

**OHIO ARTS COUNCIL  
BOARD MEETING  
APRIL 20, 2016**

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Rich at 10:09 a.m. in the offices of the Ohio Arts Council (OAC) in Columbus. Board members in attendance: Jeff Rich, chair; Ginger Warner, vice chair; Jane Foulk, secretary; Susan Allan Block; Caprice Bragg; Juan Cespedes; Robb Hankins; Jon Holt; Tom Johnson; Monica Kridler; Darryl Mehaffie; Farid Naffah; Neal Zimmers; and Sen. Michael Skindell. Board members not in attendance: Jim Dicke, Emma Off, Rep. Mike Duffey, and Rep. Teresa Fedor. Staff attending: Donna Collins, Dan Katona, Justin Nigro, Ken Emerick, Dia Foley, Christy Farnbauch, Hannah Brokenshire, and Kathy Signorino. Also in attendance: Tim Villari, Office of Sen. Gayle Manning; Linda Woggon, executive director, Ohio Citizens for the Arts (OCA); Bill Blair, legislative counsel, OCA; Hilary Damaser, principal assistant attorney general; and Dr. Amit Majmudar, Ohio Poet Laureate. Staff in partial attendance: Chiquita Mullins Lee; Mary Gray; Janelle Hallett; and Kim Turner. Audience in attendance: James Heyneman and Khaty Xiong.

**NEW MEMBER INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME SESSION**

Board Chair Jeff Rich noted the board was now at full capacity and welcomed the most recent appointee, Susan Allan Block of Toledo. Ms. Block said she was honored to join the board and looked forward to getting to know her fellow members. She shared a brief career biography.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION by Jane Foulk, seconded by Ginger Warner, to approve minutes from the board meeting of January 20, 2016. **Motion carried without dissent.**

**CHAIRMAN'S AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Rich asked for Executive Director Donna Collins' report and an update on upcoming special events. Ms. Collins said:

- The agency's biennial audit was underway, and early feedback has indicated no major findings. An official management letter is expected in August.
- Staff supervisors have been trained in the state's e-Performance evaluation system.
- New initiatives (Fund Every County, TeachArtsOhio, Creative Aging Ohio, Main Stage to Main Street) have gone well.
- Constituent office hours continue as well as visits to the field.
- A partnership with TourismOhio to brand Ohio with the arts has begun.
- The Student Art Exhibition in the hallway connecting the Riffe Center to the Statehouse has impressed House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger, so much so that he recorded a video promoting the exhibition and arts education in response.
- New Percent for Art projects continue to be commissioned.
- Speakers for the Arts Impact Ohio conference on May 19 have been set.

On this point, Director of Innovation and Engagement Christy Farnbauch added that the conference was centered on having attendees think about the impact of the arts. She highlighted several speakers. Vice Chair Ginger Warner congratulated staff for their efforts.

Ms. Collins highlighted changes to Ohio's *Poetry Out Loud* program, including the additional of regional semifinals in Cleveland, Dayton, and Columbus. Arts Learning Coordinator Chiquita Mullins Lee reported that the State Finals would be broadcast thanks to WOSU and informed the board that Thomas Ellison, a senior from Chaminade Julienne Catholic High School, is the 2016 state champion.

Ms. Collins continued:

- The OAC's Riffe Gallery is showing *Artists of the Winding Road A-Z* and has artists in the gallery almost daily. Artist Yan Sun will complete live portraits of the House Speaker and State Sen. Troy Balderson as part of the exhibition.
- An event celebrating Ohio Poet Laureate Dr. Amit Majmudar will be held on May 5 at the Governor's Residence.

*Robb Hankins joined the meeting at 10:33 a.m.*

Mr. Rich complimented the Creative Aging Ohio initiative and the staff's efforts to issue grant dollars efficiently, maintaining the same employee head count despite its grant budget doubling in recent years. He also was pleased to see Governor John Kasich emphasize STEAM education (i.e., science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics) in his State of the State. He asked that new board members be oriented to the Council's work.

*Neal Zimmers joined the meeting at 10:38 a.m.*

#### **OHIO CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS (OCA) REPORT**

OCA Executive Director Linda Woggon introduced herself and her organization to newer board members. She reported:

- Ohio had the largest delegation of advocates at National Arts Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C., in March.
- OCA was pleased to partner with the OAC on Arts Day & the Governor's Awards as well as the Arts Impact Ohio conference. OCA will hold a kickoff event in place of its advocacy briefing on the morning of Arts Day. Student advocates will again participate in legislative visits.
- Ginger Warner is the 2016 William R. Joseph Arts Advocacy Medal Award Winner and will be recognized at the Arts Day & Governor's Awards luncheon.
- The National Endowment for the Arts budget increased by \$2 million to \$148 million last federal fiscal year (FFY); an increase this FFY is uncertain.
- OCA members are monitoring the ARTS Act which would streamline the visa process to help attract international guest artists to the United States.

On the ARTS Act, Ms. Warner inquired whether international artists already present in the U.S. would be affected, particularly regarding extending the lengths of existing visas. Ms. Woggon said that it may help with extensions, but was more focused on new visas.

