

**Virginia Commission for the Arts  
Minutes, April 9, 2010  
Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen**

Members Present: Nicholas Covatta, Chair; Lisa Alderman, Tina Lea; Sharron Kitchen Miller; Evelia Gonzalez Porto, Ann Edwards Rust; Marcia Neuhaus Speck, Marcia Thalhimer, Vaughan Webb, and Deborah Wyld

Members Absent: Willie Dell, Gwendolyn Everett, and Ann Bondurant Trinkle

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

**Introduction**

Nick Covatta called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. He congratulated the Commissioners on their effective advocacy effort during the General Assembly session.

Peggy Baggett introduced K Alfierio, President/CEO of the Cultural Arts Center, who welcomed the Commissioners to the Center and talked about the impact of Commission funding on the Center.

Peggy Baggett stated that the minutes of the December 3, 2009, meeting had been inadvertently left out of the meeting materials and said that she would send them to the Commissioners by mail.

**2010-11 Grants Budget**

Peggy Baggett reviewed the status of the overall state budget and General Assembly action on the state appropriation for the Commission. She then presented the recommendations of the Executive Committee on the 2010-11 grants budget, noting that the grants budget would not be formally adopted until the June meeting.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were made.

- Because the Local Government Challenge Grants encourage localities to fund the arts, it is important to preserve these grants as much as possible
- It is important for the Commission to maintain a strong role in arts education. The Commission should convene a committee in the fall to evaluate its role in arts education.
- Virginia is currently getting a reasonable return on its investment in the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. However, there was concern that there is no one on the Mid Atlantic board of directors representing Virginia. There was consensus that the Commission should nominate one or more individuals for the Mid Atlantic board and that the Commission should encourage more Virginia organizations to apply for Mid Atlantic funding. The suggestion was also made that the Mid Atlantic should provide training through its website on how to apply for funding.

- It is important to create a document that explains the role of the arts in economic development. If Virginians for the Arts does not receive corporate funding for this project, the Commission should take responsibility for creating the document.

## **Updates**

Peggy Baggett gave updates on the Arts Build Communities and MINDS WIDE OPEN initiatives. The Commissioners praised both projects and urged the MINDS WIDE OPEN steering committee to share the success of this collaboration with all members of the General Assembly.

## **Discussion of Advocacy**

The Commissioners then discussed the recent advocacy effort to defeat the proposal for elimination of the Commission. There was agreement that the advocacy effort had surpassed expectations and that the Commission and Virginians for the Arts should build on the momentum.

There was consensus that the Commission should concentrate on the following strategies in the coming year.

- Meet with the Governor to talk about how the arts contribute to his economic development agenda.
- Meet with the Secretary of Education to share information about the role of the arts in education.
- Update the advocacy talking points
- Maintain personal contact with all members of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees.
- Ensure the creation of the document on the role of the arts in economic development.

## **Priorities for the Next Two Years**

There was consensus on the following priorities for the next two years.

- Restore state funding of the Commission grant programs to at least 80 cents per capita.
- Evaluate the role of the Commission in arts education, beginning in the fall of 2010.
- Encourage the Governor to present Governor's Awards for the Arts, possibly in 2012.
- Plan the second Virginia Heritage Awards, possibly for 2013.

## **Election of the Nominating Committee**

Nick Covatta asked for nominations of Commissioners to serve on the Nominating Committee. Vaughan Webb nominated Marcia Speck. Deborah Wyld nominated Lisa Alderman. Marcia Thalhimer nominated Evelia Gonzalez Porto. Marcia Thalhimer then made a motion to close the nominations. The motion passed unanimously. Vaughan Webb made a motion to elect Lisa Alderman, Evelia Gonzalez Porto, and Marcia Speck to the Nominating Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.