

WASHINGTON STATE ARTS COMMISSION – MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 18, 2010 / WEBINAR

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Leann Johnson, Chair
Cindy Hill Finnie, First Vice Chair
Noël Moxley, Second Vice Chair
David Brown
Kent Carlson
John Fraire
Robert Glatzer
Kate Jones
Jean Mandeberg
Bill McKay
Rosita Romero
Brom Wikstrom
Shauna Woods

STAFF PRESENT

Kris Tucker, Executive Director
Mark Gerth
Lisa Jaret
Lou MacMillan
Leslie Pope
Mike Sweney
Alice Taylor
Mayumi Tsutakawa

GUESTS

Mary Langholz, Executive Director, Washington State
Arts Alliance/Alliance Foundation
Amanda Sipher, University of Oregon graduate student

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Monte Bridges
Elizabeth Conner
Maureen Greeley
Representative Larry Haler
Senator Jim Honeyford
Representative Lynn Kessler
Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles
Lanie McMullin
Steve Sneed
Beth Takekawa

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Leann Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm and conducted roll call to verify attendance. She verified that a quorum was present; webinar participation instructions were reviewed.

APPROVE REVISED AGENDA

Chair Johnson said a revised agenda sent to Commissioners before the meeting includes an Executive Session immediately following this business meeting to discuss the March 5, 2010 decision in Thurston County Superior Court. Kathryn Wyatt, Washington State Arts Commission's (WSAC) Assistant Attorney General, will join the Executive Session.

A MOTION to approve the revised agenda of March 15, 2010 (*packet #2*) was made by Commissioner David Brown. It was seconded by Commissioner Rosita Romero. It passed unanimously by voice vote.

Commissioner Shauna Woods asked for clarification on who can attend an Executive Session; Chair Johnson said all Commissioners are asked to attend.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Johnson asked Commissioners to approve the Consent Agenda comprised of the Minutes of the February 1, 2010 Commission Meeting (*packet pp. 5-17*). She asked for comments or corrections from Commissioners or the public; none were forthcoming.

A MOTION to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Commissioner Shauna Woods and seconded by Commissioner Brom Wikstrom. It was approved unanimously by voice vote with no additions or corrections to the minutes of the February 1, 2010 Commission Meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Johnson said her report (*packet p. 1*) notes the good work of the Commission, Interim Committee and WSAC staff in response to a Senate budget proposal that affected WSAC. She thanked the legislative Commissioners, who have been true supporters and advocates for WSAC. Chair Johnson acknowledged the challenge of holding a meeting of this importance over the phone and encouraged Commissioners to participate fully.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Tucker highlighted a few items from her report (*packet pp. 3-4*).

- **Arts in Education:** Tucker said the new Arts in Education Research Initiative publication, *K-12 Arts Education Every Student Every School Every Year*, has been well received, and is available on WSAC's website. She thanked Commissioners working with Lisa Jaret, WSAC Arts in Education Program Manager, on the community meetings throughout the state.
- **Education Leaders Institute:** WSAC's proposal to improve middle school education through engaging students in arts education was accepted by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The five-member Washington team will attend the training in Chicago, along with teams from four other states. Travel expenses will be paid by the NEA. Washington's team includes Tucker, Monte Bridges, Alan Burke, Kathe Taylor, Lynn Eisenhauer and Mark Decker, all with arts education and middle school experience.
- **Poetry Out Loud:** The state finals of the annual poetry recitation contest for high school children will be held this Saturday. Jaret and Mary Lane, a consultant, have worked for months to prepare for this event. High school students memorize poems from an anthology and recite them in a

competition setting similar to a spelling bee. One state finalist goes to the national finals in Washington DC. The program is funded by the NEA. Tucker said Commissioner Fraire is one of the judges.

- **Executive Session:** All Commissioners are invited to attend the executive session to be held by phone today to discuss the recent Thurston County Superior Court ruling by Judge Hicks.
- **Updating WSAC's WACs:** The WACs task force comprised of Commissioners Noël Moxley, Elizabeth Conner, and John Fraire, will convene for orientation in a few weeks. Commissioners can anticipate more information at the May Commission Meeting.
- **WSAC's 50th Anniversary and Governor's Arts & Heritage Awards:** Governor Rosellini established the Arts Commission in 1961. He just celebrated his 100th birthday; Tucker sent him the Commission's best wishes and she hopes to stay in touch with him regarding plans for celebrating the 50th anniversary next year.

Tucker said an invitation was extended to Commissioners to attend the State Auditor's exit conference. She emphasized this is an invitation to participate, not an expectation, and asked to inform her if they plan to attend. Tucker previewed the audit report; there are no major findings or recommendations, with the exception of a few office procedural recommendations. A summary of the audit report will be included in the May Commission Meeting packet and posted on the State Auditor's website in April.

