

Virginia Commission for the Arts
June 12-13, 2008
Minutes
Jacksonville Center, Floyd

Members Present: Dr. Lucius Ellsworth, Chair; David Briggs, Nick Covatta, Susan Hirschbiel, Maria Laqueur, Bonita Lestina, Ann Rust, Jackie Stone, Beth Temple, and Vaughan Webb

Members Absent: Rod Taylor, Will Trinkle, and Deborah Valentine

Staff Present: Peggy Baggett, Foster Billingsley, and Cathy Welborn

Introduction

Lu Ellsworth, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:41 a.m. He introduced John McEnhill, who welcomed the Commissioners to Floyd and to the Jacksonville Center.

David Briggs made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 3, 2008, meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Updates on Special Initiatives

Minds Wide Open: Virginia Celebrates Women in the Arts. Susan Hirschbiel reported on the progress of the statewide celebration of women in the arts, which is intended to raise the public visibility of the size and scope of the arts industry in the state and to build collaborations among Virginia arts organizations. To date, the following has been accomplished.

- Seven regional meetings around the state to introduce the concept to small and mid-sized arts organizations have been held
- Formal announcement of the statewide celebration at the 2008 Art Works for Virginia conference occurred
- Commissioner Susan Hirschbiel agreed to serve as Statewide Chair
- Melinda Scott was hired as statewide coordinator
- Meeting of the marketing directors of the major arts institutions to begin planning the statewide promotion was held
- Meeting of the development directors of the major arts institutions to develop a plan for funding the statewide promotion was held
- The BCF advertising firm has contributed pro bono time to create the brand name and logo
- Presentation to the marketing staff of the Virginia Tourism Corporation was made
- Meetings with Altra, Media General, Dominion Resources Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Greater Richmond to request support for the project

The critical next steps are identification of the fiscal agent, selection of the programs for the statewide celebration by the major arts institutions, design of the website, and securing funding for the statewide promotional activities. The Virginia Tourism Corporation staff will begin promoting the statewide celebration as soon as a group of organizations announce specific

programs as part of the celebration.

Governor's Awards for the Arts. Peggy Baggett reported on the status of the Governor's Awards for the Arts. A total of 365 nominations were received. The pre-screening committee has put the nominations into three groups. The judges will meet on July 9 to select the winners, and the winners will be announced in early August. The presentation of the Awards will be in mid-September.

Virginians for the Arts. Lu Ellsworth reviewed the history of the founding of Virginians for the Arts, the creation of the companion 501(c)3 Foundation, and the Commission partnership with these organizations. A general discussion followed about the future of the partnership. Susan Hirschbiel made a motion to have the Chair appoint a committee to discuss the partnership. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Local Arts Agency Initiative. Peggy Baggett reported on the initiative to strengthen the local arts agency network across the state. Robin Iten Porter has been under contract to work with the local arts agencies for the past 18 months but is now living out of state. The Commission staff will be looking for someone to fill the contract position as soon as possible.

Major Arts Institutions Roundtable. Susan Hirschbiel and Peggy Baggett reported on the major arts institutions roundtable held at the end of May. This meeting was the fourth roundtable. The major arts institutions have requested that there be two roundtables per year, one in connection with the Art Works for Virginia conference and one in May, with the Commission staff providing the logistical support. The Commission staff is also in the process of setting up a listserv for the major arts institutions and will provide information on the Commission website about mentorship opportunities.

Advocacy Update

Lu Ellsworth reported that the Commission and Virginians for the Arts will continue to advocate for the state funding goal of one dollar per capita for the Commission. The same advocacy strategy will be used as in the past year.

National and State News

Lu Ellsworth announced that the NASAA annual meeting will be held in Chattanooga, Tennessee, September 11-13, 2008.

Foster Billingsley and Cathy Welborn reported on their attendance at the Building Communities through the Arts conference in South Boston, sponsored by the Southside Virginia Higher Education Center. It was the first conference on this topic in southside Virginia. Over 250 people attended.

Susan Hirschbiel reported on two collaborative initiatives from Hampton Roads. During the 2009 Virginia Arts Festival area museums and galleries will present The Art of Glass 2. The major arts organizations of Hampton Roads have also created a new website listing arts, entertainment, and sports events. The website address is www.your757.com.

Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation

Peggy Baggett reported on proposed structural changes in the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. The member state arts agencies will no longer have two seats on the board of directors. The board of directors will be much smaller, with the intent of having a more efficient and effective governing structure; and the state arts agencies will become customers of the organization.

2008-09 Grants Budget

Peggy Baggett reviewed the draft 2008-09 grants budget, incorporating the changes proposed at the April 3 Commission meeting. Several Commissioners expressed concern about the reduction in the amount of funds available for General Operating Support.

Area I General Operating Support

Lu Ellsworth had observed the Area I panel meeting. He described the panelists as a diverse and experienced group. He noted that while the panelists had raised significant concerns about some of the applicants, they recommended Priority 1 funding for all but one of the applications. Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the applications. David Briggs made a motion to approve the staff recommendations for the General Operating Support applications from Area I. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Area I Project Grants

Appalachian Traditions. Lu Ellsworth noted that the Dock Boggs Festival has been an annual event for many years. He made a motion to award \$1,000 for the project. Vaughan Webb seconded the motion and asked the staff to notify the applicant that future requests should be for a new or expanded component of the Festival rather than general support. The motion was approved 8-Yes, 1-No.

Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center. Lu Ellsworth made a motion to award \$6,500 for this project, stating that it was clearly a new initiative for the area. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

David Briggs made a motion to approve the staff recommendations for the remaining Project Grants from Area I. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously with Vaughan Webb abstaining from voting on Blue Ridge Traditional Arts and The Crooked Road.

Area II General Operating Support

Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the applications from Area II. No Commissioners had observed the meeting, but she reported that the panelists were well prepared and had good comments.

Jefferson Choral Society. David Briggs expressed concern that the organization had not responded to the Commission concerns about the board structure for several years and asked that the language in the reviewers comments be strengthened.

David Briggs made a motion to approve the staff recommendations for the General Operating Support applications from Area II. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Area II Project Grants

Amazement Square. David Briggs made a motion to award \$4,500 to Amazement Square rather than \$5,000 recommended by the Commission staff and to award the balance of \$500 to the Halifax Little Theatre for the summer theatre camp. The motion was seconded and defeated, 1-Yes, 8-No. David Briggs then made a motion to award \$4,000 to Amazement Square. The motion died for lack of a second.

Community Partnership for Revitalization. Vaughan Webb noted that the music series is not a new project and that the applicant should be told that future applications must be for new or expanded activities.

Halifax Little Theatre. Susan Hirschbiel made a motion to award \$3,500 to the Halifax Little Theatre application for the Aquila Theatre performance and \$500 to the Halifax Little Theatre application for the summer camp. The motion was seconded and approved

Bonita Lestina made a motion to approve the staff recommendation on the remaining Project Grant applications from Area II. The motion was seconded and approved with Vaughan Webb abstaining from voting on the Community Partnership for Revitalization.

Area III General Operating Support

Vaughan Webb had observed the Area III panel meeting. He commented that he agreed with the majority of the panel recommendations but that he was concerned about so few of the panelists having first hand knowledge of the applicants. Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the applications from Area III.

Opera Roanoke. Ann Rust, commenting that opera is a struggling art form and that the Commission should give as much support as possible to the opera companies in the state, made a motion to award Priority 1 funding to Opera Roanoke. The motion was seconded and passed, 5-Yes, 4-No.

ShenanArts. The Commission staff distributed a response to the panel comments from the applicant that was not received in time to be included in the Commission meeting materials. After reviewing the materials the Commissioners agreed by consensus that the staff recommendation of Priority 2 funding was appropriate.

Susan Hirschbiel made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the remaining General Operating Support applications from Area III. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Area III Project Grants

Boxerwood Education Association. Vaughan Webb and Beth Temple commented that this project was unusual and could bring excitement to the community. Vaughan Webb made a

motion to award \$2,000 to the project. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Eastern Mennonite University/Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival. David Briggs noted that this Festival has been in existence for a long time and that the project is not for a new or expanded activity. He made a motion not to fund the project. The motion was seconded and defeated, 2-Yes, 7- No. Later in the meeting Susan Hirschbiel made a motion to award a \$1,000 Special Recognition Award for the Festival while notifying the Festival staff that future applications must be for a new or expanded activity. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Staunton Music Festival. After a general discussion of whether any of the three projects were a higher priority for funding, Ann Rust made a motion to award \$1,000 to each project. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

David Briggs made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the remaining Project Grants from Area III. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Vaughan Webb recommended that in the coming year the Policy Committee should review the way the Commission supports ongoing festivals as well as the guidance for applicants on what constitutes a special project versus operating support.

