



## NCAPER Steering Committee Quarterly Meeting Minutes September 25, 2020 3-4:30 PM Eastern via Zoom

**Attendees:** Amy Schwartzman, Pam Breaux, Andi Mathis, Barbara Davis, Ted Berger, Mollie Quinlan-Hayes, Tom Claerson, Jennifer Leff, Ruby Lopez Harper, Lilia Sterling, Susie Surkamer, Cornelia Carey, Stephanie Atkins. **Staff:** Jan Newcomb, Meghan O'Toole **Guest speaker:** Kate Durio, Sound Diplomacy  
**Absent/Excused:** Michael Royce, Tom Simplot, Eddie Torres, Kay Takeda, James Hafferman

**CALL TO ORDER:** Barbara Davis called meeting to order at 3:03 PM

**MINUTES of the June 12, 2020 meeting:** T. Berger moved to accept them; P. Breaux seconded. Motion passed.

**GUEST SPEAKER, Kate Durio, Senior US Project Lead, Sound Diplomacy (working out of Lafayette, LA) was introduced by J. Newcomb**

**Kate Durio:** Sound Diplomacy is a multilingual, global team working in music advocacy and thought leadership. All of our work builds and uses data to back up the music ecosystem. We defined the 'music cities model', which uses music and culture in a deliberate and intentional way to deliver economic, social and cultural growth in cities and places. We are the global leading team of researchers, data analysts, economists and strategic consultants, with extensive expertise in the music industry, music economics, cultural planning and placemaking.

Throughout the year we have online webinars and other resources that you can access. Twice a year we put out different resource guides that we find are reactive to whatever is going on. Obviously 2020 has been a banner year for things to react to. Earlier this year we released The Better Music Cities Guide, and it's a handbook available for free on our website. It lists things that communities can work on to be more music supportive, music friendly, music helpful in their own communities related to things like a cultural plan. We've also released a Reopening Guide for how venues, audiences and musicians can safely reopen and safe operation of venues for events. And then we also put together a Covid-19 Resource Guide to help musicians, music agencies, communities, venues, gain access to resources of any kind. This was back in June, it focused on financial resources, health and wellness, professional development, education. CARESformusic.com Tool Kit released this week can be used for any arts discipline.

**Q&A Discussion:**

**A. Schwartzman – is Sound Diplomacy for profit or nonprofit?**

**K. Durio -** We are a for profit company, but we have the paperwork filed to open a non-profit based in Huntsville. We have a lot of partners there that that's where our physical office and domicile is going to be for the non-profit. And the purpose of the nonprofit is really to do more work like CAREFORMUSIC. It's about being a thought leader and about providing resources to equip people with this information and benefit from the for-profit side. Currently, we are a for profit consultancy group. The majority of our work is with individual communities. Our clients are typically local city, government or county, state, regional government, economic development offices, tourism foundations, chambers of commerce.

**T. Berger – how do you define the music eco-system? How do you get your information? How did you get the information from the government about what moneys are remaining in their CARES pool?**

**K. Durio -** We think that music is just a part of a bigger cultural ecosystem. These are all interdisciplinary and interconnected economies. Whether we're talking about hotel and hospitality, restaurants, bars, music venues, strict music venues or these mixed-use venues that are bar/ restaurants, or amusement parks. We are working on a plan in Orlando right now about their night-time economy. We do think of the ecosystem including not for profit sector, as well. When we do our asset mapping, the ecosystem includes all of recording production venues, performance and rehearsal spaces, individual artists, music education, choirs, not for profit festivals, events, those types of things, as well. **Information gathering:** First we scrub the Internet and talk to some of our more connected people locally on the ground to find out that baseline information. And then we typically form a committee of local stakeholders that are ultimately going to be tasked with the execution of the recommendation strategy that we give them at the end of the project. We send them this baseline and say we know we're missing things. Please help us by sending us your list and

then we can import those databases that exist. **Government spending information:** The US Treasury Department has an interim report that they keep updating about once a month, and it's linked in the toolkit. It shows exactly how much each state, county and city got. Then it's broken down into categories of expenditure to date. At the end, it shows you the percentage of spend rate, so we can see, to a point, how that money has been allocated and spent.

**S. Atkins:** Thank you! I'm with the National Performance Network and I'm based in New Orleans. And I've been on a few calls. We have some local response groups, creative response groups, and we've been talking about exactly what you're talking about, trying to access this funding. Is it only allocated for city municipalities?

