

**OHIO ARTS COUNCIL
PROGRAMS, PANELS & PUBLIC POLICY MEETING
FEBRUARY 13, 2014**

Committee Chair Monica Kridler called the meeting to order at 2:26 p.m. The meeting was held in Room 1932 of the Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, 77 S. High Street, Columbus, Ohio. Committee members present: Monica Kridler, chair; Jim Dicke; Emma Off; and Ginger Warner. Absent: Jane Foulk, Robb Hankins, and Sharon Howard. Staff members present: Julie Henahan, Mary Campbell-Zopf, Missy Ricksecker, Ken Emerick, Dia Foley, Dan Katona, Jim Szekacs and Elizabeth Weinstein.

Executive Director Julie Henahan shared that this meeting was planned to bring the committee up to speed on the data-collection processes that were used during the development of the last strategic plan. Committee Chair Monica Kridler added that the second part of the meeting was to explore new ideas regarding strategic planning that might be used and to look at the vision piece of the picture.

Deputy Director Mary Campbell Zopf reviewed that Ms. Kridler had spent time with her and Ms. Henahan looking over the data-collection tools and resulting reports that were generated during the last planning process and that she wanted the committee to become more familiar with for their future use.

She continued that, as the committee members knew, the agency conducted extensive outreach efforts to ensure that the agency reached a wide range of stakeholders, including constituents, grantees, legislators and the general public during the last planning process. The following methods and tools were used to gather and present information that in turn informed the planning process:

- Statewide listening tours in 13 communities;
- Environmental scan for board and staff to use;
- Statewide Arts & Cultural Opinion Survey;
- Priority-setting exercise by the board and staff;
- Consultant-led stakeholder focus groups for folk and traditional arts, individual artists, organizations—small, mid-sized, and those in the Sustainability (over \$1.5 million);
- Pre-released data from the “Status of Arts Education in Ohio Schools” report.

Ms. Campbell-Zopf asked Ms. Henahan to present a brief overview of the listening tours. Ms. Henahan shared that in the fall of 2008, the OAC launched an extensive two-year listening tour as a prelude to the development of its next strategic plan. More than 1,000 Ohioans participated with the OAC in this statewide conversation. The morning sessions focused on local business and community leaders, and the afternoon session was for local arts and arts education leaders, and the evening session, which was a town-hall meeting format, was for citizens. The point of a listening tour is to listen. Participants addressed a series of questions and staff recorded that information, and then major themes and ideas were identified.

Committee member Ginger Warner asked how they had gotten the people in the 14 communities to come to the sessions. Ms. Henahan replied that they had sent invitations, it was promoted in the local media, we also sent emails to all of our constituents—arts organizations and artists who come in to the agency for support—to help us spread the word, and a variety of other efforts. She continued that several major themes had emerged from the conversations: Heritage and Culture, Creativity and Innovation, Education, Public Policy and Planning, and Community Revitalization and Stabilization. staff noticed right away that wherever they went, the communities had a tremendous pride of place. People loved their hometowns and were proud of their local arts and cultural institutions, their historical and natural resources, and their educational programs in schools, colleges and universities, including their local branch universities. The listening tour provided the basis for some of the other steps taken in the strategic planning process.

Committee member Jim Dicke asked if there were anything really inappropriate that they heard that's worth mentioning because you heard it over and over again. Did somebody say, for example, you ought to be standing on the corner and throwing dollar bills up in the air, or was there some theme that you heard occasionally that made you think "we could never do that."

Ms. Campbell-Zopf replied that the big takeaways from the responses could be found in the headers of the sections of the plan. One of the questions staff asked was "Besides money, what could the Ohio Arts Council do for your community?" If you recall, this was a time in which state and local arts budgets, as well as the size of government, were being reduced. It was an open-ended question that helped them think beyond grants. What we learned was that people wanted to have support for their local arts resources, including the promotion of those resources; arts education for their children; and vibrant downtowns. The business leaders wanted to use their cultural and historic assets to attract new business and keep their communities vibrant. A connection could be seen between the creative economy and what people are hoping to do in their towns to ensure they were viable and interesting places for people to live.

Ms. Henahan added that she had been humbled by the response, especially in smaller communities, that a state agency cared enough to come out and sit down with them for an entire day and listen to what the entire community had to say. Ms. Campbell-Zopf added that their meetings with the business and government leaders took place in coffee shops or restaurants. Community leaders in smaller communities, such as East Liverpool, Archbold and Coshocton, wanted to show off their local assets, including arts and culture, and describe their plans for improving their communities.

Ms. Campbell-Zopf continued that most of the people living in the smaller communities did not know about the OAC and its work. This is not a surprise: when OAC staff members are in the field, they always ask groups what they know about the agency. And generally the answer is—not much. This is one of the most common refrains she has heard joining the staff in 1989. Since this refrain was heard during the listening tours, staff did talk about the agency's mission and work at the end of group sessions.