Area IVA General Operating Support

Bonita Lestina, Ann Rust, and David Briggs, all of whom had observed the Area IVA panel meeting, stated that the panelists were well prepared, thoughtful, and articulate. Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the Area IVA applications.

Alexandria Choral Society. David Briggs commented that the Alexandria Choral Society has been a highly regarded organization in the past and that, despite the poorly prepared application, the organization should not drop from Priority 1 to Priority 3 funding in one year. He made a motion to award Priority 2 funding. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Council for the Arts of Herndon. The Commission staff distributed copies of a response to the panel comments from the applicant that had not been received in time to be included in the Commission meeting books. After reviewing the materials the Commissioners agreed by consensus to approve the panel and staff recommendations on the application.

Eclipse Chamber Orchestra. Ann Rust made a motion to fund the Eclipse Chamber Orchestra as a Priority 1 grantee. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Elden Street Players. Ann Rust made a motion to fund the Elden Street Players as a Priority 2 grantee. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Springwater Fiber Workshop. The Commission staff distributed copies of a response to the panel comments from the applicant that had not been received in time to be included in the Commission meeting books. After reviewing the materials the Commissioners stated that the organization must apply in the future as an arts education organization. Maria Laqueur made a motion to approve the staff recommendation of no funding. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Bonita Lestina made a motion to approve the panel and staff recommendations on the remaining General Operating Support applications from Area IVA. The motion was seconded and approved with David Briggs abstaining from voting on Bowen McCauley Dance and Classika-Synetic Theatre.

Area IVA Project Grants

Alexandria Performing Arts Association, acting as fiscal agent for Bosma Dance. David Briggs made a motion to fund the project in the amount of \$5,000, making the grant award proportional to the grant awards in other parts of the state. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. Later in the meeting discussion of this application was re-opened, and Ann Rust made a motion to award \$9,200. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Indian Dance Educators Association. David Briggs made a motion to award a grant of \$1,000, stating that the organization did not have much visibility in its home community. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. Later in the meeting discussion of the application was re-opened, and Ann Rust made a motion to award \$2,500. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Lorton Arts Foundation. Ann Rust talked about the great value this organization will have in the community once its facility is completed and open to the public. She made a motion to award \$10,000. The motion was seconded and defeated, 1-Yes and 8-No. Beth Temple made a motion to award \$5,000. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Bonita Lestina made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the remaining Project Grant applications from Area IVA. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Area IVB General Operating Support

Beth Temple, who had observed the Area IVB panel meeting, stated that the panelists had a great deal of knowledge and had some difficult issues to discuss. Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the Area IVB applications.

David Briggs made a motion to defer discussion of Ki Theatre and the Loudoun Academy of the Arts to the section of the agenda on Special Recognition Awards. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Vaughan Webb made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the remaining General Operating Support applications from Area IVB. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Area IVB Project Grants

David Briggs made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the Project Grant applications from Area IVB. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Area V General Operating Support

Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the applications from Area V. No Commissioners had observed the panel meeting.

David Briggs made a motion to defer discussion of the Daily Poetry Association to the section of the agenda on Special Recognition Awards. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

David Briggs made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the remaining General Operating Support applications from Area V. The motion was seconded and approved with Jackie Stone abstaining from voting on the Arts Council of Richmond and Maria Laqueur abstaining from voting on the Rappahannock Art League.

Area V Project Grants

Susan Hirschbiel made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the Project Grants from Area V. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Area VI General Operating Support

Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the applications from Area VI. Rod Taylor had observed the panel meeting.

Suffolk Center for the Cultural Arts. Susan Hirschbiel expressed concern about the viability of this organization, stating that its problems go beyond the normal issues surrounding the opening of a new arts facility. She made a motion to fund the organization as a Priority 3 grantee. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Symphonicity. David Briggs made a motion to fund this organization as a Priority 1 grantee. The motion was seconded and approved, 7-Yes, 1-No, 1-Abstain.