**K. Durio:** So, it's a little bit of the wild, wild west out there, there are no rules. We look to align with partners to strengthen our strategy.

**J. Newcomb** thanked Kate for her time on such short notice and for the valuable information.

## UPDATES FROM STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### **Pam Breaux - NASAA**

SAA's have been working hard to access the CARES money with their respective Governors. As of today, we know that nine states have acquired some of this additional Cares Act funding through their Governors' offices. The total allocation across those states is \$115.5M. And we know that nine others are already in progress with their asks. Where we don't have active asks, the SAAs are using the models from the 18 states, to advance their own asks. I'll list the states that have had success and are able to distribute the dollars. It's Arizona, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont and Wisconsin. So, you heard that the Oregon ask was \$50M which is almost half of the \$115M. The median ask IS \$10/20M. The playing field is a little more nuanced, than perhaps Kate realizes, inside of state government. But it doesn't mean that folks shouldn't be advocating for it. There's also a political reason to press pause, from the vantage point of a Governor's office, depending upon how much more they can count on or not from the federal government. Depending upon their updated revenue projections, which have been particularly hard this year, to grapple with for a host of reasons, including not knowing whether they can count on the federal government for substantial aid as requested makes it tricky. The revenue reports, I think, will get more solid after the elections for a host of reasons.

### **Cornelia Carey – CERF+**

Since the Covid-19 shutdown happened CERF+ has focused on advocacy for artists – studio-based visual artists. And that is a piece of work that I think all of us need to think very seriously about because that constituency is really underrepresented at the advocacy table and certainly could benefit from all kinds of lobbying and other things. I am very interested in talking to other organizations that work with individual artists and studio-based artists about whether we can work together and support that important seat at the table.

CERF+ has also invested significantly in resource development and participating in webinars. We launched a fast-moving relief program that was timed with the end of the unemployment supplement and have now completed the second cycle. We distributed \$646,000 to 606 artists throughout the US and US territories. There was a large diversity in the pool of applicants. We are also seeing a significant uptick in our general emergency relief program. So far we've helped 122 artists with \$365,000 of relief. There was a heavy amount of applications from artists in Puerto Rico with the earthquakes and ongoing challenges there. And then more recently, wildfires in California, Oregon and Washington state in particular.

We've been doing a lot of outreach and effort, both major hurricanes, Sally and Laura, and have already begun to hear from some artists there. So, it's just one of those years that's never ending. Our budget for this year was supposed to be \$1.2M and we're now at \$2.7M. We have fortunately been able to keep up with the demand on our resources, but I have no idea what next year is going to look like. I think our most important work has been in the advocacy space and because that's where the big dollars are and that is not existent right now. People, especially in this last round of applications, gave particularly dire comments about housing - people living in cars, - people having to stay in abusive households and a range of other very concerning things. I also keep on wanting to push along this idea of tracking all of this work in real time. We've talked a lot about whether we can join forces and get some consistency on how we collect data:

- What do we need immediately following disasters?

- What do we need in the interim and long term?
- Can we all work together so we're not all collecting different pieces of information that don't sync up?

Also, the idea of common applications with so many of the artists that applied to our last two rounds had no experience applying for grants. There is a need for us to work on common applications to ease that process, but also, to help people understand how to best present themselves. These are the things that I've been spending time contemplating and trying to figure out, of course, with many of you. I appreciate this network and the work of all of your organizations.

On our Mellon funded project, each of our three pilot sites are moving ahead at different paces:

1. **Springboard for the Arts** is doing some really incredible work in artists roles, in community challenges, and has been able to move along a number of agenda items related to its planning in that project.
2. **Artist Trust** has gone through some significant challenges. It is now going to be looking for a new executive director but plans to continue the work.
3. **Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge** is doing its planning and networking.

We've been talking with Tom and Jan about how to sync up our projects. We have some ideas which I think are terrific, and we just continue to build stronger mechanisms for responding to artists before, during and after disasters.

### Tom Claeson – Performing Arts Readiness project

Like Cornelia said at the end of her discussion, we have worked with CERF+, and NCAPER, and closely with Mollie in a number of areas and have been doing quarterly calls, if not a little bit more often with Cornelia and James particularly to talk about some of the pilot sites we have.

