

Kentucky Arts Council
Board Meeting
Frankfort
March 16, 2012

Members Present: Todd Lowe, Ron Johnson, Paul Fourshee, Wilma Brown, Carla Bass Miller, Roanne Victor, John Hockensmith, Henrietta Venable Kemp, Jayne Moore Waldrop, Sonya Baker, Randall Vaughn, Josephine Richardson

Members Absent: Andee Rudloff, Everett McCorvey

Others Present: Lori Meadows, Chris Cathers, Suzanne Gray, Sallie Showalter, Dan Strauss, Heidi Caudill, Sandy Etherington

Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet: Deputy Secretary Lindy Casebier

Guests: Madeline Abramson, wife of Lt. Gov. Jerry Abramson; John Snell, Kentucky Crafted artist and Kentucky Crafted: The Market exhibitor

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: Chairman Todd Lowe welcomed all in attendance. Todd introduced Mrs. Abramson and invited board members and arts council staff to introduce themselves. Mrs. Abramson thanked the arts council for asking her to attend the board meeting, saying that it was a great opportunity for her to learn more about the agency and its support for the arts in Kentucky.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

With 12 board members in attendance, Todd declared a quorum to be present.

A motion to approve the Dec. 9, 2011 board minutes was made by Josephine Richardson, seconded by Paul Fourshee. Todd noted one correction. The correction was approved and the motion passed.

COMMENTS BY BOARD CHAIRMAN:

Todd complimented the arts council staff for their hard work. He affirmed that the arts council will find ways to support artists who lost their homes and businesses in the March tornado disasters. Todd addressed changes in the [Kentucky Folklife Program](#), stressing that the arts council is not backing away from folklife. He announced that [Kentucky Crafted artist John Snell](#) would later join the meeting to talk about Kentucky Crafted: The Market from a vendor's perspective.

Todd reported on the situation that occurred with funding for the [Louisville Orchestra](#), one of the Kentucky Arts Partnership (KAP) groups. The orchestra had been awarded a KAP grant, but was not able to fulfill their objective as stated at the grant panel. An ad hoc committee consisting of board members Ron Johnson, Randall Vaughn and Todd Lowe, and Executive Director Lori Meadows and Senior Program Analyst Dan Strauss met to review the issue. They decided it was not appropriate to award the Louisville Orchestra the full amount of their grant and relayed that information to the orchestra, which accepted the reduction. Todd added that the [Louisville Fund for the Arts](#) was also reducing their funding to the orchestra. He emphasized that the arts council cannot take tax payer money and give it to an organization whose survival is in doubt. Todd noted there is nothing in the board's organizational structure that would keep a small

board-led committee from meeting to discuss and act on a pressing situation. Todd invited the board to voice any objections but none were expressed.

REPORT BY TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET:

Todd asked Deputy Secretary Lindy Casebier to provide a cabinet update. Lindy addressed the issue of budget cuts, recognizing that the current reduction of 8.4 percent was more than anticipated. He commented that the agency and cabinet are building infrastructure for more activities in the future. There was little to report about the legislative session, but the cabinet should know by mid-April what the next two years will bring. Lindy congratulated the arts council on the success of [Kentucky Crafted: The Market](#) (March 1 – 4, 2012), which was held in Lexington this year. From his perspective, the vendors appeared pleased with the load-in process and the new venue. Lindy added that the arts council constantly shifts from event to event, but the staff remains consistently professional and adept.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Members were asked to review their abstentions and note if there were any additions or deletions. There were no changes to the list of abstentions.

GRANTS:

Teacher Initiated Program (TIP) grants: This grant supports artist residencies in schools. Schools bring artists in the [Teaching Artist Directory](#) to their classrooms to conduct 1 – 4 week residencies. The panel to review TIP applications met on March 7. It was noted that there were better, but fewer applications. The number of residencies has fallen drastically in some measure due to the removal of the arts and humanities assessment (see [Senate Bill 1](#)). The arts council is making some changes to the program, which will be announced later. One notable change is an increase in the fee paid to the artists: from \$890 to \$1,000 per week. It has been 15 years since the last increase. Some of the artists are now finding their own residencies without the assistance of the arts council, since these residencies are better paying.

