

MINUTES: NCAPER SC PLANNING MEETING 1/22/2021

ATTENDANCE: Jan Newcomb, Mollie Quinlan-Hayes, Meghan O'Toole, Barbara Schaffer-Bacon, Susie Surkamer, Amy Schwartzman, James Hafferman, Michael Royce, Cornelia Carey, Ted Berger, Andi Mathis, Lilia Sterling, Eddie Torres, Pam Breux, Tom Clareson, Jennifer Leff, Stephanie Atkins

ABSENT: Kay Takeda, Ruby Lopez Harper, Barbara Davis

CALL TO ORDER: Welcome and call to order by Jan Newcomb: 2:03pm (Meeting Recorded)

Executive Director Year End Update: (Jan) Everyone received my report prior to the meeting. Overall, I want to make note that NCAPER truly rose to the occasion this year, and brought the coalition to the forefront. I think we have come a long way in capacity building in the last two and a half years. Today, I hope we leave with action steps of where we want to go and begin to develop a framework of how to get there. How do we want to work with constituents and other partner organizations? I have been pleased, especially this year, how well we worked with so many partner organizations. I am asking for all of your ideas and thoughts today on our next action steps.

PROJECT UPDATES

OAX, Mollie Quinlan-Hayes: We had two OAX related stories published: a feature article in the December issue of AFTA member magazine Artlink, and an article Tom, Jan and I collaborated on for Chorus America. Things have been quiet through the holidays.

I had good conversations with Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts before the holiday season. Although they don't have an umbrella organization, they are very interested in working with NCAPER as a conduit. They have officially designated two people to work with us: Jim Brace, Arts and Business Council in greater Boston. He would like to be a liaison to our steering committee. And Peter Cook was designated to be my point person who will send out our next wave of information to their entire agency whenever we have it. A great relationship we are building with them.

I have also been working with Lee Grinsted, an archive specialist who works with Tom, about putting together a toolkit to use if an organization has to consolidate, restructure, merge, or close. The toolkit would guide them on housing all of their information, retaining artistic and administrative assets, and institutional knowledge so they can reopen quickly if they come out of this in 2021/22.

Tool Kit may include:

Guidance letter from VLA how to legally suspend your activities - the bare minimum you need to do to maintain Nonprofit status

Template/Guide what each staff person in your organization does (also include board and volunteers)

Institutional Memory Guide/Template - operations of your organization

Guidance on Archiving Your Assets - to preserve your cultural legacy

Decision Tree - outline all the options, so they can weigh their different options

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Currently, I am testing out this idea in the field to find out what is going on right now in the community. Everything seems to be happening in waves at this point. I am also working with Tom and Jan to present this material at the Chorus America and Folk Arts Alliance Conference in February. Also, on my mind is to work on expanding the performing arts slant of the project to include Visual Arts, Digital and Media Arts, as well.

Mollie asked: If anyone has heard or sees data on organization closures/suspensions to please share them with her.

Amy Noted: I know that the toolkit is organization focused. If some of these tools are available for artists, I would hope we push them in that direction as well. Something good for us to think about.

Ted shared that it is projected that a third of museums may close. Mostly he is hearing organizations are running on fumes right now and waiting/holding on for PPE and waiting to make decisions with the new administration. They are not yet looking at the reality of what may happen next. With special note that organizations with physical spaces to maintain are especially struggling at this time.

RAND Report, Amy Schwartzman: Due to the size and detailed content of the RAND report, a special meeting for the steering committee has been suggested. Amy will give a brief presentation on the high points and applicable sections of the report for the steering committee and answer any questions. She expressed it would be good for the steering committee to look at the appendix to find the questionnaire they used and information specific to art/artist organizations and the artisans in Puerto Rico. Then you can formulate your questions in advance. The report is a look at a recovery plan for PR artists and arts organizations. I was hired to come up with courses of actions for what the government there could do for the Arts sector to recover. I think it gives us a way to look at future disasters that happen and certain systems we may want to have in place and actions we take for future disasters.

Amy will reach out to Gretchen Ramos Ruiz who is in PR and focused on this work. Cerf+ and other voices that will enhance our conversation. Look to schedule it in a few weeks to allow others to join us for this special meeting.

Jan suggested we should open up to others who might be interested, in PR, and elsewhere, who might be interested and have future needs for the information.

Corninlia asked that we include Lori Foley, as well.

Amy will also invite someone from RAND. We will schedule a meeting for mid to late February, likely a Friday.

Cornelia expressed that the work of FEMA, and the NEA work done with Andi Mathis, as a model for this work, should be highlighted.

