

**OHIO ARTS COUNCIL
BOARD MEETING
APRIL 5, 2017**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ginger Warner at 10:05 a.m. in the offices of the Ohio Arts Council (OAC) in Columbus. Board members in attendance: Ginger Warner, chair; Jane Foulk, secretary; Susan Allan Block; Juan Cespedes; Robb Hankins; Gary Hanson; Jon Holt; Tom Johnson; Darryl Mehaffie; Farid Naffah; Bill White; and Neal Zimmers. Board members not in attendance: Jim Dicke, vice-chair; Caprice Bragg; Monica Kridler; Rep. Mike Duffey; Rep. Teresa Fedor; Sen. Matt Dolan; and Sen. Michael Skindell. Staff attending: Donna Collins, Justin Nigro, Ken Emerick, Dia Foley, Christy Farnbauch, Carla Oesterle, Kathy Signorino, Chiquita Mullins Lee, and Ted Hattemer. Also in attendance: Bill Behrendt, executive director, Ohio Citizens for the Arts (OCA); Hilary Damaser, principal assistant attorney general; Kathryn Miller, OAC fellow; and Brooke Watz, OAC intern.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Neal Zimmers, seconded by Jane Foulk, to approve minutes from the Nominating Committee meeting of January 13, 2017. **Motion carried without dissent.**

MOTION by Susan Allan Block, seconded by Jane Foulk, to approve minutes from the Finance Committee meeting of January 25, 2017. **Motion carried without dissent.**

Farid Naffah joined the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

MOTION by Darryl Mehaffie, seconded by Jon Holt, to approve minutes from the board meeting of January 25, 2017. **Motion carried without dissent.**

MOTION by Juan Cespedes, seconded by Jon Holt, to approve minutes from the Executive Committee meeting of January 25, 2017. **Motion carried without dissent.**

CHAIRMAN'S AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chair Ginger Warner outlined the orders of business for the meeting—reports from the board's Executive and Finance Committees, the introduction of the agency's new staff member, and consideration of the FY 2017 Individual Excellence Awards.

Executive Director Donna Collins provided her report:

- Communications Strategist Hannah Brokenshire planned to depart her Public Information Officer 1 position to move out of state. A replacement would be hired after the Governor's Awards. Ms. Warner complimented Ms. Brokenshire's work to rebrand the agency and introduce a new logo.
- Information on panel meetings was shared with board members.

- The agency saw significant increases in applications for its on-year grant programs, including ArtsNEXT, Arts Partnership, and Arts Access.
- Ms. Warner, Ms. Collins, and Artist Programs Director Ken Emerick attended National Arts Advocacy Day and visited Ohio's Congressional delegation, meeting with ten of Ohio's members of Congress. All positively received the agency's message on the importance of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).
- Bill White participated in the Leader in Residence program at Marietta College.
- The next OAC Riffe Gallery show, *After Hours*, will feature artwork from state employees and run from May 4-July 8.

Ms. Warner thanked Ms. Collins for compiling a list of the agency's partnerships and was impressed with the volume.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Warner summarized the Executive Committee's last meeting, where the committee reviewed its purpose to take action between board meetings and guide the OAC agenda.

MOTION by Jane Foulk, seconded by Juan Cespedes, to approve the Executive Committee report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Warner reviewed the Finance Committee's morning discussion, including the quarterly budget report and grant ratifications for this quarter.

Ms. Warner asked Ms. Collins to explain a grant to the Tuesday Musical Association for Creative Aging Ohio, and Ms. Collins explained it as a partnership on a fellowship associated with the initiative. Ms. Warner also asked about organizations requesting full versus partial payments, and Ms. Collins said organizations choose the type of payment structure they prefer. Tom Johnson asked for detail on the Main Stage to Main Street payments, and Ms. Collins later provided detail on the Coshocton Earth Day Festival, Pomerene Center for the Arts, Main Street Greenville, and the Council for the Arts of Greater Lima.

MOTION by Jon Holt, seconded by Neal Zimmers, to approve the grants section of the quarterly budget report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

Jane Foulk asked about the agency's participation in the Treasurer of State and Office of Budget and Management's open checkbooks, and Ms. Collins said it was automated.

MOTION by Neal Zimmers, seconded by Jane Foulk, to approve the administration section of the quarterly budget report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

MOTION by Darryl Mehaffie, seconded by Gary Hanson, to approve the OAC Riffe Gallery section of the quarterly budget report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

MOTION by Jon Holt, seconded by Juan Cespedes, to approve the Percent for Art section of the quarterly budget report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

Ms. Warner briefly reviewed the quarter's grant ratification report.