Ms. Woggon continued:

- OCA is working with the Ohio Alliance of Arts Education on implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The act defines arts education as part of a well-rounded education, which advocates consider a victory. OCA is partnering with the Cuyahoga Partnership for Arts and Culture to develop an infographic on ESSA.
- OCA was pleased to see Gov. Kasich, in his State of the State speech, recognize the arts as critical to a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. Policies related to the governor's speech may appear in the next state operating budget.
- OCA has a list of arts and culture capital projects available.

OCA Legislative Counsel Bill Blair explained the impetus behind founding OCA, the organization's main focus on increasing arts funding, and the history of arts funding in Ohio. He urged board members to remain advocates for arts funding. He mentioned that he had been working on developing a compromise related to state legislation banning ivory, and stakeholders continue to negotiate.

*Darryl Mehaffie joined the meeting at 10:58 a.m., and Sen. Michael Skindell left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.*

Robb Hankins asked if Gov. Kasich was expected to promote STEAM education in his State of the State, and Ms. Woggon said she had anticipated it. Mr. Blair recalled few previous governors discussing the arts in the State of the State.

Ms. Collins thanked OCA for their leadership and discussed the May 18 morning and mid-afternoon events of Arts Day & the Governor's Awards, late afternoon Columbus artVentures (i.e., visits to arts groups throughout the city), and an evening reception at the Columbus Museum of Art as well as the May 19 Arts Impact Ohio conference.

Mr. Rich observed that the arts budget of New York City, which has the population of Ohio, is greater than the NEA's budget. In turn, he advocated for dramatic increases to arts funding and a more vibrant arts education program at the national level, especially considering the size of the federal budget.

#### **QUARTERLY EXPENSE REPORT**

Ms. Warner reviewed the second quarter FY 2016 expense report, covering the agency's grant payment procedures and new rent payments. Responding to Ms. Warner, Artist Programs/Percent for Art Director Ken Emerick explained that the Percent for Art expenses only reflect a small portion of the total project budgets.

Responding to Mr. Hankins, Ms. Collins said Big Yellow School Bus applications were going well this year and explained that schools ask for actual transportation expenses, up to \$500. He then asked how panelist fees were determined, and Investment Office Director Dia Foley said panel meetings cover two days and fees take into account mileage and overnight stays. Artist Programs/Percent for Art Coordinator Kathy Signorino explained that Individual Excellence award panelists are typically from out-of-state and receive a flat fee depending on the discipline (i.e., the type and volume of artwork reviewed). Lastly, Mr. Hankins asked for an explanation of TeachArtsOhio, and Ms. Collins briefly described the program as a means of investing in arts education at schools in each of the six JobsOhio regions. Schools were identified based on need, and constituent feedback informed the approach to create longer, semester- or year-long teaching artist residencies. Each site has a different experience depending on the direction each teacher and artist takes.

Responding to Monica Kridler, Ms. Collins said membership dues to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) were paid with a grant, citing that NASAA is a nonprofit and that the payment followed past practice. Ms. Kridler also inquired as to why Victoria Theatre Association received two payments, and Ms. Collins explained that one was a FY 2015 final grant payment and the other was a FY 2016 partial grant payment.

MOTION by Robb Hankins, seconded by Jane Foulk, to accept the quarterly expense report. **Motion carried without dissent.**

#### **GRANT RATIFICATIONS**

Ms. Warner thanked staff for including county and other detail on the grant ratification report.

MOTION by Jon Holt, seconded by Ginger Warner, to accept the grant ratification report, except for ratifications for Beavercreek City School District and Greater Dayton Public Television. **Motion carried without dissent.**

MOTION by Neal Zimmers, seconded by Ginger Warner, to accept the grant ratification for Greater Dayton Public Television. **Motion carried without dissent – Jon Holt left the room for discussion and vote.**

MOTION by Jon Holt, seconded by Jane Foulk, to accept the grant ratification for Beavercreek City School District. **Motion carried without dissent – Jeff Rich left the room for discussion and vote.**

#### **GRANT RECOMMENDATIONS: FY 2016 INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

Mr. Rich reviewed the grant recommendations for the FY 2016 Individual Excellence (IE) awards in this year's categories – choreography, criticism, fiction/nonfiction, music composition, playwriting, and poetry. Mr. Emerick described the panel meeting process, telling the board that the agency does not use the same panelist twice to encourage diverse

winners and that the volume of work reviewed by panelists is impressive. He believed ARTIE would make delivery of material for review easier. Ms. Signorino discussed differences between returning awardees, new awardees, and new applicants, reporting that there were 36 returning awardees (48%) and 16 new awardees (21%). Mr. Emerick said Ohio was one of the first states to grant IE awards, starting in 1978, and the current amount is near the average of other states at \$5,000 per award. He viewed Ohio as extremely generous compared to its peers in terms of number of awards issued. He believed the agency empowered artists who are returning awardees to stay, work, and live in Ohio.