2010 LEGISLATURE – UPDATE AND RECAP

Gerth highlighted bills from this report, which was distributed in the second packet (*packet #2 p. 4A*).

- **WSAC Budget:** The Legislature is in special session, budget passage is pending, and final budget details are still unknown. Tucker will discuss known budget implications later in this meeting.
- **Public Art:** Only one new bill affecting public art was introduced this year; no action occurred on that bill and it is presumed dead.
- **Boards and Commissions:** House Bill 2617 includes language to limit travel reimbursement for Commissioners to attend meetings. The bill passed the Senate Ways and Means Committee, and will be heard in the Senate floor in a few days. If passed, this bill goes into effect July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011; the May 12 Commission Meeting would remain unaffected.
- **4Culture/Arts and Heritage Funding/King County Lodging Tax and Cultural Access Funds:** No scheduling or movement has been made on these bills, as the Legislature focuses on revenue and tax bills. Commissioner David Brown said while those bills may be dead for now, they are likely to be reintroduced next session.

WSAC PLANNING AND BUDGET

Chair Johnson said Commissioners will approve a budget for FY 2011 at the May 12, 2010 meeting in Seattle. This budget will be based on funding approved by the Legislature and the amount of the NEA grant award, which will be announced in the next few weeks.

The budget proposal submitted for Commission approval will be developed by WSAC staff in consultation with the Interim Committee; today's discussion amongst Commissioners will guide them in that process (*packet pp. 19-22*). Commissioners will review the strategic pathways and key themes evident during discussion at the February Commission Meeting, and discuss the priorities for our focus and policy directions to pursue as a Commission. This is an important conversation and an opportunity to provide input on future direction and next steps.

Chair Johnson said WSAC's budget is likely to be at reduced levels into the 2011-2013 biennium and beyond. She said Commissioners need to make decisions that move us forward and make the best use of our resources, for FY 2011 and farther into the future. Chair Johnson asked Tucker to lead the discussion on budget reductions.

Tucker used a PowerPoint slide to show the decline in the WSAC budget over three biennia: 2007-2009, 2009-2011, and 2011-2013. Because of the budget crisis, WSAC's biennium budget has been reduced twice in FY 2010. Even though budget shrinkage was anticipated, the budget is significantly reduced from the level anticipated a year ago.

Tucker said it is likely that the budget for the next biennium, 2011-2013, will remain at, or be less than, the FY 2011 level. The NEA received a slight increase in its budget. The Wallace Foundation funds specifically support the four-year Arts Participation Leadership Initiative, and while these funds do support one staff position and provide some funding for agency administration, they do not offset the reduction in general funds. Lou MacMillan, WSAC Deputy Director, explained Wallace Foundation funds are budgeted to be fully expended at the end of the 2011-2013 biennium. Tucker explained the state general fund grants budget is anticipated to be reduced from approximately \$1.4 million in FY 2009 to \$353,000 in FY 2011. Tucker said all grants are contracts for services, even though the coding differs from other types of contracts. The reductions to grant funding will be reported and monitored. NEA funding is expected to remain relatively flat, so it will not offset cuts in the state general fund budget. These cuts indicate that the Legislature sees grants as a lower priority for state expenditures, when it must consider balancing expenditures and revenues for the state as a whole.

Commissioner Kent Carlson asked what plans are being made to inform existing grants recipients, stakeholders, and constituents about impending funding reductions, so they can plan accordingly. Tucker said two-year grantees have been contacted. When WSAC approves a two-year grant, a separate contract is written for each year, and the agency contract states that the amount is contingent on available funds. Notices were sent in January to grantees that stated these WSAC grants are likely to be reduced 25 to 35 percent in FY 2011.

Chair Johnson reviewed the strategic plan pathways of education, community, stewardship. In discussion groups during the February Commission Meeting, Commissioners made many comments and shared ideas that reaffirmed those pathways. In reviewing notes from those discussion groups, the Interim Committee identified three key themes: communities and statewide reach, arts education, and stewardship of the State Art Collection. These themes align well with the strategic pathways.

Chair Johnson said the Commission must consider how to meet the short-term budget challenges of FY 2011, as well as how to position WSAC to face long-term opportunities and challenges. She referred to page 21 and led a discussion of priorities and directions with reduced resources, as outlined in the packet (*packet p. 21*).

Communities & Statewide Reach: Chair Johnson stated that \$400,000 of the proposed \$556,000 budget reduction must be cut from grants. WSAC staff calculated that next year, grants need to be reduced by 25 to 35 percent. Resuming the Poet Laureate program would require some state funds, as well as approval from the Governor's Office. The Local Arts Initiative was discussed in May 2009 as part of the

“repositioning” proposal to provide some focused effort to develop the arts in local communities. It is budgeted with NEA dollars, so that funding can carry over to FY 2011.

