

**OHIO ARTS COUNCIL
BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 15, 2014**

The meeting was called to order by board Chair Jeff Rich at 10:45 a.m. in the offices of the Ohio Arts Council (OAC) in Columbus. In attendance: Jeff Rich, chair; Jane Foulk, secretary; Juan Cespedes; Jim Dicke; Jon Holt; Monica Kridler; Darryl Mehaffie; Neal Zimmers; Senator Eric Kearney; and Representative Michael Stinziano. Absent: Ginger Warner, vice chair; Robb Hankins; Sharon Howard; and Emma Off. Staff attending: Donna Collins, Dan Katona, and Justin Nigro. Staff in partial attendance: Carla Oesterle and Dia Foley. Also in attendance: Goran Babic, administrative aide to Senator Gayle Manning; Linda Woggon, Ohio Citizens for the Arts (OCA) executive director; Angela Sullivan, assistant attorney general; Christy Farnbauch, Strategic Links, LLC; and Bill Blair, OCA legislative counsel.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Jane Foulk, seconded by Juan Cespedes, to approve all minutes from the committee and board meetings on June 19, 2014. **Motion carried without dissent.**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Rich thanked all OAC staff for working together to achieve a seamless transition as the new leadership team of Donna Collins, executive director, and Dan Katona, deputy director, assumed their positions over the summer. Mr. Rich noted that Ms. Collins was recognized as one of the top fifty national arts leaders by a prominent arts blog.

Mr. Rich stated the main orders of business were to discuss and vote on committee assignment revisions, grant ratifications made since the board meeting on June 19, 2014, and panelist and alternate recommendations. He said the board would also hear reports from the Finance Committee on the agency's FY 2014-2015 biennial budget and the FY 2016-2017 budget proposal, including recent submissions to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and Office of Budget and Management (OBM), and would hear updates from Christy Farnbauch of Strategic Links, LLC, from Linda Woggon, the new Ohio Citizens for the Arts (OCA) executive director, and from Bill Blair, OCA legislative counsel.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Collins highlighted items from the "Advancing the OAC Mission" report. In doing so, she noted that staffers Carla Oesterle, Dia Foley, and Kathy Signorino recently celebrated 20 years of service to the OAC. She also reported that:

- The NEA partnership agreement was submitted.
- The OAC is embarking on an engagement tour this November with input from board members and will visit Dayton, Shawnee, Canton, and Piqua. A special event will be held in Columbus in December in partnership with OCA, Heritage Ohio, and the Ohio History Connection. Ten additional meetings will be planned in 2015.
- An OAC staff retreat is being planned where work will continue to finalize the OAC's review of all programs with an eye toward streamlining services and eliminating redundancies. Board member Jane Foulk offered her residence for the retreat.

- Open “office hours” for constituents have begun, including meetings with Pach Atomz, a pyrographic artist, and Tim Tavcar, artistic director of WordStage, who both took great lengths to visit the OAC.
- Reorganization of the OAC’s operations and staff around innovation and investment is underway. One vacant, reclassified position remains open – a deputy director of innovation and engagement who will create opportunities for serving the field beyond grant-making, such as developing webinars, sharing informational resources, and performing research on better ways to serve the public.

Senator Eric Kearney asked Ms. Collins to connect the innovation and investment structure to the OAC’s mission. Ms. Collins explained the OAC’s mission is to fund and support quality arts experiences and can meet that charge through being innovative in its service delivery and wise in its investment of state tax dollars so that all Ohioans have access to the arts. Responding further on the innovation aspect, Ms. Collins said it reflected strengthening Ohio’s communities, artists, and arts organizations by providing them additional resources and tools to find, for example, more sources of support, ways to grow audiences, and improved methods of running arts organizations. She also saw innovation as a way of improving constituents’ engagement with the OAC. Mr. Rich added that over the last fifty years, arts organizations have changed dramatically, so the OAC must change too.

