

**OHIO ARTS COUNCIL  
BOARD MEETING  
OCTOBER 4, 2017**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ginger Warner at 10:34 a.m. in the offices of the Ohio Arts Council (OAC) in Columbus. Board members in attendance: Ginger Warner, chair; Susan Allan Block; Caprice Bragg; Juan Cespedes; Robb Hankins; Gary Hanson; Jon Holt; Monica Kridler; Darryl Mehaffie; Farid Naffah; Bill White; Neal Zimmers; and Rep. Mike Duffey. Board members not in attendance: Jim Dicke, vice-chair; Jane Foulk, secretary; Tom Johnson; Sen. Matt Dolan; Sen. Michael Skindell; and Rep. Teresa Fedor. Staff attending: Donna Collins, Dan Katona, Justin Nigro, Ken Emerick, Dia Foley, Brianna Dance, Amanda Etchison, Jim Szekacs, and Chiquita Mullins Lee. Also in attendance: Hilary Damaser, principal assistant attorney general; Bill Behrendt, executive director, Ohio Citizens for the Arts (OCA); Lexie Spring, OCA member services coordinator; and Kayla Draper, OAC fellow.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION by Darryl Mehaffie, seconded by Juan Cespedes, to approve minutes from the committee and board meetings of July 19, 2017. **Motion carried without dissent.**

*Farid Naffah joined the meeting at 10:36 a.m.*

**CHAIRMAN and DIRECTOR'S REPORTS**

Chair Ginger Warner summarized the Poet Laureate Committee's summer meetings. She and her fellow committee members complimented the high quality of candidates for the laureateship as well as the recommendation process, particularly the inclusion of an out-of-state poet to help the committee's review. Neal Zimmers inquired if past candidates applied, Ms. Warner confirmed that several resubmitted and revised their nominations. Responding to Monica Kridler, Ms. Warner said the outgoing laureate did not play a role in recommending the next one to keep the process impartial. Executive Director Donna Collins replied that the outgoing laureate has shared some lessons learned with staff. Responding to Susan Allan Block, Ms. Warner said there was an expectation for the laureate to hold 20 events around the state, but otherwise the laureate was free to shape the laureateship and take on projects. Ms. Warner proposed carrying over the committee assignments from the current fiscal year into the next fiscal year, except for the Executive Committee which is seated separately.

MOTION by Caprice Bragg, seconded by Jon Holt, to ratify and approve the board committee assignments for FY 2018 (except the Executive Committee). **Motion carried without dissent.**

Ms. Collins then provided her report:

- A job opening for a second arts learning coordinator was posted with 202 applications received and an offer made to Jarred Small, a former music educator, ensemble manager, and analyst at the DeVos Institute of Arts Management.

- *State Arts Plan 2020* has been designed with the staff workplan to be developed.
- The agency's grant panel calendar was shared with the board.
- The Ohio Art Education Association named the Ohio Arts Council as the 2017 Distinguished Organization for Art Education, a statewide award.
- Ms. Warner, Ms. Collins, and Deputy Director Dan Katona would be attending the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies Leadership Institute in Portland, Oregon.

*Robb Hankins joined the meeting at 10:52 a.m.*

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ms. Warner reported on the Executive Committee's July meeting. She made particular note of the committee's recommendation to ask board members contribute to a private fund to defray the expenses of board lunches.

MOTION by Juan Cespedes, seconded by Susan Allan Block, to ask board members to contribute to defray the expenses of board lunches. **Motion carried without dissent.**

#### **PROGRAMS, PANELS, AND PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Acting Committee Chair Darryl Mehaffie asked Mr. Katona to summarize the agency's panelist recommendations and selection process.

Robb Hankins complimented the diversity of the recommended panelists. Ms. Warner thanked the staff for their efforts. Ms. Kridler clarified that the board was only reviewing recommendations for panelists and that not every person would become a panelist.

Mr. Katona proceeded to review changes to the FY 2019 *Guidelines*, including the formalization of TeachArtsOhio as a grant program, incorporating the Artist Express and Artist in Residence programs to offer teaching artist residencies of varying length.

MOTION by Monica Kridler, seconded by Neal Zimmers, to approve the panelist recommendations. **Motion carried without dissent.**

MOTION by Darryl Mehaffie, seconded by Caprice Bragg, to approve the FY 2019 *Guidelines*. **Motion carried without dissent.**

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ms. Warner reviewed the morning's Finance Committee proceedings, including the agency's quarterly expenditure report and ratification report.

Mr. Hankins asked for detail on the agency's expenditure to Jerry Yoshitomi, and Ms. Collins detailed Mr. Yoshitomi's work for the agency's Arts Impact Ohio conference, agency staff training, and grantee training.