TranspARTation Grants: This grant stemmed from the arts education advisory group and their recommendations. Schools can't afford field trips because of the cost of buses. The arts council decided that since the number of TIP applications (which bring artists into schools) was down, schools should have opportunities to take their students to educational activities offered by arts organizations. These activities tie into the [Kentucky Arts and Humanities Program Review](#). Schools will apply directly to the arts council for funds to travel to Kentucky Arts Partnership (KAP) group locations, performances and events. Twelve KAP groups were selected in the first review cycle for consideration by the schools. These KAP groups all have educational programs in place and are already adjudicated. Another round of applications for the KAP groups will take place in June. As for the schools, their applications will be reviewed through an in-house panel. The arts council does not have a specific amount of money allocated at this time for the grant program. The remaining TIP grant funds—ten to fifteen thousand dollars—will support all of the applications for the rest of the year.

A motion to approve funding for these grants was made by Carla Bass Miller, seconded by Jayne Moore Waldrop. The motion passed without objection.

GOVERNANCE PROCESS:

- Advocacy best practices update: Wilma Brown began by thanking Mrs. Abramson and First Lady Jane Beshear for attending the [Cultural Districts press conference](#). Mrs.

Abramson noted that she has family in Horse Cave and knows people are excited about the community's cultural district certification.

Wilma then talked about the importance of Arts Day during which time KAP groups could meet with legislators. The arts council hosted a photo session at the Capitol, an advocacy workshop and an evening reception. These activities provided many opportunities for the arts council to talk to KAP partners. Henrietta could not come to the events in Frankfort, but she sent us information on her advocacy efforts from that day. Wilma recommended that all board members do this if they can't make it to an event.

Wilma also reflected that redistricting could offer board members opportunities to speak to new legislators about the arts.

Jayne Moore Waldrop pointed out that March 20 is the Poetry Out Loud State Finals and April 24 is Kentucky Writers' Day. Todd added that National Art Advocacy Day is April 16 – 17 in Washington, D.C.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OPERATIONAL UPDATE:

- Budget update: The arts council received an 8.4 percent reduction for fiscal years 2013 and 2014. This cut takes the state appropriation down to \$2,771,900. In FY2008 the arts council had a general fund appropriation of \$4,182,500. The arts council general fund appropriation is now lower than the 1993 appropriation. Unfortunately, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) also promises a funding reduction for FY2013. There's no word yet on how much of a cut that will be. Two line items are also included in the draft state budget. One is for Actors Theatre of Louisville (\$100,000 in FY 2013 and 2014). The other is RiverPark Center in Owensboro (\$150,000 for FY 2013 and 2014.)
- Arts Day: This was the first year that Lexington and Louisville groups took their photos at the evening reception. The Lieutenant Governor and Mrs. Abramson attended the event, along with the second highest number of legislators (27). Forty-nine legislators attended the photo sessions at the Capitol and/or the reception. This is a good response that reflects the rise in the number of legislators attending Arts Day over the last five years. As for Arts Day resolutions, the arts council contacted Rep. Jeff Hoover and Sen. Jared Carpenter's offices about sponsoring resolutions in the House and Senate. Not only did Representative Hoover agree, but he took it upon himself to ask Representative Rocky Adkins to co-sponsor a bipartisan resolution. All but three members of the House signed as co-sponsors, totaling 96 representatives. Next year, our goal is that all House members sign the resolution. The arts council wishes to develop good relationships with all legislators, regardless of political party. Kentucky Poet Laureate Maureen Morehead was also invited to read a poem on the House and Senate floors.
- Kentucky Cultural Districts Certification Program: Five communities—Berea, Covington, Horse Cave, Paducah and Danville—received certification in the first application cycle. First Lady Beshear and Mrs. Abramson were present at the announcement, which the arts council appreciates. In some states, the only communities selected are the larger ones. In Kentucky, we are focusing on communities making the effort to use the arts for community and tourism development regardless of size. The arts council plans to do technical assistance for those communities that were and were not selected. This is part of a larger goal of helping communities learn how to integrate the arts into their everyday lives. According to the [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies](#) (NASAA), Kentucky is the 12th state to have a certification program.

- **Kentucky Crafted: The Market:** The move from Louisville to Lexington was a major decision that was discussed at the June 2011 board meeting. The arts council made many changes in how we carried out Market this year. Advertising money was increased by \$10,000. Billboards were done for the first time. The arts council focused more on the idea of the Market being an overall arts market, not just for visual artists. With this in mind, the Kentucky Stage received greater prominence. The admission cost was increased from eight dollars to ten dollars. Discounts were limited to advance ticket purchases and a Groupon deal. Tickets purchased at the desk were full price. Parking was generally free, depending on other events outside our control. The Lexington Center provided excellent support. The atmosphere was fantastic, even with the tornado evacuation.