PAR's main focus has been developing new webinars. Two of them just debuted within the past week. One is on **virtualizing performances**; Matthew Kowal, from Denver, who is serving as our festival safety coordinator and consultant, presented it to 95/100 people in that session. We had a session on **using the pocket readiness resource** that Mollie put together to coincide with the release of the PRR on September 1st. Mollie is giving September, October and November classes to get people thinking about how to use that tool. We have a session from a former fire chief in North Carolina who is talking about **fire safety for arts organizations** that debuts on October 14th. And then we have a section on **business continuity**, which has been a live session for years, and we've just turned that into a webinar. We have added about another third to the number of webinars that we have.

We are in the process of getting our planning grants awarded. We had 42 spots and 69 applications which is akin to trying to fit 15 cats into a bag. We have begun awarding some and we have a few groups that we are going to go back and look at during the next week to try to make some more awards. Also, we have begun to award network grants, one is in Gretna, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania area, another in the Duluth and northern Minnesota area, and finally also one in Puerto Rico that was just awarded. That group is working with everybody from FEMA staff to other arts groups, and we're looking forward to their activities. Finally, we have another competitive program called the Circuit Rider Program. We are able to support 3 consultants for 18 months, half time/half salary and 2 consultants for 12 months to really do a localized activity of helping people write plans, giving technical assistance workshops and presentations, etc. We've done this in six locations as part of the 2017-19 grant. Two locations have undergone training and have just launched. One of those is in Santa Barbara, California, with the Santa Barbara Arts Council, and the other is with the Folk Alliance International, which is an organization that we've worked with quite a bit. They received a planning grant a year and a half ago to work on doing things just for their association, but now they're working with all of their nonprofits and a number of their regional groups, as well.

Finally, Jan and I are doing office hours with representatives and members of a number of organizations. We've been working with members of the Folk Alliance International for the past three weeks. Earlier with Dance USA, we did a number of office hours and will continue them in the next few weeks. They can be from one to five people, from the institution, just to talk about the resources they need. Jan, Mollie and I are writing an article for Chorus America's *The Voice* magazine and our plan is to do a webinar in the new year. These are just a number of different outreach areas of our work.

### **Susie Surkamer – South Arts/ArtsReady**

Jan reported because Susie had to leave the meeting early. The team (South Arts, PAR, NEDCC) has been working on the ArtsReady tool: its release will be 2021. There was a brief discussion of the role of the tool and NCAPER. Jan confirmed all is the same as was voted on in March, at this time. The adjustment is that the tool is currently 18 months behind its original projected launch. Jan does not have further information as she is not a member of the ArtsReady2.0 team.

**Discussion:** **Cornelia** stated she had a further question on the ArtsReady discussion and asked that we make sure that the next steering committee meeting someone gives a good update on where it all stands, what is going on with the project and what is NCAPER's role because she feels she is really fuzzy on that. **Jan** assured our role has not changed, and that Susie will be asked to give an update at the next meeting. **Tom added** that they are no longer working with the first developer. We have the possibility of working with another developer, but there are still some things that need to be squared away with that. It's been an ongoing and very difficult project. He reported that Susie and he are having a meeting on Monday to try to determine what we can do to move things ahead as quickly as possible. **Mollie added** that the PRR, that Tom did a quick report on, was intended, in terms of public messaging, to roll out in tandem with the online tool. We have now rolled it out as Phase 1. The digital tool will be phase 2 and the paid version. We just wanted to go ahead and get the free version out there, especially now. Since it was announced on September 1st, we've had a lot of people downloading it and that continues to grow.

### **Barbara Davis – The Actors Fund**

On the Oregon fires, I just wanted to mention that we are about to launch an emergency assistance fund for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, which was really hard hit with these fires. 24 of their employees, that we know of, lost their homes. Another at least 20 to 30 were evacuated and have not been able to return. We are working with their staff and management. They have a donor who wanted to set up a fund. We are using those funds, as well as some of our own, to provide some emergency assistance to those affected. Also, in case there are any of your organizations also working on the fires, we'd love to talk with anyone about it to see if there can be any exchange of resources or information, or even just hearing how it's going. We are speaking with each one of the applicants at length in terms of trying to assess what they need, where they are with FEMA and everything else. Also, there is a need for mental health services, because, as you can well imagine, this has been quite traumatic for them. The OSF has housing on its campus and are temporarily housing a number of the employees who have either lost their homes or can't yet go back to them, as well as members of the community. Jan mentioned that she has been in contact with the new Executive Director of the OSF to see if NCAPER can do anything for them. **Barbara signed off the meeting to attend to an emergency meeting.**