Neal Zimmers asked if artists must submit new work to apply. Ms. Signorino said work must be created within three years, and Mr. Emerick clarified that if an artist is funded, the same work cannot be resubmitted in future applications. Ms. Signorino confirmed to Ms. Block that the agency employs a blind panel process. Ms. Signorino then clarified to Ms. Warner that the agency's organizational funding guideline is that an entity is a new applicant if it has not applied for funding in the last five years, although this guideline was not employed for IE awards in the board book materials. Caprice Bragg asked how panelists were selected, and Mr. Emerick said that he always was looking for new panelists and offered that the board could forward panelist resumes to him. He said anonymous review and potential conflicts of interest meant that out-of-state panelists were preferred, and he went on to say that assembling diverse panels was important, in terms of the type of artist, discipline, age, and academic affiliations, for example. He added that established artists often self-selected out of applying for funding, allowing new and emerging artists to earn awards. He expressed openness to reviewing how to proceed with the program, now that IE awards have been in operation for more than three decades. Mr. Hankins and Mr. Rich complimented the staff's work and the program. Mr. Rich added that affording the cost-of-living in cultural coastal cities is difficult for artists, and thus IE awards allowed artists to remain in Ohio.

MOTION by Monica Kridler, seconded by Jane Foulk, to accept the FY 2016 Individual Excellence grant recommendations. **Motion carried without dissent.**

The board recessed at 11:45 pm. and resumed business at 12:19 p.m.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF OHIO POET LAUREATE DR. AMIT MAJMUDAR**

Mr. Rich introduced Dr. Amit Majmudar, the first Ohio Poet Laureate. Dr. Majmudar reviewed the past four months of laureateship activity. References to Dr. Majmudar as Ohio Poet Laureate have garnered media attention from major Ohio newspapers, CNN, *Time*, the *New York Times*, National Public Radio, medical publications, and a combination of large and small Indian newspapers. He anticipated having 20 readings this year in a variety of venues. In terms of initiatives, he has taken an interdisciplinary approach, combining poetry with other art forms, such as mixing poetry with dance at a performance at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. He is also working to build an Ohio Future Laureates program, which would have one student

in each of the 15 most underprivileged Ohio school districts work with 15 of Ohio's best poets. Students would have their resulting works published online in the *Kenyon Review*.

Mr. Zimmers asked how Dr. Majmudar's appointment was received in Ohio's poetry community, and he reported that Ohio poets were thrilled. He said there was a sense that "Ohio got it right" in forming the laureateship and naming its honoree. Mr. Hankins observed that Dr. Majmudar proves the connection between science, art, and genius. Darryl Mehaffie complimented the Ohio Poet Laureate Selection Committee's work and thanked Dr. Majmudar for his passion. Ms. Warner expressed excitement at seeing Dr. Majmudar again and hearing his work. Responding to Ms. Block, Dr. Majmudar informed the board of several events he had planned with medical schools and hospitals.

Responding to requests from several members of the board, Dr. Majmudar concluded by reading the eponymous poem from *Dothead*, his newest published collection.

#### **OAC STAFF UPDATE – INVESTMENT OFFICE**

Mr. Rich introduced Ms. Foley as well as Investment Associates Kim Turner and Janelle Hallett to the board. Ms. Foley shared that her staff consistently go above and beyond in performing their job duties and make the agency shine brighter. Ms. Hallett said she enjoyed the challenge of learning and helping to develop the agency's new grant system, ARTIE. She administers arts learning grants, Building Cultural Diversity, and joint managers ArtSTART and Sustainability with Ms. Turner. Ms. Turner noted that she is the agency's accessibility coordinator in addition to her role in the Investment Office and helps to administer the Artists with Disabilities Program.

*Monica Kridler left the meeting at 12:43 p.m.*

Ms. Foley provided the board with an update on the 2016 grants season, offering information on application volumes, the panel process, the agency's review of organizational budget information for FY 2017 Sustainability grants, and development of ARTIE. Ms. Collins and Mr. Rich thanked Ms. Foley for her work and leadership.

#### **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Rich reminded the board of the Ohio Ethics Commission's filing requirements for financial disclosure statements in 2016.

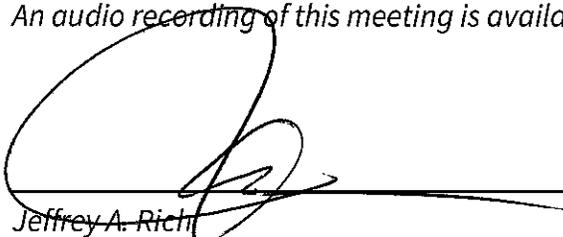
Ms. Collins shared the current FY 2016-2017 budget allocation with the board and mentioned that FY 2017 allocations would be reviewed at the next board meeting after FY 2016 close-out, to see if any adjustments should be made based on constituent need. She added that, with changes to the former Project Support program, an adjustment of allocations might be needed in particular in this area.

Tom Johnson invited board members to view the exhibition in the OAC's Riffe Gallery following the meeting.

Ms. Collins reported on recent visits in the field with Ms. Bragg and Mr. Hankins.

The meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

*An audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.*



---

Jeffrey A. Rich  
OAC Board Chair



---

Jane Foulk  
OAC Board Secretary