



## **Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

Monday, February 7, 2011

---

A regular meeting of the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Conference Room at the Idea Center at Playhouse Square, 1375 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio.

The roll call showed Trustees Matt Charboneau, Sari Feldman, Vickie Johnson and Steven Minter to be present. Chris Coburn was absent. It was determined that there was a quorum.

Also in attendance were: CAC Staff: Karen Gahl-Mills, executive director, Jill Paulsen, director of grant programs, Jonah Weinberg, director of external affairs, Meg Harris, director of administration; and Donnie Gill and Stacey Hoffman, program managers.

### **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Trustee Feldman seconded by Trustee Johnson, to approve the minutes of the December 13<sup>th</sup> 2010 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees. Discussion: None. Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

### **2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Gahl-Mills welcomed all in attendance, including Jill Paulsen, the new director of grant programs.

Ms. Gahl-Mills thanked Jane Rosenberg for lending CAC her late husband, Seth's, painting, "Lake Effect". Seth was one of the first Creative Workforce Fellows.

Ms. Gahl-Mills stated that subsequent to posting the board meeting materials, CAC received notice that tax receipts for January were \$1,393,423, approximately \$30k under the forecast. She noted that one month does not make a trend, but that it will be monitored.

Ms. Gahl-Mills added that she would be inviting Barbara Hawley to come and make a presentation about Sunshine and Open Meeting laws, to keep the CAC board up to speed on the latest regulations.

Ms. Gahl-Mills informed all in attendance that they would hear how the charge that the Board gave the staff, to continue to improve existing grant programs and to explore new options and ideas, is being realized.

Ms. Gahl-Mills added that staff would present the findings of a survey done by Burges & Burges. Through this survey, CAC has learned that there is a solid base of support for CAC and that there are some positive impressions of the working being done by CAC in the community. Also learned

is that CAC has some education and outreach to do with a broader group of citizens to explain CAC's work and the positive effect it is having on local communities.

Ms. Gahl-Mills stated that staff would also present the beginnings of how CAC is going to apply "improvements" to the 2012 Project Support program over the next two years. Staff, particularly Stacey Hoffman, has synthesized the data that CAC has been collecting over the past few months. Jill Paulsen has also lent her grantmaking experience to the suggestions for changes that will be presented today.

Ms. Gahl-Mills stated that all in attendance would also hear an informal debriefing about CAC's planning charrette, led by Vickie Johnson & Matt Charboneau. The mission of CAC since its founding has been to sustain the excellence of Cuyahoga County's arts and cultural assets, assets that enrich our lives and enhance our community's appeal. CAC's challenge now: to clearly define the difference that CAC can and should make for the institutions that represent a singular asset for the County and its residents.

Ms. Gahl-Mills stated that the charrette was brought together to explore ideas and brainstorm, not to make any decisions or make policy. At the charrette, CAC heard clearly from a group of respected community leaders that the job of CAC is to invest in the future, not just sustain the arts ecosystem of the present day.

Ms. Gahl-Mills continued, stating that the thinking of the members of the charrette, with CAC, about the future of this agency was invaluable, and the ideas that they helped to surface can help CAC think about the policies that this board should adopt in order to ensure a continued wise investment of taxpayer resources for the coming years.

Ms. Gahl-Mills informed the board of her attendance at the gala open house celebrating the Rainey Institute's new facility on East 55<sup>th</sup> Street on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. She highlighted the upcoming groundbreaking for MOCA's new facility in University Circle. She stated that CAC's partners are investing in the future, even in uncertain times, and CAC is hearing from the community that CAC must be willing to do the same.

Ms. Gahl-Mills shared her desire to highlight an organization or program supported by CAC at each board meeting. She presented a short video on Senior Outreach Services (SOS). SOS is based at the Langston Hughes Center in the Fairfax neighborhood, and was founded on the principles of African village life, in which a community reveres and cares for its elders. A special emphasis is placed on utilizing the arts as a tool for "successful aging". The video presented documented the final culmination of Senior STOMP I, The Rhythms of Africa (September 2009). The elders created their own instruments and learned African rhythms to be performed with a choreographed dance piece.

Ms. Gahl-Mills further stated that SOS received a 2011 Project Support grant for Senior Stomp II, in which the elders will perform choreographed Tai Chi movements while singing a song that they will have composed based on the Langston Hughes poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers". The production will debut at SOS in April and be presented at CSU for Cleveland Senior Day and at area senior centers. They'll be working with musician Baba Jubal Harris, a Creative Workforce Fellowship recipient.

### **3. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Burges & Burges Perceptual Analysis**

Mr. Weinberg informed the Board about the perceptual analysis that was conducted by Burges & Burges between October and December of 2010. It was necessary to take part in this analysis to gain a better understanding of how CAC is perceived in the community. Additionally, this sort of surveying has not been done since CAC was established.

Mr. Weinberg continued, stating that the analysis was completed in two parts; interviews and online surveys.