Ms. Campbell-Zopf then presented an overview of the Statewide Arts & Cultural Opinion

Survey. The e-survey was housed on a proprietary website and sought to determine the extent and nature of citizens' arts and cultural activities. It also looked at frequency of child involvement in arts and cultural activities, identified preferences in cultural needs and explored perceptions of the role of Ohio state government in meeting citizens' cultural needs. She further described a few of the assumptions behind the design of the survey design. One important assumption was that American's participation in the arts is changing because of the increased use of technology. This was born out in a recent NEA survey, which looked at Americans' participation in the arts. Since 1982, the NEA has been tracking arts participation. In 2008, the arts participation survey revealed that for the first time since the survey was introduced in 1982, Americans' participation in the arts had lost ground and declined five percentage points. The drops in participation occurred mainly with major arts institutions, which is interesting.

She continued that when the NEA looked around the country, they saw plenty of people participating in the arts; however, they were not always in the traditional ways that had been tracked through their survey. People were participating in new and innovative ways and often in non-traditional settings. One reason for this change in arts participation is technology.¹ Young people are plugged in and they are downloading music and making videos etc. They see themselves as creators and not just as passive observers. Large, nationally known arts institutions, such as the Metropolitan Opera are broadcasting their performances in movie theatres, symphonies, including the San Francisco Symphony, are broadcasting in ball parks. One of the things that Ms. Kridler has asked the committee to think about is: how is arts participation changing and how might those new trends in the arts participation be reflected through the board's new plan?

Ms. Campbell-Zopf continued describing the assumptions behind the last plan—funding was down and funding streams needed to be diversified, the size of government was reset by design, and private/public partnerships needed to grow. Through the citizen survey, for example, we explored whether Ohioans would be interested in paying more taxes to support parks, history and arts and culture. The survey documented that there was interest in a tax initiative that would benefit arts and culture, history and parks.

The big takeaway from the survey was that Ohioans wanted to:

- Help ensure arts education for all students;
- Help Ohio's communities develop their own local cultural resources;
- Fund professional arts organizations and artists;
- Help ensure arts learning and opportunities for citizens of all ages.

The OAC had many partners across the state who promoted this survey. Staff worked with a wide range of organizations and agencies (70) to promote the survey statewide including, the Donors Forum, county offices on aging, state agencies, including, Department of Aging, Ohio Historical Society, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, etc. The agency's survey had the highest response rate this research company had ever seen with this type of survey. Staff also

¹ The NEA has modified its arts participation survey to reflect trends in arts participation, especially those using new forms of technology.

decided to use some inventive social media approaches, including promotion through Facebook and an ad on Facebook.

OAC Research and Program Development Director Dan Katona shared that the agency was trying to get beyond “the choir,” and things were a little different back then, the OAC Facebook page had many fans and “likes,” but not as many as today, so the agency ran a Facebook ad through the ad service they offer. The OAC showed up as a banner to click on the side, staff targeted it to appear on the friends of friends (not the people who already were fans of the OAC page, but people who were friends of theirs). Facebook reported that around 740,000 people had an impression appear on their screen as they were on Facebook. Of those, 600 people clicked on the ad, and staff assumed that a majority of those who clicked through went on to take the survey. Facebook only charges for click-throughs, so it was a good investment for the agency. It seemed like a good way to get folks involved who probably do not know the OAC.

Ms. Campbell-Zopf added that from the survey results, staff found that 50 percent of the people worked or were involved in the arts in some way, but the other 50 percent were not. So indeed the survey got beyond the usual suspects, and captured a much broader Ohio perspective.

Next the staff shared the environmental scan that was prepared for the consultants. Staff looked at the changing demographics in the state, the health of the cultural sector, the economic and political environment, and the policy and demographic changes in the education sector. That information was used to jumpstart the board’s thinking about conditions in the state and how the agency might act strategically within that environment. The idea behind strategic planning is to understand the conditions the agency is in—have good data—and then plan accordingly. She continued that while many plans have covered 18 months to three years in the past, today plans are typically of a shorter duration and are considered to be better because of the rapidly changing operating environment. In the end, the board wanted the plan to cover a three-year period, and that’s what we did.

During the last process, the board’s work laid a strong foundation from which to plan. Board members:

- Participated in retreats and special presentations and talked one-on-one with staff throughout the planning process;
- Read briefing materials (one supplemental funding strategies and tax initiatives for state arts agencies (SAA); decentralization strategies, grant-making profiles that benchmarked the agency’s work with other like state arts agencies, etc.)
- Identified their individual priorities for OAC programs and services, as well as explored time-sensitive policy issues, such as the 50 percent rule—the rule that 50 percent of the subsidy budget goes to the “majors.” The Priority-Setting Summary Report in your materials shows the results of that exercise.

Ms. Kridler asked how much of the planning process was mandated by the NEA. Ms. Campbell-Zopf replied that the NEA requires that you have a publicly inclusive strategic planning process, a set of metrics to measure the progress of the plan, and other methods for documenting implementation program effectiveness.