The arts council staff—which included everyone in the office—worked very hard to make the Market a success. What made the Market a success? For the first time ever, not only did the Market break even, it appears that the Market actually made money. Attendance numbers were around 8,700. This number would have been even higher on that Friday, if not for the storms. What is really important, though, is that the artists seem to be doing well. In the past few years, the number of artists wanting to participate in the Market has been steadily dropping. Another sign of success is that artists are already calling the office, asking how to be included in the Market next year.

- **Poetry Out Loud:** This is a mandated program of the NEA. In Kentucky, the arts council sends teaching artists to work with students in schools. Students learn about poetry, memorize poems and learn to recite these poems in front of an audience. Each school hosts a poetry competition to determine their contender for the state competition, which will be held in Frankfort next week. Twenty-one schools are participating this year. The state winner continues on to the national championship in Washington, D.C. The Kentucky finalists in the past have done very well at the national level.
- **Arts Council Awards and Recognition:** Kentucky Crafted: The Market received the #1 Fair or Festival in the Nation designation for the third year in a row from readers of AmericanStyle magazine. This award has only been in place for ten years. The Market has come in first place for five of those ten years. The arts council also received several awards from the [Kentucky Association of Government Communicators](#) (KAGC) for marketing materials from FY 2011. These materials included the “Discover Art in Kentucky” book, the annual report and videos coordinated by former Arts Education Director Carrie Nath for the TIP and Poetry Out Loud programs. The Governor’s Award website also received an honorable mention. The arts council was the second highest office overall, in terms of awards. This achievement is completely in line with the agency’s goal of increasing communication standards.
- **Other current agency initiatives and projects:** The arts council has been working on several special initiatives, including making it possible for the Commission to Create exhibit at the Governor’s Mansion to travel to the [Kentucky Artisan Center at Berea](#). The arts council sent out a communication last week looking for artists and arts organizations in Kentucky that were affected by the storms. The NEA asked the arts council to gather information on the numbers and types of assistance needed. For the first time, the cabinet offered the arts council a chance to invite a guest to the Kentucky Derby. This guest will be Jonathan Katz, chief executive officer of NASAA, who plans to visit

Kentucky in May. The arts council appreciates this wonderful opportunity, which reflects how the arts are increasingly being seen as part of the state's economic development.

The Power 2 Give initiative implemented by the Fund for the Arts has been very successful. Many arts organizations are raising money to fund projects. The arts council was able to put funds into the pot due to extra amounts released by the cut in the Louisville Orchestra's KAP funding. This money, which is available only for KAP groups, provides another way to leverage funds from other sources.

The arts council submitted its funding application to the NEA. Lori attended the panel review in Washington, D.C. The panel made several comments about our application. One, Kentucky's arts heritage is different from that of other states, which is reflected in the work of the arts council. We focus on our traditions of arts, crafts, music, etc. Two, we were called a "showcase agency." The arts council does so much work with producing events on many levels. This is due in part to mandates within state government, such as the Ryder Cup, World Equestrian Games and the Derby Celebration. As a showcase agency, we work to promote and showcase the arts and artists in Kentucky. In fact, we are increasingly focusing more on showcasing than on grants because of state mandates and a dwindling budget. Three, the panel as a whole had very supportive and enthusiastic words about our resolution that artists should be paid for their work. No other state arts agency has this resolution to their knowledge.

- Staffing update: Craig Kittner, arts marketing director, moved to North Carolina in December to pursue his career as an artist. Several internal changes also took place. Ed Lawrence is transitioning into the arts marketing director position, while we look for a new communications director. Melissa Nesselrode, executive secretary, left the arts council to take a position in another agency. Heidi Caudill, administrative associate, is taking her position. Kate Sprengnether, former program assistant, is the new receptionist. The arts council is still pursuing the idea of creating a new Folklife position, but that remains in question until after the budget is determined.

REVIEW OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

No monitoring reports were required for this meeting.

BOARD DISCUSSION ON ENDS:

The Mission of the Kentucky Arts Council is to create opportunities for the people of Kentucky to value, participate in and benefit from the arts.

Todd opened a discussion on the arts council's grant review process. He asked John Hockensmith, a board member and professional photographer, to comment on his first experience as a reviewer on a grant panel. John replied that it was "enlightening." He had spent his entire career in the business sector and funded his art through his own means. Though John knew as an artist that there was money available from the NEA and the arts council, he was not aware of how it was distributed. His observations as a panelist were that the arts council review process was fair-handed, serious and featured good leadership from Lori.