Mr. Weinberg informed the Board that in-depth interviews were held with thirty-seven individuals who hold a leadership role in the community. The following observations were made:

- Most were familiar with CAC and could describe what it did.
- CAC was generally considered vital to the success of Cuyahoga County & Northeast Ohio
- Strong support for cigarette tax as funding source
- Strong desire to see funding go to viable, sustainable organizations, and not used to prop up those that cannot survive without CAC dollars
- Desire to see dollars spent on programs to expand long-term sustainability of the sector
- Expressed need for CAC to do more to inform the public about its work, in order to assure that the agency is known, understood and valued
- Desire by some to see more work to reach organizations in economically challenged areas, including more minority participation

Mr. Weinberg summarized the interview findings, stating that community leaders continued to have a very positive view of a dedicated, public funding source for the region's arts & culture resources; however, they would like to see more to promote CAC's work and ensure it is as broad-reaching as possible.

Mr. Weinberg stated that the online survey was sent to more than 6,500 individuals, resulting in 578 responses (a response rate of nearly 10%). The following observations were made:

- More than 80% were familiar with CAC
- More than 90% felt that arts and culture were vital to the region
- 65% had a favorable view of CAC
  - About 25% "not sure how they felt at this point"
- 90% in favor of CAC funding for arts and culture
- 80% in favor of the cigarette tax as a funding source & would vote to support renewal
  - 60% would support expanding the funding base to include all tobacco products

Mr. Weinberg summarized the survey findings, stating that 30% of respondents thought CAC awarded fewer than \$10 million while 43% of the respondents had no idea how much grant money was being awarded. 72% of the respondents suggested they would be more supportive of CAC if they knew that only 5% went to administrative costs.

Mr. Weinberg stated that the vast majority of respondents who know CAC, like CAC and would support ongoing, dedicated public-funding for the arts in this region. It is important to note that a

vast majority of the people who are aware of CAC still don't understand what CAC does. CAC has a big opportunity to fill that knowledge gap

Mr. Weinberg informed the Board that continued public outreach was underway with municipalities and community groups, leveraging additional potential cultural partners.

Ms. Feldman asked if the perceptual analysis gave any sense as to whether or not CAC was doing what was expected.

Mr. Weinberg replied that CAC was doing what was stated in Issue 18, but that we could be doing more.

Galen Schuerlein, Vice President at Burges & Burges, stated that there was a lot of support for CAC and that overall the perceptual analysis was a positive exercise. There was some mention of having more local control, not bringing in people from out of state to serve as panelists. There was also some desire for more outreach to smaller organizations.

Mr. Minter asked if the respondents were asked where they got their information from.

Mr. Weinberg confirmed that they had gathered that information; people were getting their general news information online and their arts and cultural information through the organizations they are involved with.

### **Charrette Debrief**

Ms. Johnson reported out on the charrette that was held on January 21. She commented on how exciting it was to see this group of community leaders and arts experts take a full day from their busy schedules to explore opportunities for CAC to make the greatest, most positive impact in our region.

Ms. Johnson continued, stating as a trustee, she came away from the meeting confident that there was a consensus that CAC needs to be more than a check writer; it must to be a transformative force that uses its resources to foster a rich, sustainable arts and culture sector in Cuyahoga County.

Mr. Charboneau added that CAC can affect positive change. He came away from the charrette with the following themes:

- The time is now to go beyond the passive (but substantive) role that CAC has played in the past and invest in our future.
- A bottom up/neighborhood based strategy is key to expanding CAC's reach.
- There is more to consider regarding arts education, and a genuine exploration of options in this area is warranted.

Ms. Gahl-Mills added that the General Operating Support funding provided by CAC has been incredibly important to the sector, but that we can still maintain the integrity of GOS while we explore new ideas.

Tom Schorgl, President and CEO of Community Partnership for Arts and Culture, stated that nothing discussed went against the three campaign promises that consisted of operating support,

project support and support to individual artists. Mr. Schorgl added that this is a new era and CAC needs to respond to the era. There are a lot of different opportunities for CAC to be a national leader in arts and cultural funding.

Deena Epstein, Senior Program Officer at The George Gund Foundation added that it was helpful to look at things from different angles. She asked the question, at the end of ten years, what will have changed?

Ms. Gahl-Mills stated that a more formal summary would be forthcoming.

## **Project Support**

Ms. Paulsen pointed out that what Vicki and Matt noted in their recap of the recent planning charrette, and from what the board has been discussing in recent meetings, there is a “mandate for change.”

Ms. Paulsen reiterated how pleased she was to be here, to have joined the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture team and to be stepping quickly into the exciting work of thinking through how best we can strategically shape the 2012 Project Support grant program to continue its goal of reaching out to new audiences and expanding the breadth of those connected to CAC.

Ms. Paulsen continued, stating that she would be sharing some initial findings, recommendations and plans for the next few months. From the start, CAC has continually evolved its programming with the goal of best meeting the needs of the diverse arts and culture sector and Cuyahoga County as a whole.

Ms. Paulsen stated that the staff had spent several months examining its Project Support grant program, talking with grantees and commissioning research to better understand how CAC can improve the program for the next cycle.