Andi suggested inviting Brian Lusser (sp?) to the meeting. He was in PR with Andi, working to assess the damage to historic structures. He is currently working on a Workforce Development Program and hurricane recovery program.

Barbara Schaffer Bacon suggested that there seems to be a lot of interest in this report and to schedule the meeting with enough time for people to be in attendance.

NCAPER/Reapplication to Mellon Discussion:

Jan opened the discussion with the question, do we (PAR/NCAPER/AR/Cerf+) consider making one proposal to Mellon as our work continues to align and overlap and is towards the same goal? We will have a conversation with Susan from Mellon in March or April. We will need to know what we are asking before we speak to her. Our term report is due to Mellon end of February.

Ted suggested each organization express their thoughts on what would be good, and what would be complicated about a joint proposal?

Cornelia noted that currently CERF has had delays with our Mellon Funding projects. The concern being timing - not sure as to how this will all work. She also acknowledged that there is existing confusion in the marketplace of how all the various organizations interconnect, how they work, and who to contact for what etc. It would be good to help everyone understand each organization's work towards a stronger safety net in the arts. We haven't had a conversation about it with Susan. I know that PAR is discussing their role right now. Cerf is focused on artists around readiness, resilience and emergency relief on artists in craft disciplines. Mellon is more interested in readiness than emergency response. These are preliminary conversations we have had with Mellon. James may have more to add.

James added that as we reconfigure the Mellon project, one piece to consider is Cerf alignment with PAR and NCAPER. We have expressed a desire for stronger more coordinated project activity. So this is a good way to let Susan know we are in conversation about this. A good preview for us.

Tom: The PAR perspective is our grant started 1/1/2020 and will end 12/31/22. Part of our second grant from Mellon, is we need to do a sustainability study as part of the grant. We are doing a survey, focus groups and interviews. We are working with Claudia Back and Advise Arts

so we have an objective third party who knows the field well. We are looking to see if we need to expand beyond the PA to the visual arts? How would we do that? We are not set on where our organizational home is going to be. That is part of the study. And Jan and I have talked about NCAPER to piggy back on the findings of the PAR survey so that we can determine some good information on that. We are using PAR, NCAPER and AR mailing lists to get responses from a wide group.

Jan: Susie is not here but one thing NCAPER would have had by now would be income from the tool but that is not happening yet. The tool is not on the table for us as an income source as we thought it would be. BSB suggested a Coalition fee as that is what we are and makes us unique as opposed to member dues since we are not a membership org. That said we can't live on those alone so without major funding from Mellon or NEA. We need to consider this as we discuss and we do not have other funding as most orgs would.

Tom: With the tool - there is not a problem with the tool itself it is that we are in the process of changing developers due to concerns we had with pricing. The other is the first year of tool subscription was to be underwritten by the PAR grant. So income from the tool would likely in 2021/22

Jan: thank you for that distinction

Cornelia: Do I remember correctly that AR became a project under NCAPER?

Jan: The tool is under NCAPER, not the program.

Cornelia: Can we vote that it be under South Arts?

Jan: NCAPER was there to help people prepare their plans. I also think South Arts has taken stronger ownership of AR.

Cornelia: If we could have some clarification of that relationship in the next meeting that would be good.

Ted: I value what being part of being a coalition is. It is a very important thing. And with what's going on in the field with the constant sense of what an emergency is, I think we need to create as strong an organization as possible without losing the sense of a coalition. I think we are at a moment where this administration is trying to think bigger. And our sector has a broken system and there is awareness right now of that and we can build right now and can take a stand.

Amy: I would like to echo what Ted said. I believe deeply in the value the collective decision making by bringing in different perspectives. I would not like to see a hierarchical organization. A holistic view of readiness and recovery for our entire sector would be excellent. We need to focus on equity and diversity and bring that perspective in and ensuring that it is focused on. We

need to come together as a holistic organization but maintain the coalition. We need networks , thinking structurally...

Tom: I have a concern as the newest org on the block, CERF is a long established org that has staff and grants programs and some activity not supported by grants - so I am not sure about an umbrella organization that would work with such an established organization. I think some places

Cornelia: Also do not think we are the only game in town, Actor's Fund and Music Cares . I want the readiness piece for all the different areas and then we come together. There are a lot of policy issues that have come up and we don't have representation in this coalition....how do we unite us all in a strategic way? Advocacy is important and creates a diagram of who does what and NCAPER being the center for policy and advocacy on what all of us do.

James: I don't think we need to recreate the wheel. There are orgs like this in other sectors. Models we can look at and refine it to what NCAPER decides to be and build on that. It may need to evolve until there is momentum and funding opportunities etc..so now we need a path forward and we recognize that it will evolve.