Chair Johnson said there has been discussion in many recent Commission Meetings related to transitioning WSAC grant programs towards supporting specific projects and initiatives. She said the Commission might explore this option more fully next year and potentially pursue a direction change in FY 2012. Chair Johnson called for comments and discussion from Commissioners.

Commissioner Cindy Finnie said the Commission has put a lot of work into the strategic plan and now has an opportunity to do things differently, and in context of the information Chair Johnson has just reviewed, she asked Commissioners what they would like to see staff do to make this transition a positive, less stressful experience for everyone. Chair Johnson supported this line of inquiry.

Commissioner Brown suggested having information on the previous ten years of funding allocations for the various programs, such as folk arts, partnerships, grants, etc.

Commissioner Glatzer said he was concerned the Legislature would regard WSAC’s current budget allocation as a new base line and not increase funding in the future when the economy recovers. He said it is important to inform legislators about the impact of budget cuts on WSAC and arts in Washington, and to redouble efforts to influence legislators to increase the budget at least a little each year as the economy recovers.

Commissioner Brown said he did not believe it was possible for WSAC to be an effective arts commission for the entire state, especially with cuts as proposed. He supports the suggestion to converse with legislators to learn their expectations.

Chair Johnson said while grants are a significant piece of serving the State, with the significant reduction in funding, Commissioners need to consider what else WSAC can do to make a significant impact on the state. She would like to see a map showing where WSAC dollars are spent throughout the state, for grants and otherwise.

Commissioner Jean Mandeberg said WSAC’s grantees and partners may be changing their business models. WSAC may need to respond and develop in different ways than before. Commissioner Romero suggested that WSAC join forces with other organizations that are doing similar work. Commissioner Brown suggested the Commission advocate for cultural access funds and focus effort to support increased funding in the arts. Commissioner Glatzer is interested in building greater awareness of WSAC and its programs in the Spokane area, particularly in regard to arts education. Commissioner Brown suggested focusing on the most important things WSAC does and consider discontinuing some of the least important things.

Commissioner Romero asked if WSAC can learn from other organizations around the nation. Tucker said information about innovations and best practices is available through several sources including Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF), National Association of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), and various informal networks.

Tucker said these comments will be used to develop a budget proposal for Interim Committee review in April.

Arts Education: Chair Johnson noted arts education continues to be a priority, yet WSAC faces a 25 to 35 percent reduction to its arts education grants. Chair Johnson asked Commissioners for further discussion on their concerns and considerations.

Commissioner Brown said the current overhaul of the *No Child Left Behind* program contains a promise to retain and possibly strengthen the arts component. Commissioners can be vocal supporters of that initiative, to ensure arts will be an important part of that program.

Commissioner Carlson asked for a review of restrictions on WSAC and Commissioners in regard to lobbying Congress. Tucker said a focused national advocacy effort would require some advice from the Office of the Governor or Attorney General. Commissioners can engage in lobbying without restrictions when they wear their private citizen hat. NASAA has a lobbyist, tracks arts issues in Congress, and works closely with the NEA. Americans for the Arts coordinates a National Arts Advocacy Day.

Stewardship of the State Art Collection: Chair Johnson reminded Commissioners that they will consider a policy proposal for pooling public artwork allocation funds at the May Commission Meeting. The February 1, 2010 Commission Meeting Minutes (*see page 9-11*) provide a summary. Public art is funded by the Capital Budget. Commissioner Brown said the pooling proposal makes sense.

Commissioner Romero asked whether the budget cuts will affect stewardship and WSAC's ability to keep track of and maintain the State Art Collection. Alice Taylor, WSAC Art in Public Places Program Manager, said the collection has always been tracked but the new database allows more efficient tracking and better reporting.

Administrative Efficiencies: Chair Johnson reviewed administrative efficiencies (*packet p. 22*). Commissioner Carlson and other Commissioners raised concerns about House Bill 2617, which would eliminate travel reimbursements.

Commissioner Carlson said the May 12 meeting will be held at the K&L Gates law office in Seattle. ArtsFund will hold its annual meeting on the same day, and he said the ArtsFund lunch meeting will be attended by many WSAC grantees and local leaders. Commissioner Carlson said he would send an email to Commissioners to ask for their help covering the portion of the lunch that exceeds the state per diem reimbursement rate.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Johnson thanked Commissioners for their participation and concluded the regular business meeting; the Executive Session will commence at 3:15 pm and all Commissioners are invited to attend. She said the Executive Session is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically, RCW 42.30.110(1)(i), to address the March 5, 2010 letter decision entered by Judge Richard Hicks in *Kogan v. Washington State Arts Commission*, Thurston County Superior Court, Number 08-2-02829-9. No further Commission business will be conducted between the close of the Executive Session and adjournment of the regular meeting. At the close of Executive Session, the Commission's regular meeting will be adjourned.

The regular meeting was closed at 3:09 pm for continuation at the Executive Session, and was adjourned at 3:45 pm at the close of the Executive Session.