MOTION by Neal Zimmers, seconded by Jon Holt, to approve the quarter's grant ratification report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

GRANT RECOMMENDATIONS: FY 2017 INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Ms. Warner introduced the grant recommendations for the FY 2017 Individual Excellence (IE) Awards in this year's categories—crafts, design arts and illustration, interdisciplinary work, media arts, photography, two-dimensional visual arts, and three-dimensional visual arts—and welcomed Mr. Emerick and Artist Programs Coordinator Kathy Signorino. Mr. Emerick explained the agency's biennial approach to splitting awards between a visual year and creative writing and music year. This was the first year the IE Awards used ARTIE. He then explained the panel meeting process and collaborative awards.

Responding to Ms. Warner's concern over repeated award winners, Mr. Emerick said return winners have remained in Ohio and created innovative work over their careers that has been recognized by different panels. The panel process is blind, he added. Mr. White inquired about artists who have technical issues with applying, and Ms. Signorino said in one case the issue was corrected during the panel process. Responding to Susan Allan Block. Mr. Emerick confirmed that non-winners often apply again and technical assistance from staff is available. Ms. Signorino added that panelists' feedback is shared with applicants upon request. Gary Hanson inquired about the goal of the program and whether a distinction existed between practicing and amateur artists. Mr. Emerick said artists self-identify as professional artists, although more amateurs tend to apply during the writing year. He continued that the program's goal is to support and boost the artistic community in Ohio and recognize and elevate artists' work.

Robb Hankins joined the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Hanson then asked whether censorship ever played a role in the awards, and Mr. Emerick said the program was open for anyone to apply, but for challenging works, panels tended to desire a clear justification in artists' statements that went beyond shock value. To Ms. Block's point from the morning's Finance Committee, Ms. Collins said the agency held regional meetings around the state to promote the awards. Neal Zimmers asked about the amount of awards compared to applications and whether more funding was needed for the program, and Mr. Emerick said the process was competitive with 17% of applicants funded in visual

arts, a relatively high rate nationally. Mr. Emerick also thought Ohio was generous in its support for artists at the state level compared to other states, and Ms. Collins reminded the board that it capped the program at 75 IE Awards annually, a level at which Mr. Emerick felt comfortable. Ms. Foulk thanked staff for being so inviting to the public during the panel process. Mr. Johnson asked about media coverage of the awards, and Ms. Signorino said a media release was distributed widely and winners were asked to promote their awards. She thought winners in smaller communities or affiliated with universities may receive more media coverage, and Mr. Emerick said winners were encouraged to invite state legislators and community members to their events. Ms. Warner believed the IE Awards transformed artists and their perceptions of themselves. Responding to Robb Hankins, Ms. Collins said only state dollars were used to fund IE awards. Ms. Warner thanked staff for their work.

MOTION by Tom Johnson, seconded by Jon Holt, to accept the FY 2017 Individual Excellence Award grant recommendations. **Motion carried without dissent.**

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Warner reminded board members to file their financial disclosure statements by May 15 and complete their annual ethics training requirements. She also updated the board on the Ohio Poet Laureate selection timeline.

OAC STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Warner noted that Justin Nigro had been promoted to become the agency's operations and public affairs director, consolidating his duties and adding supervisory authority over the communications and technology strategists. She welcomed Ted Hattemer, the OAC's new technology strategist, to the agency. Mr. Nigro briefly explained the restructuring of the communications office and introduced Mr. Hattemer, who served as The Ohio State University's first director of new media and was eventually promoted to become the assistant vice president for interactive communications. Mr. Hattemer provided his background to the board and his career of marrying communications with technology. Ms. Collins thanked Mr. Hattemer for his work to date.

Mr. White inquired if the agency had a social media policy to set parameters on content. Mr. Nigro said the agency had a social media plan that targeted certain content areas and set guidelines on determining a social media budget. He said Ms. Brokenshire had a dashboard to analyze social media metrics. Mr. White asked staff to engage and empower the board to share the agency's message as necessary. Mr. Nigro agreed with Ms. Block's assessment that having board members share posts on platforms such as Facebook would help the agency. Responding to Mr. Johnson, Mr. Nigro said the agency's social media budget was judiciously deployed because it only took a small investment to boost a post's reach appreciably. OAC Social Media and Special Events Fellow Kathryn Miller estimated the OAC's Facebook "likes" were approximately 8,000. Jon Holt refined Mr. White's question on social media policy, discussing user general content as it pertained to external users or comments from the

general public. Principal Assistant Attorney General Hilary Damaser noted that the agency would need a policy in place in order to control objectionable comments. Ms. Collins believed a staff-level policy existed, but a social media policy for external users did not exist, and Mr. Nigro agreed. Ms. Warner encouraged development of a policy. Mr. White expressed his desire to promote the OAC but wanted to be sensitive in his public role, and Ms. Damaser explained the distinction between acting as a public official and private citizen and the need for disclaimers when personal views are expressed, particularly if advocating a position.

