



**Commission Board Meeting
Thursday, December 9, 2021
Abingdon, Virginia**

Attendees

Commissioners: Asa Jackson, Terry Emory Buntrock, Frazier Millner Armstrong, Jan P. Monroe, Barbara Parker, Amanda Pillion, David Trinkle, MD, and Robert Goudie

Staff: Janet Starke, Casey Polczynski, and Deborah Love (AG Office Liaison)

Virtual: Dr. Dena Jennings, Michael Markley, Laurie Naismith (due to medical exemptions), and Cathy Welborn

Absent: LaTasha Do'zia,

Meeting convened by Asa Jackson (Chair) for the morning convening at 9:08 AM.

Approval of Minutes from the October 7, 2021 Meeting

Motion to approve: David Trinkle

Seconded: Barbara Parker

All approved, with abstention from Robert Goudie

I. IDEA Leading and Learning

Presenter: Dena Jennings

Dr. Dean Jennings presented on the Spectrum of A's related to IDEA

- Adoption
- Adoration
- Affirmation
- Appreciation
- Appropriation

What are the fears our stakeholders have?

Commissioners participated in dialogue/activity about related to the content provided.

Reflections on NASAA's Anti-bias Training

Janet Starke shared reflections on NASAA's recent Anti-bias training, in which most staff and several Commissioners also participated (differing tracks). Commissioners also shared their thoughts on the offering.

II. Executive Director's Report – presented by Janet Starke

Administrative Assistant

- Currently conducting having in-person panel interviews
- Face to face interviews week of December 13, 2021
- Have a candidate identified by Week of December 20, 2021

Deputy Director

- This is an appointed position
- Challenging to fill as 1) difficult to identify candidates by word of mouth with such a varied and needed skillset of experience with finance/budgeting, HR and IT oversight; and 2) given the transition to new leadership
- Looking to reshape this position to shift the primary accounting responsibilities to address the needs for HR, compliance, IT and

Governor's Budget

- Due to be released December 16, 2021
- VCA stressed the importance of increased operating support needed as organizations lead out of the pandemic. Budget request emphasized the integral role of the arts within individual and economic recovery over the past two years.
- Also stressed the need to focus on investment in and strengthening internal infrastructure (resources and human capital)

APA Audit

- Auditors noted improvements since 2019 audit, and staff's evident efforts to address findings
- Also shared that VCA processes more transactions in a given year than other like-sized agencies, suggesting greater case for increased case for support might be better made based on those metrics

Virtual Artist Showcase

- Planning began summer 2021, with the program launching in October 2021; finale released December 8, 2021
- Artist(s) and Venue focused – 24 of the 60 currently included in the VCA's Performing Arts Tour Directory
- Result of direct appeal by the artists when asked for greatest needs during the pandemic; they wanted to still reach audiences
- Artistic/artist diversity was a primary goal, with a regional focus
- Will have longer shelf life—continue because of public domain and individual creative works
- Virginia Tourism is interested in promoting at a later date, in alignment with its Virginia is for Music Lovers campaign

Art Works for VA

- This year, to be a virtual professional development series (4th Wednesday of each month from January through April 2022) 3:30 – 5:00 PM
- Dr. Dena Jennings helping to identify presenters for January (e.g. Justin Harrington—hip hop/folk artist)
- Dominion Energy Foundation is again, interested in supporting, including through partnership on the Art Stars Rewards
- January ArtWorks PD session will align to Arts Advocacy Day
- February - individual artists; March – arts education; April – creative placemaking

Advisory Panel Meetings

- Panel meetings this spring will be held in-person; across the Commonwealth
- Draft panel meeting dates will soon be confirmed and disseminated
- Guidelines and applications released between mid-December and January 4

III. Report from Virginians for the Arts (VFTA) – Beverly Hess, President

- Ongoing planning with McGuireWoods (as administrators)
- Qualitative and Quantitative data talking points will be developed
- VFTA will strategize after budget release (December 16, 2021)
- VFTA will elect new president in January as Hess is stepping down
- Janet recognized Beverly for her leadership of VFTA, noting the strength of collaboration and strategy-building.

IV. Update on Strategic Plan

Janet Starke gave brief overview of current accomplishments to goals. More review to come following outcomes of Governor's budget, General Assembly action.

V. Artist Fellowship Recommendations (Board Book Tab 8)

Commissioner in attendance, Sushmita Mazumdar provided an overview of the Artist Fellowship (Poetry) Advisory Panel

- 37 (thirty-seven) applications reviewed
- Some applications seemed like project grants, which raised the question of a need for micro grants
- Gender identification description needs to be updated to align to IDEA
- Fellowship scoring not yet aligned with IDEA

Budget and Policy Committee proposed an additional allocation of first alternate, Dayan Lee, to fund an additional sixth Fellowship

Motion: Dr. David Trinkle, MD

Seconded: Jan Monroe

All Approved for allocating a 6th Fellowship Award

Motion to approve all of the Artist Fellowship Awards as presented in the Board Book including the sixth Awardee

Motion: Barbara Parker
Seconded: Dr. David Trinkle, MD
All Approved

VI. Teaching Artist Roster (Board Book Tab 9)

Jan Monroe provided an overview of the Teaching Artist Roster panel review that took place on Wednesday, November 17, 2022.