Tidewater Winds. Nick Covatta made a motion to approve funding as a Priority 1 grantee. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Nick Covatta made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the remaining General Operating Support applications from Area VI. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Area VI Project Grants

Old Dominion University Literary Festival. David Briggs, noting that this festival has been funded for many years, made a motion for no funding. The motion was seconded. Susan Hirschbiel then amended the motion to consider a Special Recognition Award. The amended motion was seconded and approved unanimously. Later in the meeting David Briggs made a motion to award a \$500 Special Recognition Award to this applicant. The motion was seconded. Susan Hirschbiel then amended the motion to award \$1,000 in Special Recognition funding. The amended motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

David Briggs made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the remaining Project Grant applications from Area VI. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

General Operating Support for Major Arts Institutions

Jackie Stone, who observed the panel reviewing applications from the major arts institutions, stated that the panelists were thoughtful and well prepared and that they handled some difficult questions in a careful and professional manner. Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the applications.

American Shakespeare Center. David Briggs noted that the application is not clear on how the organization is managing its long term debt and recommended that the application from this organization be reviewed again by the advisory panel in the spring of 2009. The Commission agreed by consensus with this recommendation.

Art Museum of Western Virginia. Several Commissioners questioned whether the projected revenue figures for the Museum, once the new facility is open, can be met in the current economic climate. The Commissioners agreed by consensus with the staff recommendation of Priority 1 funding but stated that the application from this organization should be reviewed by the advisory panel again in the spring of 2009.

Mill Mountain Theatre. Several Commissioners noted the panel comments about Mill Mountain Theatre not participating in the statewide initiatives or providing leadership on behalf of the arts as a whole in the Roanoke area. The Commissioners agreed by consensus that the application from this organization should be reviewed by the advisory panel again in the spring of 2009.

Virginia Stage Company. David Briggs noted that the application is not clear on how the organization is managing its long term debt and recommended that the application from this organization be reviewed again by the advisory panel in the spring of 2009. The Commission agreed by consensus with this recommendation.

Susan Hirschbiel made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the General Operating Support for Major Arts Institutions applications. The motion was seconded and approved with Susan Hirschbiel abstaining from voting on the Chrysler Museum and the Virginia Arts Festival.

Susan Hirschbiel then commented that 2008-09 will be a challenging year economically for all arts organizations but particularly for the major arts institutions. She asked that the Commission staff provide more information to the Commission about the status of the major arts organizations during the grant review in the spring of 2009.

Ms. Hirschbiel praised the recent efforts of the majority of the major arts organizations in expanding their leadership on behalf of all of the arts. She noted that under the current Commission guidelines for funding there are 16 organizations at the cap for funding. Because the cap limits the amount of funds that can be requested by the large budget applicants, when Commission grant funds are cut, these organizations would see a significant percentage drop in their grant amount, regardless of their own budget growth or reductions. She made a motion to make an exception to the Commission guidelines for funding in 2008-09 by removing the 16

organizations at the funding cap from the funding formula and awarding a set amount of \$112,500 in General Operating Support to each with the funds coming from the amount budgeted for General Operating Support. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Special Recognition Awards

Peggy Baggett presented the staff recommendations on Special Recognition Awards for Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts and the Blue Ridge Institute of Ferrum College. Bonita Lestina made a motion to approve the staff recommendations. The motion was seconded and approved with Vaughan Webb abstaining from voting on the Blue Ridge Institute.

The Commission then discussed the option of awarding Special Recognition grants to five organizations in lieu of General Operating Support or Project Grants.

Eastern Mennonite University for the Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival. Susan Hirschbiel made a motion to award a \$1,000 Special Recognition Award for the Festival while notifying the Festival staff that future applications must be for a new or expanded activity. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Ki Theatre. Noting that the future of this organization is uncertain, Ann Rust made a motion not to award funding to Ki Theatre. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Loudoun Academy of the Arts Foundation. Noting that the Academy provides high quality instruction but does not yet meet the standards for General Operating Support, David Briggs made a motion to award a \$2,000 Special Recognition Award. The motion was seconded. Ann Rust then amended the motion to award \$3,000. The amended motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Daily Poetry Association. David Briggs made a motion to award a \$500 Special Recognition Award to this organization. The motion was seconded. Nick Covatta then amended the motion to award \$1,000. The amended motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Old Dominion University Literary Festival. David Briggs made a motion to award a \$500 Special Recognition Award to this applicant. The motion was seconded. Susan Hirschbiel then amended the motion to award \$1,000 in Special Recognition funding. The amended motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Services to the Field Grants

David Briggs, who observed the panel meeting, stated that the panelists were well prepared and that the meeting was efficient and productive. The panelists suggested a number of changes in the application form and panelist review sheets but were unanimous in saying that the new grant program is needed.