Mr. Johnson asked that Ms. Collins' testimony before the House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education be re-shared with the board, and several board members complimented it.

Arts Learning Coordinator Chiquita Mullins Lee shared an update on Ohio's *Poetry Out Loud* program. Madeleine Schroeder of Columbus Alternative High School became the twelfth state champion after a regional semifinals process, which expanded to six this year based on the JobsOhio regions. Former State Senator Eric Kearney emceed the finals, with poet Maggie Smith reading selected works. Ms. Warner hoped *POL* would be promoted to Ohio's Congressional delegation in the future.

OHIO CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS (OCA) REPORT

OCA Executive Director Bill Behrendt discussed the OAC's FY 2018-2019 biennial budget as it stood in the legislature. OCA's goal of \$34 million in state funding for the arts was unchanged, he said. OCA Board Member Ross McGregor, a former state representative, testified before the House jurisdictional subcommittee for the organization. He shared the legislature's projected timeline for the operating budget bill and believed the House would make major changes.

At the federal level, Mr. Behrendt reported that President Donald Trump had proposed eliminating the NEA in federal FY 2018, and the very next week was a well-timed National Arts Advocacy Day with 55 advocates from Ohio out of about 700. He was optimistic that Congress would not follow the president's budget recommendations to cut the NEA by \$15 million in federal FY 2017 and eliminate it in federal FY 2018. He said 154 members of Congress, including U.S. Representatives Steve Stivers and Mike Turner, had signed a letter urging an increase in the NEA's budget to \$155 million. Mr. Behrendt stated that OCA would be holding advocacy workshops around the state and training student advocates for Arts Day.

Ms. Warner added that Congressman Jim Renacci would be meeting with OAC staff in coming days. Mr. Hankins asked for the "truck driver version" of the agency's budget. Ms. Collins said the agency's annual grants budget was \$14 million, with \$1 million coming from the NEA. Mr. Hankins noted that the OAC has the second largest NEA award in the nation for state arts agencies, and Ms. Collins explained California was first owing to its large population. Mr. Behrendt observed that no NEA dollars were spent on OAC administration and all federal dollars were reinvested as grants. Responding to Mr. Hankins, Mr. Behrendt said advocating for the OAC and NEA budgets as a package was important. He said traditional methods, such

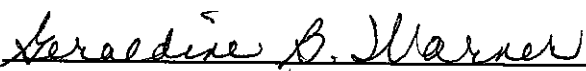
as phone calls and letters rather than social media, were more effective forms of outreach to elected officials and recommended tailoring legislative asks based on the legislator.

Neal Zimmers left the meeting at 12:04 p.m.

Ms. Block asked about alternative sources of funding for the OAC if governmental support eroded. Ms. Warner mentioned the now-shuttered OAC Foundation as a former source. Ms. Damaser referenced the agency's gifts and donations appropriation line item. Ms. Collins observed that the OAC had received large grants from foundations in the past for specific projects, but grants for re-granting were harder to find. Ms. Warner noted that the agency's gifts and donations line item can be subject to rotary raids in times of recession. Ms. Block, Ms. Warner, and Ms. Damaser thought through the idea of creating an endowment. Ms. Warner urged caution, in that creating an endowment itself could lead to a disincentive for public funding. Ms. Damaser added an independent endowment could do anything, including not fund a public agency, regardless of its founding purpose. All three thought it was an idea meriting additional, measured study.

Before adjournment, Darryl Mehaffie complimented the Lines of Sight exhibition of Carmen Herrera's work at the Wexner Center for the Arts, where a reception was held with the Cuban Ambassador. Mr. Hankins shared the dancing plates of Minerva, Ohio, an artistic project which brought the community together around a shared concept and identity. Mr. White invited the board and staff to the Brick Street Art Bash in Marietta, a project in which Ms. Collins had an integral role.

The meeting adjourned at 12:22 p.m.



Geraldine B. Warner
OAC Board Chair



Jane Foulk
OAC Board Secretary