Four (4) applicants applied.

The panel recommended all four, with the staff making the recommendation not to approve one artist whose application was not strong, and whose ability to convey artistry through teaching was not evident; encouraging to reapply at a later date (with more evident, relevant experience).

Motion to approve the three Teaching Artist recommendations as presented in the Board Book.

Motion: Jan Monroe
Seconded: Barbara Parker
All approved

VII. Guidelines for Funding 2022-2023 (Board Book Tab 6)

Mike Markley provided an overview of the draft Guidelines for Funding for FY23
Recommended changes identified in red text provided in the board book

Motion: Dr. David Trinkle, MD
Seconded: Frazier Millner Armstrong
All approved

VIII. American Rescue Plan (ARP)

ARP for GOS (General Operating Support grantees)

Janet Starke shared that 197 of the eligible (current) GOS grantees applied. \$702,500 to be disbursed for funding.

ARP Recovery Grant

- Project Grant and AIE awardees, as well as new organizations who are not current GOS grantees, applied
- 58 applications were submitted
- Guidelines outlined these would be panel reviewed; however all applications were strong and met eligibility
- Staff recommendation to fund **all** of the ARP Recovery grantees, as funding is available

Motion: Amanda Pillion
Seconded: Laurie Naismith
All approved

IX. Reports

Committee Reports

- a. Chair Michael Markley reported on behalf of the Budget and Policy Committee

Introduction-Expansion of the Executive Committee (per the by laws)

Quorum is an issue with only three existing Executive Committee members. This means that the Chair and Vice Chair cannot have any discussion regarding the agency without it being considered a quorum, and therefore necessitate a public meeting.

As was first discussed at the October meeting, the Board should consider expansion to six Executive Committee members; meaning that four members need to be in-person to for the committee to meet. More specifically, Chair Jackson and (Committee) Chair Markley suggested that Committee Chairs would seem most appropriate to fulfill that expansion.

This needs to be discussed by the board for two public meetings before the opportunity to vote by the full Commission Board, with this December meeting fulfilling that requirement. The Board would move to vote at the 3rd quarter meeting (scheduled for February 9, 2022).

Board agreed, in principle, to the intent for revision.

- b. Chair Sushmita Mazmudar reported on behalf of the IDEA Committee
- Committee had a discussion on IDEA progress relative to questions in applications
 - Also discussed a point system (scoring) relative to the integration of IDEA criteria, to be piloted through the FY23 Project Grant applications
- c. Chair Jan Monroe reported on behalf of the Arts in Education Committee
- The Committee discussed the need to determine the background check renewal process (having successfully strengthened the Background Check Policy with last year's significant review/revision of the Policy Manual). The Policy does not actually address the renewal process for VCA Teaching Artists; they currently renew upon their renewal process to the Roster. Committee will discuss and bring forth recommendation at a later date.
 - The Committee also received an update on the Arts Education Data Project, which will be shared in (AIE Coordinator) Casey Polczynski's report.

Staff Reports

Program Coordinator Cathy Welborn reported on the following:

- 960 grants have been processed so far in FY22
- Touring Grants returned to greater levels of submission in summer and fall, as many performances could be held outside
- Anticipated FY23 GOS grantees: 202 long form, 87 short form; others will have the option apply to long form, for a panel review and possible higher priority

Arts in Education Coordinator Casey Polczynski reported on the following:

- Poetry Out Loud (POL) update: all regions have representation, with 40 schools registered. The competition will be hybrid of virtual and in-person.
- Arts Ed Data Project: VDOE got approval for release of all data for the Arts Data Project, specific to public schools, not private. Phase 1 includes schools. Goal is to add a dashboard for pre- and post-COVID data.

Executive Director Janet Starke reported on the following:

APA Audit

- Noted improvement from 2019 audit related to compliance, internal controls, and procedures
- Addressed identified items missing from award letters pertaining to federal funds
- Documentation of admin manuals
- Awareness of challenges
- Legislative Amendment for VCA Foundation identifying this as a fund (rather than a separate entity which is not accurate), whereby interest on funds from license plates and tax check off funds are more directly appropriated to VCA
- (Federal) Awaiting confirmation hearing for new NEH and NEA leadership

X. Public Comment

Chair Asa Jackson invited Public Comment. Beverly Hess, VFTA President and Executive Director of The Arts Factory shared:

- As an arts organization leader, would like to respond to IDEA conversation. How do we quantify IDEA responses in a way that is meaningful without being offensive? Continued challenge for the field.
- IDEA work that includes qualitative information supports the work in reporting that is compassionate and also responsive

XI. Adjournment

Chair Asa Jackson adjourned the meeting at 1:33 PM.