Representative Michael Stinziano joined the meeting at 10:59 a.m., and Goran Babic, administrative aide to Senator Gayle Manning, joined the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Ms. Collins continued:

- Strategic planning work will continue to produce a plan for board members’ review and discussion at their next meeting on January 21, 2015.
- The OAC’s fiftieth anniversary occurs in 2015. Commemorative plans are under consideration, including a special dinner with past and present board members and staff.
- A new idea, conceived by Mary Duffey of the BalletMet Columbus board and currently dubbed “Main Stage to Main Street,” is under exploration. The initiative would focus on bringing urban main stages to rural main streets, increasing arts access through free performances and other forms of engagement.
- The new grants management system, SmartSimple, is under contract. Mr. Katona provided background, summarizing the OAC’s agreement with the Department of Administrative Services to proceed with SmartSimple while the state investigates creating an enterprise-wide system. He projected beta testing would occur in late January in preparation for a full launch on March 9, 2015. The OAC can then proceed to roll out the new system as appropriate.
- Future OAC board meetings in 2015 will occur on January 21, April 15, and July 22, with the Governor’s Awards for the Arts/Arts Day occurring on May 13.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. Rich reviewed revised committee assignments (exempting the Executive Committee) to take effect through June 2015. Sen. Kearney questioned why the Programs, Panels, and Public Policy Committee appeared to have eight members rather than “up to seven members” as stated in its description, and Ms. Collins clarified that chairs do not count toward this limit.

MOTION by Neal Zimmers, seconded by Juan Cespedes, to approve the recommended slates committee assignments. **Motion carried without dissent.**

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Neal Zimmers, acting chair of the Finance Committee, summarized the committee's morning activity, reviewing the FY 2014-2015 OAC budget update, the FY 2014 OAC quarterly expense report, and the committee's discussion on bolstering the OAC's presence at statewide events.

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

GRANT RATIFICATIONS

Mr. Katona reviewed the grant ratification report.

MOTION by Darryl Mehaffie, seconded by Monica Kridler, to approve the grant ratification report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

PANELIST AND ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Rich noted that the morning's Programs, Panels, and Public Policy Committee lacked a quorum, so members instead had a conversation led by committee chair Monica Kridler. Ms. Collins said OAC staff vetted recommended panelists and found them well-qualified to adjudicate grant applications for the next cycle. She said future processes will specifically ensure that panelists will come from diverse geographic areas. Mr. Katona expanded on Ms. Collins' point, stating diversity is a goal across geography, gender, ethnicity, age, organizational size, organizational experience, and prior panel experience.

MOTION by Darryl Mehaffie, seconded by Jon Holt, to approve all panelists and alternate panelists as recommended. **Motion carried without dissent.**

BOARD MEMBER LOCAL NEWS SHARING

Ms. Kridler reported of the successful collaboration between BalletMet Columbus, Opera Columbus, and the Columbus Symphony and Chorus to present *Twisted*. Responding to questions, Ms. Kridler said she believed further collaborations between the three groups may be in the works, and event attendance was excellent.

Darryl Mehaffie informed the board that the Annie Moses Band successfully opened the Darke County Center for the Arts' season.

Sen. Kearney expressed appreciation toward fellow board members for allowing him to serve, observing this was his last meeting before leaving the Senate due to term limits.

Mr. Zimmers thanked Mr. Katona for appearing recently at the Granville Arts Commission.

Mr. Cespedes thanked the staff for improving the OAC's social media presence and content volume, helping to connect the agency to more people, and complimented the current Wexner Center for the Arts exhibition, *Transfigurations*.

Ms. Foulk reported that all Appalachian counties collaborated on applying for capital funds this cycle, resulting in the planned restoration of several opera houses, some of which already have performances scheduled. They also experimented successfully on a conducting a bus tour, which visited several arts organizations this summer.

Mr. Rich also commented on the impressive Wexner collections, especially the Pablo Picasso pieces on exhibit, and told of a recent family trip to Spain to visit the Prado and the Reina Sofia, which is currently showing Picasso's powerful work, *Guernica*.

GUIDELINES UPDATES

Ms. Collins walked through proposed updates to the OAC *Guidelines*, including incorporating the previously board-approved Sustainability upper budget tier threshold increase to \$1.75 million from \$1.5 million; moving out the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship application deadline and Sustainability and Artist in Residence draft deadlines; clarifying grant match language; requiring Creative Economy applicants to state the names of their project partners and clarifying such partners' ineligibility to apply for separate Project Support grants; and prioritizing funding for new applicants to the Big Yellow School Bus program, ahead of those who apply multiple times in the same fiscal year.

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

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

Mr. Rich read a memorandum from Governor Kasich's office on board attendance requirements, which outlines compliance procedures pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 3.17.

Ms. Kridler asked about the Ohio Ethics Commission (OEC) training schedule. Justin Nigro, executive assistant/leadership liaison, explained ways to comply with the governor's executive order requiring ethics training. Responding to Mr. Mehaffie, Mr. Nigro answered that only one training session is required if a member serves on multiple boards or commissions. Responding to Ms. Foulk, Mr. Nigro confirmed ethics training is an annual requirement.