The detailed Work Plan of the strategic plan tracks progress with a set of metrics. Goal team leaders are just wrapping up work on this document. The plan officially ended December 31,

2013. Take a look at the work plan to see the degree of change for each performance target. Overall the staff is accomplishing what they set out to do. She emphasized that this work plan will help the agency when it applies to the NEA in the fall. The agency was highly praised for its process, transparency, and diligence. And as everyone knows—what gets measured gets done. If outcomes are not systematically tracked, the plan is probably not being effectively carried out.

The committee thanked Ms. Campbell-Zopf and the staff for their great work on this important job. Ms. Kridler added that incoming Executive Director Donna Collins will lead the next process of developing a strategic plan and she is ready and interested in having input from the board. She is big on gathering the best ideas from whomever. Ms. Kridler continued that she was keen to see what ideas the committee could generate.

Ms. Kridler shared the following initial ideas:

Building off of the idea of “place,”

- Create an arts district in each Ohio City; it would be a home base and over the years would select and show the best of the art in that area, and then maybe one to two times a year, bring the best of that art to Columbus or Cincinnati or wherever, to show the best the state has to offer. There could also be a big celebration around this display of culture and heritage.
- Present an Art Basel Miami-like event at the convention center, similar to a giant trade show for the arts. Hundreds of booths from communities around the state could come together—invite every arts organization, leader, artist, gallery, etc.—and bring and show art together and talk and exchange great ideas together.
- Establish an arts exchange with another state through which the OAC would trade art and artists and contacts and information, and get everyone in the Midwest to have an exchange, and bring artists together and try to find a way for artists to have this kind of exchange.
- Technology, we need to catch up with the times.
- Turn STEM into STEAM and put the OAC behind that. Galvanize educators, constituents, government to make that change. We know that employers want creative thinkers, and that may be something the OAC wants to get behind.

Ms. Campbell-Zopf added that there are also some important things that should be carried forward from the last strategic plan. Staff will prepare a reference list of those things for the board.

Mr. Dicke then stated that museums are in a “trick bag” when it comes to de-accessioning lesser works in their collections. The proceeds of a sale of work from the collection may only be used to purchase additional art, or the museum risks losing its accreditation. Oftentimes the staff time and cost of selling these lesser works is not worth the expected proceeds from the sale, especially if it has to go into an acquisitions fund to buy more art. He proposed that instead of handing the museums money (through the Sustainability programs), the agency could create a state-wide collection that all the state’s museums could share. This would allow them to offload some of their lesser works into a statewide collection for the benefit of all the museums in the state. It would create a brick-and-mortar conservation challenge for the agency, and different from what we have done in the past, so maybe it would be inappropriate for us to do it. But it’s an interesting conversation because it’s a problem museums have that they don’t have a way to

address, and at the same time, we are writing them checks for other kinds of grants, and perhaps we could be killing two birds with one stone.

Ms. Off shared that she thought this would be a good idea, and that the Cincinnati Art Museum had a lot of stuff.

Emma Off left the room at 2:58 p.m.

Ms. Campbell-Zopf added that many state arts agencies (SAAs) work with state art collections. Ms. Henahan shared that if the SAAs do not have the management of the state art collection per se, there may be a state museum. The Hawaii Arts Council, for example is in charge of the state museum.

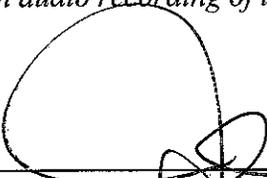
Mr. Dicke suggested that maybe there could be a partnership with the Columbus Museum of Art (because it is in the state capital), whereby they would provide storage and curatorial services for the state collection and the agency could pay them a modest stipend every year to do that. He suggested that this was a conversation that would take time to flesh out, and the agency is not thinking about this for right now, but it is a real problem that museums have. Ms. Henahan agreed, and stated that at any given time museums have only 10-15 percent of their collection in view, and the rest is in storage.

Ms. Warner asked if Mr. Dicke were suggesting that this pool of art would come from the parts of museums' collections that they want to de-accession. Mr. Dicke responded that perhaps the collection could be semi-permanent, offering museums a chance to show work that they don't often get to display. The state collection would borrow that work for a fee or grant so at the end of the day there is something in it for them.

Ms. Campbell-Zopf added that any plan needs strong private-public partnerships to carry out important work, for the talent, expertise and dollars. That's why the agency has so many strong working partnerships. But it would be great to see a stronger business role in OAC partnerships. Mr. Dicke brought up the example of the Detroit Art Institute, which is in a tragic position with no easy way out. He continued that Ms. Off had suggested that the Cincinnati Art Museum had a ton of stuff, and added that there may be five museums in Ohio that all have Ansel Adams collections. And if there were one or two of them that were in multiple museums, the extras could be sold to museums in other states.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

An audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.



Monica Kridler
Programs, Panels & Public Policy
Committee Chair



Jane Foulk
OAC Board Secretary