BSB echoed: combining efforts that overlap with PAR education work - combining overlapping efforts will clean up and clean up the relationship with South Arts. The intertwine of AR and NCAPER was a constant source of confusion and cleaning that up would be beneficial. I am hopeful that the NEA will step up with this new administration. Have the conversation about structure.

Andi Mathis: About structure and award support. We are not allowed to award fiscal agents. So be wary of that as you consider options.

Amy: I don't know if an org that works with a fiscal agent would qualify? We need to explore more. The American bar association and other nations; orgs that get involved with FEMA - we should explore how that happens now so that we can plan along those lines.

Michael: if FEMA can give to a nonprofit why can't they give to NCAPER?

Amy: missed the response...getting \$ happens in various kinds of way and the ways are not always the same FEMA region to region. I think there is value to FEMA understanding how they work.

(Susie arrived at the meeting.)

Ted: Longer term proposal makes sense to me with a venn diagram. Show there is a path but we need time to build this capacity and keep the coalition approach. Short term mid term, long term.

Jan brought Susie up to speed asked about AR and NCAPER

Susie: We are finishing the product but not in the original time projected. Launched if lucky in early summer. The plan is still NEDCC will host the platform and SA will still be involved and NCAPER will market it when they do seminars.

Jan: It will still be managed by SA, the webpage etc will be maintained by SA.

Mollie: We just did a refresh of the AR webpage with links to all of our partner organizations. We are aware that there is confusion in the marketplace of who to contact for what.

Jan: I like the short, mid and long term goals idea. It has taken awhile to get here. I also like the coalition and not spending all our time being a 501c3.

Cornelia: We did a business plan years ago and we might want to dust that off and look at it. With the new Administration should we have another NEA gathering? To have different federal partners involved in this space. Revisit some of these things we have done as building blocks.

Andi: 2016 after the convening.

Ted: Convening is important from a policy space. This coalition needs to be seen as the one that knows all things about emergencies. We should have a conference for the field. This is now becoming a field wide concern and there are different things that they all need to know and income from it could sustain the coalition.

Amy: There is a legal way for a coalition to be a 501c3.

Andi:

Tom: The idea of a national conference - when we did a proposal for the NCAPER grants should be a national conference as part of - we said no but....what about having a web conference. There may be a need to try to do something along the lines of what Ted is suggesting and then if NCAPER has it on an ongoing basis.

BSB: I added the link from the 2016 convening. To me it is the representation and participation of agencies and organizations that is the important part of this. It makes sense to work with NEA... PR (missed this..) .I would like our agencies to have a place where policies are set in this regard.

Amy: A lot of local agencies need guidance on cultivating a relationship with their local FEMA people.

Jan: The field guide will be including some of that and will start being developed by this June. So it can be building on that.

Pam: Agree S, M L term strategies. Obvious connection to the pandemic and how NCAPER is willing to navigate that . mid term strategy around a convening - take time to target well with something that will resonate across the field to then create the needs and expectations of the arts field. So we need it to be compelling. The Arts put readiness on the way back burner. Long term about the evolution of NCAPER - I feel ill equipped right now to answer that I think that assembling some data that helps us see multi year to think about that evolution. We may think it should evolve in the policy field, with the pandemic,I am missing context to think a few years. Social media - is this where our efforts should remain? WHERE HAVE WE been most successful or least successful? Then look at our evolution.

James: Are you anticipating a mini thought leader committee or are the three organizations coming together?

Jan: A joint proposal at this point is not possible. NCAPER needs new support by January 2022. We are meeting but are not in sync with each other's programs. (missed this) Social media was not even there 18 months ago. It is a bit of a frustrating cart before the horse, in so many ways we are just beginning. That is what is difficult for me as to how we get there and what we want to be? Do we need to look for a more diverse coalition?

Ted: BIPOC communities in times of disasters / emergencies is something we need to address. This proposal over a multi year period we need to do - advance the work of what everyone is doing.

Amy: brought together post Katrina we need to come together to help and build our sector (missed it) short term goal is to figure out how we fit together? There is an urgency due to the pandemic, so now we realize there are all these different levels out there. To figure out how we move forward to build a national voice of this issue.

Cornelia: it has always been a coalition of the willing. It needs to be presented as meaningful to the organizations that we want. They have to see meaning and relevance in the work.

Susie: Pandemic does put NCAPER in unique positions is to be able to look at where we have come in this grant period and now due to pandemic need to reexamine something and where is this country right now for readiness - re looking at things. Our SC who should be at the table when we look at the future of who might be at the table, especially when you look at the less staffed organization, less funded, sometimes they are so small that for them to take the time to participate in a coalition like this and how we operate might be too much for them. Do we look at paying some people's time? An advisory committee? Stipend to some if they are small but want to be involved?