### **Michael Royce – New York Foundation for the Arts**

Jan read Michael's report that he sent in advance – The moderator of the October 23 webinar that NYFA and NCAPER are partnering on will be Elissa Hecker, Esq. (she has been an amazing resource to NYFA over the years and is a leader in the art law world). The other panelists are Jina Paik (Nonprofit Finance Fund, and who can speak to the financial side of things), and Ari Solotoff, Esq. (former ED of the Portland Symphony and Executive VP of the Philadelphia Orchestra during the latter's bankruptcy restructure, and now an arts lawyer). The final panelist will likely be Luke Blackadar from Arts & Business Council/VLA Boston. In terms of direction - what we've discussed thus far pretty much tracks our conversation. We'll briefly frame the problem and challenges facing arts organizations now, then present a range of strategic options. Each panelist will highlight a slightly different aspect, including the role of a board. We're going to avoid getting too deep into the mechanics of any particular choice, like bankruptcy, and instead focus on strategy and understanding options. If there's interest and demand, putting together a follow-up on something technical like bankruptcy is pretty simple. The panel will take place on October 23, from 12 – 1:30 PM Eastern and will include Q&A at the end.

### **Jennifer Leff - MusiCares**

It is very interesting hearing about all the policy sides and what NCAPER has been involved with because MusiCares is only doing things with those directly affected. This discussion has been really fascinating to hear for the past seven months now. Since March, we have helped over 18,000 people and dispersed about \$20M.

And honestly, we have been floored with the amount of people who have come out and said, we want to support you. Who knows what's going to happen next year. Everybody's going to be vying for the same dollars. This is affecting everyone from the musicians to the back of house, to the managers. At first it was furloughs, and now it is permanent layoffs. We are desperately, desperately trying to reach untapped communities, for example, people who were affected by the hurricanes wouldn't have known about us if it wasn't for the hurricanes because they're not necessarily connected to labels and managers.

We're now back to our regular programming, if you will. And we are seeing everything. We're still seeing dental and medical needs as we never stopped our non-COVID focus. So now we're just doing both. There is a significant focus around mental health issues because we're all feeling it. You can imagine people whose industries have just been halted. We have pivoted obviously to everything online and I think it's tough because people have a very short span now for online information and webinars and they're suffering from screen fatigue. We are trying to bring some unique programming. And that's why I love that idea of the office hours Tom spoke of that he and Jan have been doing. It's actionable. And I think people need actionable items right now. There is no end in sight, but we're here to help.

### **Lilia Sterling – The Joan Mitchell Foundation**

The Foundation was able to secure over \$500,000 from the budget and redirect it. We made 103 grants to our recipient community, which was not public, but we were glad we were able to do that. We added additional funding to Artists Relief, which if you haven't heard yet, they have secured \$220M and are now extended through December, which we're really excited about for the visual arts community. We were able to make a grant to the New Orleans Creative Response Relief Fund in June or July. We were able to stay committed to our fellowship program, which we'll be announcing in a few weeks. And we are also looking at ways that we can potentially do another round of relief funding in some way, whether that's to artists relief or internally.

## **UPDATES ON PROJECTS**

### **Mollie Quinlan-Hayes – Arts Organizations at a Crossroads (OAX)**

We have changed the title of the project to Arts Organizations at a Crossroads, OAX, which is a field scan to understand what's happening and where, regarding organization status in terms of their continuation of operations. We're focusing primarily on organizations, although certainly most conversations have addressed the needs of artists as well, and organizations as employers of artists. So, the question is, is a response which offers arts organizations information about their various options so they can make intentional decisions indicated? I think the short answer is yes. The immediate objectives are to become informed about what's happening, where to connect and matchmake, and to identify those who are developing similar responses to collect and curate resources and promote what others are offering in the space, such as the webinar.