MOTION by Juan Cespedes, seconded by Susan Allan Block, to approve the quarterly expenditure report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

MOTION by Darryl Mehaffie, seconded by Juan Cespedes, to approve the quarter's ratification report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

Ms. Warner also noted that this was the on-year for funding review by the National Endowment for the Arts for the agency's state partnership agreement. Ms. Collins said drafting of the agency's NEA grant application included all staff, and Mr. Katona thanked the staff for their work and highlighted elements of the narrative.

### **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Warner asked Mr. Katona to review the findings of the agency's constituent satisfaction survey, as provided in a memorandum to the board. Mr. Zimmers asked about the agency's work to simplify the budget worksheet in ARTIE, which had triggered a slightly lower satisfaction rate compared to other elements in the ARTIE system. Mr. Katona spoke of future enhancements to the worksheet that he expected might improve the satisfaction rate and applicants' ease-of-use.

Ms. Warner introduced old business, reminding the board that it had tabled consideration of an ArtSTART grant recommendation for Community Refugee and Immigration Services (CRIS), pending additional staff research. Mr. Katona and Brianna Dance, organizational programs coordinator, shared their findings and impressions of attending a screening of the documentary, also summarized in a memorandum to the board. With the application to the OAC meant to fund brochures, Mr. Katona distributed marketing materials used for the event located on the CRIS website, and Ms. Dance described the artistic elements of the project.

Discussion ensued. Rep. Mike Duffey reviewed the notion of legal status of refugees and immigrants. Ms. Block and Rep. Duffey discussed the political nature of the marketing materials, including use of the word "demonizing." Mr. Zimmers reminded the board the Granville Arts Commission had rejected a similar request for funding from CRIS, determining that the artmaking aspects of the project had been completed and the remainder of the project had political overtones.

Gary Hanson prefaced his comments by saying he believed one of the great strengths of the United States is its open-mindedness toward immigrants. He accepted the staff's assessment. Although he believed that the content of the project might not be political, he was struck by language used by CRIS in its application that the goal of the project is was "an effort to apply art as a means of overturning the negative sentiment" around immigration and that "the medium is the message". Thus, Mr. Hanson viewed the goal as political and did not believe the goal of the project fit with the OAC's restriction against "[a]pplications for projects that

primarily present political...ideas.” Bill White speculated that a different CRIS project might fit within the OAC’s *Guidelines* more squarely than the current application before the board. Ms. Warner observed that this project had already been submitted for panel and board review and could not be altered, but CRIS could apply again in the future with other projects.

*Darryl Mehaffie left the meeting at 11:58 a.m.*

Jon Holt questioned whether the board’s actions were precedential, and Mr. Hankins recognized the difficulty in the issue at hand. He believed if the project presented quality art then it would merit funding. Ms. Kridler wondered if a brochure was produced, and Ms. Collins later said most funding requests were for prospective work, rather than reimbursement. Juan Cespedes noted that the Greater Columbus Arts Council (GCAC) did support a similar funding request from CRIS, although the OAC was in a different position than GCAC. Mr. White observed that CRIS had partnered with other state agencies, and Hilary Damaser clarified that those partnerships were for resettlement programs, rather than art projects. Responding Mr. Holt, Ms. Collins did not believe today’s decision would impact the regular grant panel process going forward. Rep. Duffey also acknowledged the board’s difficult position without seeing the brochure or documentary.

MOTION by Robb Hankins, seconded by Susan Allan Block, not to fund the ArtSTART grant recommendation for CRIS. **Motion carried on an 8-1 vote with two abstentions.** Robb Hankins dissented, and Gary Hanson and Jon Holt abstained from the vote itself.

Ms. Damaser advised that members of a public body have an obligation to vote on agency business. Mr. Cespedes observed that the motion would carry regardless of the abstentions, and Mr. Zimmers clarified that Ms. Damaser’s advice did not appear in state law.

MOTION by Neal Zimmers, seconded by Juan Cespedes, to excuse the abstentions of Gary Hanson and Jon Holt in the preceding motion. **Motion carried without dissent.**

Mr. Hankins shared the work of ArtsinStark to partner with Stark County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery on using public art to cope with the opiate crisis through The Healing Tree project.

The board recessed at 12:26 p.m. and resumed business at 1:30 p.m at the OAC Riffe Gallery.

#### **OHIO CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS (OCA) REPORT**

OCA Executive Director Bill Behrendt reported on the upcoming state capital budget process. He thanked Rep. Duffey for volunteering to present on the topic at the upcoming Creative Ohio: Healthy Communities convening in December. Mr. Behrendt made a standing offer to attend and speak on advocacy at any upcoming public events brought to his attention by

OAC board members. He provided a brief update on Arts Day activities and OCA's advocacy on the NEA's budget.

The meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

~~Geraldine B. Warner~~

Geraldine B. Warner  
OAC Board Chair

(Kinger)

Jane Foulk

Jane Foulk  
OAC Board Secretary