James: Similar to the structure is the What we are right now may not be the way we go forward. (Missed it) the umbrella organization NCWO is a model where you are allowed to have the participation but not be on the SC. Look at the SC model of ours (missed it)

Tom: We may not be able to turn in a joint project but if we start from today's meeting and spend much of this year how we can become the true support organization but we need more time. Maybe some have paid time to look at the joint proposal happen at end of 2022? Figuring things out but rallying a bit more in such a short time frame.

Amy: Can we talk to Susan and Mellon about this before we do this?

Jan: That will need to happen in March/April.

Tom: in the next year possible to build in whatever needed for NCAPER capacity. Whatever will be needed for convening. Whatever will be needed for a convergence format. And whatever will be needed to build for next year's stronger coalition - we are building the capacity to build capacity.

Amy: I have a different view. This field is the urgent of the moment and is the time to act - we are in a moment with the world moving swiftly around us. I do think the look now is vital so that we move quickly to take advantage of what is happening now.

Cornelia: 2006 convening there was about 40 of us with 6 reports fresh from Katrina and drawing on experience from other disasters. Just giving us an opportunity to hear what gains we have made in this time and ways to not lose lessons learned. It served as a strong surge forward. I think we don't want to sit on lessons learned this year. But we also sit still facing the pandemic.

Amy: The NYC culture@3 formed a huge infrastructure that is nimble they formed working groups leaders from the field come to them . They intend to last beyond the covid crisis and the urgency of the times that brought them together. It is possible to do work in this way? A lot can get done quickly and informally when they feel the need is there. Take advantage of the moment.

BSB: I keep hearing this is the moment for policy. Yes to publications and education work but if the coalition can set its activity to how it is communications, steering and activating and can bring what people are doing back to the group. A strategic policy will emerge. A short term strategy where you want to be most active. I think it will get you to the structure of what you want to talk to Mellon or NEA. Add in to one of the grants into the other. I think that Mellon will be most impressed with policy action, not what you are talking about and laying the seeds for convening at the right moments.

Cornelia: Amy you had an idea of codifying all arts orgs and arts (missed it) getting each member of our SC to join our local emergency organizations and hear what is going on. How does what they are discussing inform our work? Also we have a conference in PR coming up in the fall to learn about what (Missed it)

Ted: Is there a way of looking where there are natural clusters where we could start these policy discussions? Convening in different ways but as equals but they take it to their local officials to inform a larger group.

Tom: Part of our grant is to bring together some of our existing networks - is this a way we can start doing that relatively quickly. Work we did at GIA last Nov/Dec we are getting a lot of calls that we never had before. Does some of what Amy has done and what Jan and I have done in CA come together to convene and distribute....

Amy: Diversity issue and equity issues need to be brought into any of those discussions.

Stephanie Atkins: There are a handful of groups that are overlapping. All of them are focusing on equity but the collectives are definitely mixed and even within that the purpose of coming together is to serve the arts sector (.missed the end)

BSB: Groups are not at organizational status yet. Huge state of flux right now. They don't know if they will be disappearing or a glut of work that will be coming. Perhaps have some bond money (missed it)

Ted: Mellon has a much greater interest with BIPOC agencies and looking at systemic policy issues

Amy: We have mobilized around natural disasters, there are also chronic disasters and it affects the outcomes of other disastersAmelia Brown was working in the arts emergency space in Minneapolis. Some say she is irreplaceable, I feel a need to insure that this work continues in this way. We are in three disasters and paralleling what the Biden administration is thinking about. Very practical level to think of 50c4 if we are looking at the advocacy space.

Eddie: I can send some information about the advocacy sector if that would be helpful.

Ted: Is there something we can do to follow in her name? She was committed to disaster issues.

James: She was the author of our Springboard for the Arts - anything we can do in her name would be really great.

Susie: Conversation has been rich. The Committee of Pam, Michael, and myself and try to take all the ideas and come back to you with our work.

Jan: I do like the idea that the institutes can be vitally involved.

Susie: Please make sure this is all in the notes. (we can make the recording available ;))

Amy: if we have additional thoughts do we send them to the proposal committee?

Susie: Yes send to the committee and Jan and Meghan

Cornelia: Cerf+ if anyone is interested in

Tom: When will the PR program happen? In February? Is it a strike while the iron is hot - just thinking about it shine you have the presentation to Susan so soon.

Amy: Even if we don't meet on the PR thing in Feb. maybe see where the questions ...
Lessons learned there and questions that remain.

We will get these notes out soon and if you want to add to them sooner rather than later that would be great.

ADJOURNMENT: 4pm