan:

Foster Billingsley presented the Strategic Plan timeline and discussed what has been accomplished since the plans approval by the board in June 2013.

- The Commission staff has implemented the majority of the items through the winter and spring 2014.
- The online artist roster has been time consuming but several things have come out of creating the roster.
- The Commission staff recommends that an education committee be created to discuss whether the roster is still needed as a resource for schools and arts organizations.

He also talked about items that have been put on hold.

With the leadership transition within the Commission it has been decided that rewriting the staff job responsibilities will be put on hold until the fall 2014.

Cultural/Arts Tourism Marketing Program:

Results of the Cultural/Tourism Marketing Program were discussed. The survey sent out by the Virginia Commission for the Arts and Virginia Tourism Corporation generated little input and it was decided by the Virginia Tourism Corporation and Virginia Commission for the Arts staff that there was not enough time to create a new grant program/initiative before June 30, 2014.

Margaret Vanderhye and Foster Billingsley will meet with the Virginia Tourism Corporation staff on April 7, 2014 to discuss how to move forward with the joint partnership.

Ann Edwards Rust made a motion to suspend the Cultural/Arts Tourism Marketing Program for 2014-2015 and to create a committee to restructure the grant program. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2014 Art Works Conference:

Participant surveys from the 2014 Art Works Conference were reviewed. There was discussion about starting the second day of the conference at 9 a.m. and ending at 4:30 p.m. The opening session needs to

be shortened. There was a recommendation to have two shorter sessions in the morning that are 1 hour in length and two sessions in the afternoon.

Foster Billingsley spoke about the interest of the Presenters Network in having a showcase of touring artists and ensembles at the conference. The Commissioners agreed that this was too expensive and time-consuming for the Commission, but would seek ways to support the Presenters Network at the conference through an opening reception.

Update on the Virginians for the Arts:

Foster Billingsley gave an update on the Virginians for the Arts (VFTA). At its January 2014 membership meeting VFTA elected a new board president, John “Butch” Davies. The organization is working to complete a new strategic plan that will help raise visibility for greater funding of the arts in Virginia.

Workhouse Arts Center:

Ann Edwards Rust gave background history of the Workhouse Arts Center and the elimination of its \$60 million debt. The Workhouse Arts Center has developed a new business model.

Update on Virginia Opera Association:

Lisa Alderman introduced Russell Allen, President/CEO of Virginia Opera Association (VOA). Mr. Allen discussed with the Commission the challenging times that his organization has gone through during the last four years. VOA has put on hold the search for a new Artistic Director.

Election of the Nominating Committee:

Lisa Alderman gave the job descriptions of each of the Executive Committee (Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.) The Commissioners agreed that the board needs to review the Commission’s By-Laws and consider rewriting the job descriptions of the Executive Committee.

Lisa Alderman opened the floor to nominations for the Nominating Committee.

Willie Dell made a motion to elect Lisa Alderman, Marcia Neuhaus Speck, and Marcia Thalhimer to the Nominating Committee. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Poetry Out Loud:

Foster Billingsley gave an update on the 2014 Poetry Out Loud Competition. Virginia is in its sixth year participating in this program. Virginia Repertory Theatre has successfully managed the program over the last four years for the Commission. This year over 8,000 high school students participated in the seven regional competitions. The National Finals will be held in Washington, D.C. on April 30, 2014.

New / Old Business:

No new or old business.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.