We have been looking at a range of options for organizations facing closure, from shared services, alliances, restructuring, hibernation all the way into dissolution or bankruptcy. Again, none of these is easy and some of them are more difficult than they may appear. And I'll be bringing the recommendations on next steps to the next steering committee quarterly meeting. I've been conducting leadership interviews with twenty-five organizations, including local state agencies, national art service organizations, arts funders, Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, and with Amy, Ted, Tom and Pam. I want to thank all of you for taking time to talk with me. We are sending out a 10-question survey to 225 arts funders and service organizations over the next week. And thank you, Meghan, for all of your help with that. I've done a literature scan, there are some wonderful resources available. The draft article has been submitted and the list of resources will be ready to post next week. Tom and LYRISIS have offered to provide resources for organizations that are interested in archiving their legacy. The project is really good visibility for NCAPER and what we do. I think it's generating a lot of interest with particular interest from the Volunteer Lawyers Network. I'm really seeing that a multi-part and nuanced approach is necessary and that taking these activities to the ground, working with networks is going to be a large undertaking. We know, of course, that these kinds of conversations are very sensitive and rely on a lot of trust and existing relationships. I'm also hearing from multiple people that fatigue is likely to take out a number of organizations before they could actually get through an assessment and make decisions. **Jan added** that she will be meeting with Mollie and there will be monthly updates on the progress of the OAX project.

## **Amy Schwartzman – Asset Mapping**

We have long discussed an ecosystem mapping project. We know that when a disaster happens, before a disaster happens, it is very often the case that locals really don't know who was there, who they need to reach out to and that can be in terms of organizations, that can be in terms of individual artists and artist businesses. It's not always clear what the scheme of relationships are within a community. Who is it that artists rely on in general times when there's not a crisis? How do people get their information? How can we reach them to either give them information in advance of a disaster or crisis that may be coming their way? How can we hear from them about how it has impacted them? How do we put this all together? And it very much relates back to some of our very early speaking about NCAEPER. This idea of building a network of networks.

We had one group meeting earlier this summer and then Jan, Ted and I talked more about it. I'm at a much earlier stage than Molly is on OAX, at this point. But a lot of this is a thought project for the moment about how do we create a model, do we create tools? How does NCAEPER occupy the space to help the field? Is it about developing something that gives locals a framework for how to do this kind of work? And I will say to you personally now that as I think of this more and more, we know that organizations are stressed. We know that they don't necessarily have capacity to take on the project. We can put a model out there, but it doesn't mean that people have the ability to put it in place themselves. And as I've continued to think about this on my own, and clearly this is something I would bring to the steering committee for a decision, we're ourselves under-resourced, but we are I think at this point in time, the national organization that brings together those who have an interest in seeing that the arts and cultural sector is better prepared for and able to cope with disasters and emergencies. And I feel that maybe there's a more active role that we need to play.

So that will be part of the thinking that I'll be doing and how we can make this a reality. Maybe this would be through a pilot project. If I were to think of a place that would be a pilot place, it would actually be Puerto Rico, because part of what we've also discussed is how do we make visible the invisible? That was something that Ted said in our last conversation. So if we're trying to especially identify those who are not in the loop and the mainstream and we want to track the impact of what has happened in a disaster or how we reach them, how information gets out to them, we're also talking about a place where we feel we have that kind of community that we can draw upon and that has many of the issues that we're looking to solve.

So, whether it's developing models and or tools, building upon some tools we already have developed that are in the Cultural Placekeeping Guide, or how we move this forward, how do we do either mapping to advance the cause of how we can help the community? As I said, it's really a thought project at this point. I will come to the Steering Committee with a proposal on how we can build out our own network and provide maybe some resources to help us understand who's out there better.

And I'll just add one thing in terms of a model. My feeling at the moment also is that we're not just talking about developing a model that helps people figure out who they need to put into some kind of database or map, but that we also should be working with existing data, which would be census data. So, we have a model that's in place beforehand. And if we need to make early assessments on the impact of disasters, we can actually rely on existing data. It would also be about developing a model like that.

## **REQUEST FOR AD HOC COMMITTEE – J. Newcomb**

Jan requested volunteers to be on an ad hoc committee for these proposals, getting them ready and RFP and for the NEA field guide. Framing what we are doing exactly. Barbara Davis, Ted Berger, Ruby Lopez Harper, and Pam Breaux agreed to serve on the committee.

**NEXT MEETING** – The group agreed to meet on Friday, October 30th, 3pm. Jan announced that the January 2021 meeting that is usually held onsite will be a longer meeting via zoom.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Jan adjourned the meeting at 4:37pm EST

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Meghan O'Toole and Jan Newcomb**