Ann Rust made a motion to approve the panel and staff recommendations. The motion was seconded. David Briggs raised a concern of whether the Arts Alliance Mountain Empire qualifies as a Virginia organization. Several Commissioners commented that the publication of A! Magazine is an important service in southwest Virginia. Lu Ellsworth noted that the magazine focuses primarily on the I-81 corridor rather than reaching into far southwest Virginia.

Nick Covatta then made a motion to award a \$6,000 Special Recognition Award to Arts Alliance Mountain Empire. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. The Commission then unanimously approved the motion to approve the panel and staff recommendations on the remaining applications.

General Operating Support Short Form

Bonita Lestina made a motion to approve the short form General Operating Support requests. The motion was seconded and approved with David Briggs abstaining from voting on the Fairfax Symphony, Signature Theatre, and the Virginia Chamber Orchestra, Ann Rust abstaining from voting on the Arts Council of Fairfax County, Lu Ellsworth abstaining from voting on Pro Art Association, Maria Laqueur abstaining from voting on the Rappahannock Foundation for the Arts, and Nick Covatta abstaining from voting on the North Street Playhouse.

Local Government Challenge Grants

David Briggs made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the Local Government Challenge Grants. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2009-2010 Performing Arts Tour Directory

Cathy Welborn presented the panel and staff recommendations on the applications to be listed in the 2009-2010 Tour Directory. Peggy Baggett pointed out that under the Commission guidelines for funding individual students or youth ensembles are not eligible to be listed in the Tour Directory but that two applicants are adults touring with their own children. The advisory panel had recommended that both applicants be included in the Tour Directory, stating that having children tour with their parents is a different situation than a student ensemble. The Commissioners agreed by consensus with this interpretation of the guidelines.

Beth Temple made a motion to approve the staff recommendations on the performers for the 2009-2010 Tour Directory. The motion was seconded and approved with David Briggs abstaining with regard to the Bowen McCauley Dance.

Artist Residency Grants

Peggy Baggett described the panel review process and presented the staff recommendations on the applications. Ann Rust made a motion to approve the staff recommendations. The motion was seconded and approved with David Briggs abstaining from voting on the Kenmore Middle School application involving Bowen McCauley Dance.

Technology Enhancement Grants

Foster Billingsley presented the panel and staff recommendations on the Technology Enhancement Grants. Beth Temple made a motion to accept the panel and staff recommendations. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2008-09 Grants Budget

Maria Laqueur made a motion to approve the 2008-09 grants budget, incorporating the

changes made during the grant review and moving all unallocated funds to General Operating Support. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Recognition of Outgoing Commissioners

Lu Ellsworth praised the work of the three Commissioners whose terms end on June 30, 2008 - Bonita Lestina, Rod Taylor, and Beth Temple. Ms. Lestina and Ms. Temple each spoke about how much their service on the Commission meant to them.

Old and New Business

Peggy Baggett presented a request from the MacCallum More Gardens for emergency funding. The Commissioners expressed concern about the situation but declined to award special funding.

Jackie Stone reported that the Young Lawyers for the Arts committee of the State Bar Association had planned a series of workshops for artists on how to plan and conduct their businesses. The workshops are being presented in Richmond in partnership with the Visual Arts Center of Richmond. The Commission will work with the Young Lawyers for the Arts committee to present the workshops in other parts of the state.

Report of the Nominating Committee

Vaughan Webb gave the report of the Nominating Committee that recommended the following slate of officers for 2008-09:

Chair	Lu Ellsworth
Vice Chair	Nick Covatta
Secretary	David Briggs

Lu Ellsworth asked Vaughan Webb to preside over this section of the agenda. Jackie Stone made a motion to accept the slate of officers proposed by the Nominating Committee. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Special Guest

Lu Ellsworth recognized and greeted the Honorable Rick Boucher, U. S. Representative of the Ninth Congressional District, and thanked him for his support of the arts. Representative Boucher spoke about the importance of the arts in his district.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.