The board recessed for lunch at 11:43 a.m. and resumed business at 12:29 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Rich welcomed Ms. Farnbauch to present the preliminary results of the OAC's September 2014 statewide survey on the arts and culture. Ms. Farnbauch shared the survey's methodology and means of distribution, remarking that the results featured an extremely high confidence interval of 99 percent (± 2 percent) and responses from 5,613 Ohioans with all counties represented. A breakdown by region will be forthcoming. The survey gauged ways Ohioans engage in the arts (e.g., involvement in arts activities, attendance at arts events, and meaningfulness of the arts) and their attitudes towards the arts (e.g., rating the importance and quality of arts experiences, barriers to participation in arts activities, and sentiment toward public funds for the arts). Compared to past benchmarks, Ms. Farnbauch noted that today more Ohioans are aware that public funds are used to support the arts in Ohio and that more believe that public

funds should be invested in the arts. The survey also revealed grantee sentiments about the type of work the OAC supports, barriers to grantees' work, and ways the OAC can support grantees in the future. In terms of next steps, Ms. Farnbauch said that survey data would be further analyzed and benchmarked to federal data; focus groups would be conducted in conjunction with the engagement tour; and the results would be incorporated into the strategic planning process.

Mr. Rich asked for elaboration on ways grantees would like the OAC to support their work in the future, and Ms. Farnbauch listed these specific findings.

Mr. Zimmers related a recent *New York Times* article that reported on the challenges arts organizations face in attracting subscriptions, specifically mid-sized groups. Ms. Farnbauch said this was a national problem, and the OAC could play a role in helping the field grapple with the issue. Innovation could be key here, she noted, and Mr. Rich agreed that this was a longstanding challenge often counteracted through creative marketing and promotion efforts, although it can be difficult to fund such activities.

OHIO CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS (OCA) REPORT

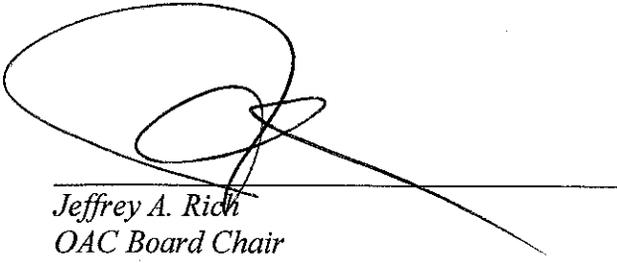
Ms. Woggon expressed excitement at starting her work at the OCA and shared the group's recent activity. Shoshonna Gross was hired as the new operations director, replacing Janelle Hallett who joined the OAC as a grants office associate, and a new class of OCA directors will be elected at OCA's upcoming board meeting on December 10, 2014. Ms. Woggon conveyed her top three priorities for OCA: 1) growing its membership, 2) growing its grassroots advocacy network, and 3) ensuring its technological capabilities can meet its needs.

In federal news, OCA has been pushing for federal appropriations for the NEA; the House is considering flat funding, while the Senate would prefer to add \$4 million to NEA's budget. The Cleveland Playhouse has received one of just 18 arts and education grants from the U.S. Department of Education. National Arts Day is scheduled for March 23-24, 2015, and Arts Day in Ohio will be May 13, 2015; planning meetings are underway. Ms. Woggon will also be working to connect arts organizations to legislators in their districts.

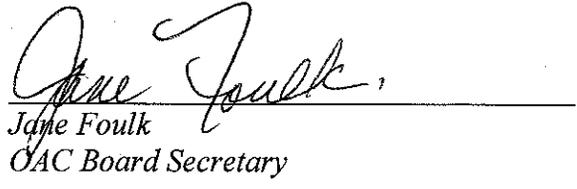
Mr. Blair described the OCA's formation and past work in promoting allocating public funds through the OAC. He emphasized the importance of constituent outreach to legislators in support of arts funding, especially in election years, and complimented the work of Sen. Kearney and Rep. Stinziano. Recognizing OBM's limits on funding levels requested by the OAC, he said OCA will present its own view of appropriate funding levels for the next biennium, which the OCA board will discuss in December. He anticipated it being beyond OBM's limit, expected to advocate for a higher level, and invited the OAC board to join in that advocacy. Even with arts funding comprising a very small portion of the state budget, Mr. Blair said it was always a struggle to maintain or increase arts appropriations. He expressed gratitude at the current administration's efforts to return to funding levels last seen in the Taft administration.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

An audio recording of this discussion is available upon request.



Jeffrey A. Rich
OAC Board Chair



Jane Foulk
OAC Board Secretary