Ms. Paulsen informed the Board that the key issues had been broken into four areas. The first is defining the landscape. With the CPAC research in hand, and our own analysis of the local landscape, it's clear that we have room to re-evaluate how we categorize our grantees and the projects they implement in our community. This would involve moving from a method that focuses on narrow activities (theatre, galleries, murals, etc.) to project categories that are more inclusive. Potential categories include artistic presentation, arts and cultural heritage, arts learning and community cultural development.

Ms. Paulsen continued, stating that while this may just seem like semantics, it will allow CAC to track trends and achievements over time. This expanded framework may eventually lead to tailored goal-setting and applications for each of the four proposed focus areas within project support. With this potential reframing, various types of organizations would have an opportunity to better tell their stories and have their work/grant applications fairly evaluated.

Ms. Hoffman presented information related to the second key issue, expanding access. Through CAC's research it became clear that there are gaps in the current funding model and portfolio of partners/grantees. A geographic gap has been identified along the I-480 corridor and in the southwestern suburbs. There is also a gap in the types of organizations funded. Many

organizations providing arts or cultural programming at a community level are not represented; we would like to identify some smaller, neighborhood-based and more ethnically and racially diverse organizations.

Ms. Hoffman continued, presenting information related to the third key issue, reducing barriers to entry. As a means to broaden CAC's reach, remove barriers and include more organizations in the Project Support pool, CAC is interested in piloting a new small-grants program in 2012 that will attract smaller organizations that have not been able to apply for funding in the past or who have chosen not to participate in our process. Our experience further suggests that some smaller organizations may struggle to meet CAC's current PS eligibility criteria. In our efforts to be responsive to the community, we are considering some changes to the criteria.

Ms. Paulsen reported on the final key issue of aligning our grantmaking programs to ensure that our grant programs measure up to national best practice and to be responsive to community feedback. Several areas will be reevaluated:

- PS grant award amounts---not with the sense that we need to set arbitrary caps or floors, but rather to ensure that awards allow for successful completion of new arts and culture programming
- Consideration to incorporating a mix of in-state and out-of-state experts to serve on future panels.
- All of our work will continue to be done with an increased commitment to community outreach.

Ms. Paulsen stated that staff would use feedback from board members today and in ongoing conversations to draft the 2012 Project Support guidelines for the Board's review and approval in April. Staff would continue to reach out to current/past grant partners, local institutions and CPAC, among others to refine the guidelines. As in the past, our efforts may include a community forum, informal meetings or public comment period for potential PS guideline changes.

Ms. Paulsen opened up the floor for questions and comments.

Megan Van Voorhis, Vice President of Community Partnership for Arts and Culture, stated that the findings from their research had been covered in the key areas presented by staff.

Mr. Minter shared his excitement about the ideas proposed. He asked that staff consider if the small grants make a difference. He suggested that the marketing of the pilot program would become extremely important.

Ms. Gahl-Mills responded to Mr. Minter's comment about modest grants. She referred to the \$1,200 grant given to Foluke Cultural Arts, who was able to provide a safe space after school for children to learn ballet. The small investment made a large difference in this program.

#### **4. BOARD ACTION**

##### **Audit Committee**

Ms. Harris informed the Board that the Audit and Finance Advisory Committee of CAC met on January 26, 2011. The agenda included the review and revision of the Committee Charter and the review and comment on a draft investment policy.

Ms. Harris continued, stating that the charter of the Audit and Finance Committee is reviewed annually to ensure that the charter meets the charge of the committee. The charter was updated to reflect the number of individuals that may serve on the committee, the financial expertise required as a prerequisite for service on the committee, and the need to extend CAC's Ethics Policy to apply to committee members. The revised charter limits the scope of the committee to three key areas that will add the most value to CAC; risk assessment and internal controls, creation of an investment policy and monitoring of adherence to policy and review of the annual financial audit and other audits of financial policies and procedures.

Motion by Trustee Feldman seconded by Trustee Johnson, to approve the new charter of the Audit and Finance Committee. Discussion: None. Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Harris presented the Investment Policy that was reviewed by the Audit and Finance Committee and provided to the Board in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Minter asked if this was just a matter of codifying practices that we already follow.

Ms. Harris confirmed that was the case.

Ms. Feldman commented that it was good to have it in writing.

Motion by Trustee Minter seconded by Trustee Feldman, to approve the new investment policy of the Audit and Finance Committee. Discussion: None. Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

### **2011 Board Workplan**

Ms. Gahl-Mills presented the board workplan for 2011 pointing out that it was a guidepost of work to be completed and that it was a working document.

Motion by Trustee Feldman seconded by Trustee Johnson, to approve the 2011 Board workplan. Discussion: None. Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

### **Contracts**

Ms. Harris informed the Board of the contract entered into with Case Western Reserve University for a series of full day workshops focused on the development of CAC staff.

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **6. OTHER**

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the CAC Board of Trustees is scheduled for Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. at Idea Center.

Motion by Trustee Charboneau seconded by Trustee Feldman to adjourn. Discussion: None. Vote: All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

---

Steven A. Minter, President, Board of Trustees

Attest:

---

Vickie Eaton Johnson, Secretary, Board of Trustees