Carla Bass Miller added that the panel she sat on was fair, but she was troubled by one aspect: some of the applicants did not have professional grant writing skills, which could put their applications at a disadvantage. She referred specifically to schools and teachers who may have never written a grant before. Lori told the board that arts education director Rachel Allen is doing workshops in this area. During these sessions, Rachel meets with teachers and schools

to walk them through the application. She is also available to review applications up until two weeks before a panel. Panel sessions are open to grant applicants. After receiving a response from the panelists, applicants are encouraged to follow up with Rachel and discuss what their weak areas were. Todd said that the arts council staff spends a lot of time looking at applications. Paul Fourshee recommended that applicants take advantage of the review opportunity. Henrietta Kemp responded that review help needs to be more prominent, while Paul countered that procrastination may be the real problem. Lori answered their comments, saying that the review opportunity is listed on the grant application guidelines but that most applications are submitted on the day before and the day of the application deadline. John asked how the arts council reaches out to parochial schools. Lori replied that private schools are difficult to reach; often the arts council has to contact them or vice versa. Todd urged board members to speak for their communities and bring parochial schools to the arts council's attention. Josephine Richardson observed that some people are intimidated by the application process. They are turned down and don't want to try again. Lori described the efforts of a group of artists on the teaching artist directory in Eastern Kentucky to promote the program to schools. She noted that artists need to be strong advocates in the rest of the state.

The board's discussion turned to the two line items in the FY2013 and 2014 budgets. Actors Theatre of Louisville has requested \$100,000 and RiverPark Center in Owensboro requested \$150,000. These amounts are not attached to the arts council budget but the cabinet's budget. If the state budget passes with the line items intact, the money will come out of the cabinet's existing budget. Lindy explained the implications to the board: with no extra funds in the cabinet budget, Secretary Marcheta Sparrow would be forced to find the money somewhere. This might mean cuts to staff positions in order to fund these line items. There are also a lot of worthwhile initiatives across the state that may suffer as well. It all boils down to circumventing the arts council and legitimate means for funding through grants. Lindy commented that all arts organizations are suffering right now. When a group can't get something funded and turns to a line item, these become unfunded mandates. Lori added that Actors Theatre and RiverPark Center are KAP groups and they would receive money from the arts council in addition to line item funding. She reminded everyone about the December 2011 board meeting discussion on line items and their negative consequences for other arts groups in the state. Jayne asked how the line items could affect KAP funding for the two organizations in question. Todd answered that the board could vote to take away their funding, to which Lori agreed, saying it would have to be a board decision at this point. Paul wondered whether there should be a policy about line items and KAP applicants. Todd noted that it would have to be carefully crafted and not something to be rushed into. The difference between capital and line-item funding has to be taken into account. Paul asked whether there was a precedent for voting to take away funding from an individual organization. Ron Johnson replied that the grant letter for KAP groups is carefully worded to make it clear the funds are contingent. He reasoned that the board could vote to create a contingency not to seek line-item funding, and suggested that a board committee could be formed to explore the issue. Paul remarked that the line-item problem needs to be examined for the sake of the rest of the arts council's constituents. Wilma supported Ron's proposal for a committee. Ron added that examining the line-item issue is a matter that falls within the arts council mission. He envisioned a scenario where well-financed and well-connected groups can lobby for line-item funding, while others cannot because of their size, funds, geographic location and political outlook. Though the arts council can assure applicants that it is a level playing field using our system, it is not a level playing field on the line-item front. Todd concurred that a committee may need to be formed.

Chris Cathers, program branch manager, was asked about the vendors' reaction to the relocation of Kentucky Crafted: The Market to Lexington this year. He answered that the artists

were reporting record sales. This is the biggest reward for the arts council staff members, who work very hard to make the Market a good experience for vendors and visitors alike. Chris added that it's always nice to see a smile on the artists' faces. He thanked the board for listening to the staff, looking at the research and taking the risk of moving the event. Jayne commented that she was very pleased as a visitor and shopper at the Market. She also spent some time as a volunteer. Josephine, speaking as a buyer, observed that the venue was very friendly, welcoming and fresh. She liked the fact that parking was free or, at very least, less expensive than in Louisville.

Todd introduced special guest John Snell as a long-standing Kentucky Crafted: The Market participant who was also a vendor at the show this year. Lori explained that the arts council tries to provide business opportunities for artists, with the idea of the arts as a significant industry in the state. As the agency has had to cut some grants and programs, it has been able to work more closely with individual artists. Todd asked John S. to offer his perspective on the statement "artists live and work in a supportive environment."

John S. provided a brief sketch of his background: two degrees in computer science and no formal training as an artist. He developed an interest in photography and traded a friend \$100 and a truckload of firewood for a camera. In 2000, he left his job and set out to pursue his passion for photography. Two years later, in 2002, he joined the Kentucky Crafted Program. His first Market experience came in 2003. Since then, John S. has taken advantage of arts council workshops in marketing, booth design and booth behavior. He felt these workshops assisted him in his evolution as a photographer and marketer in addition to improving his sales. During the 2006 Market, John S. was approached by a publisher who wanted to do a coffee table book on Kentucky. This project grew into a coffee table book on Red River Gorge. According to John S., the Market presented an unusual business opportunity that paid off well. As for the 2012 Market, his sales doubled the average of his sales for the first nine years. He passed around postcards that he designed for this year's show as a marketing tool. He mailed 750 of these postcards to his contacts in Central Kentucky, promoting the Market and his booth. John S. commended the arts council for the additional marketing in Lexington. He stated that he had never seen the traffic flow, energy and enthusiasm at the Market as shown on Saturday (the first public day). Most of his sales were from retail customers, but he also gained some significant contacts. He sold more big pieces at the 2012 Market (\$300 or more) than in any previous year. This speaks well for the Central Kentucky crowd. John S. finished by asking the board to allow the Market to return to Lexington next year.

Lori noted that John S. had told her that he was able to increase his marketing due to the reduced travel expense. Did he usually set aside money for marketing? John S. replied that it depended on his financial situation. This year he didn't have the expense of lodging and food, so he was able to put more money into marketing. He knew of several other artists in the Kentucky Crafted Program who sent out postcards and maintained mailing lists for marketing purposes. Lori mentioned his use of social media and his quick response to a question about the Market posted on the arts council's Facebook page. John S. reflected that Facebook has offered new opportunities for him that never would have been possible, even with a website.

Todd thanked John S. for his comments on the workshops offered by the arts council, since one of the agency's most important activities is offering training opportunities to constituents. He asked whether most artists are aware of these sessions and take advantage of them. John S. replied that there may be a number of people unsure of ways to market their work. He drew attention to artists who are new to the business and that often need marketing skills to provide direction. John S. recommended a workshop on photographing artwork for jurying into galleries,

competitions, exhibits and programs. He noted that he had benefited from having his work professionally photographed by the [Office of Creative Services](#), which was an appointment set up by the arts council for artists in the Kentucky Crafted Program. These appointments are still available at certain times of the year. Lori reflected that there are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of artists in the state who don't know about the arts council and its services.

Paul brought up John S.'s earlier statement that his average sales at the Market had improved this year. Did he think this increase could be attributed to the fact that the 2012 Market was advertised as more of an art market than a craft market? John S. explained that he didn't have a good answer but just knew the visitors to his booth were buying larger pieces. Lori and Chris offered examples of how other areas, such as the literary activities and two days of live music, were highlighted this year. Chris compared the differences between the Louisville and Lexington venues as well as visitor expectations. Sallie Showalter asked John S., who lives in Lexington, if he was aware of the extra promotions such as billboards, articles and interviews. He replied that he had seen the billboard on Nicholasville Road and read an article two days before the Market, but didn't see the TV ads because he doesn't watch much television.

Todd steered the conversation back to the statement "artists live and work in a supportive environment." He asked John S. what sort of grade he would give the arts council on supporting artists, to which he replied, "A." His interactions with the Kentucky Crafted Program have always been positive, the workshops are great and questions are answered. Todd asked whether the arts council is easy to work with, responsive, not overly bureaucratic. John S. answered that he didn't feel like there's a lot of red tape and while the jury process was the most formal dealing he's had with the arts council, it was necessary for fairness and consistency. Todd thanked him for taking the time to offer his perspective.

Wilma led the board meeting evaluation discussion. The following comments were made:

- Lori said the arts council is working with the University of Louisville to do a public art symposium on April 14.
- Paul commented that the Governor's Mansion was a nice venue for the meeting and the lunch was excellent.
- Jayne remarked that it was nice to have Mrs. Abramson in attendance.
- Roanne wished to see more training sessions made available to artists on how to photograph their work for submissions. She always tells artists to contact the arts council for advice.
- Todd thanked the board for their attendance at arts council events and for promoting the Market. He reminded everyone to take advantage of opportunities to talk to legislators about the arts.

Adjournment