

**Cultural Executives Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, February 18, 2009**  
**Bonnet House Center – 900 N Birch Rd, Fort Lauderdale**

**Present:** Janet Erlick (Chair), Hal Axler (Vice Chair), Laura Aker, Karen Beard, Mary Becht, Duke Coney, Jams Curci, Doug Evans, Tonya Seaver Evans, Pam Dearden, Sue Gail, Nicole Gauthier, Neal Hecker, Maureen Kohler, Helen LaForge, Meredith Lasher, Jody Leshinsky, Gustavo Ortiz, Vena Paylo, Joy Satterlee, Mindy Shrago, Richard Simon, Mark Solomon, Jane Sullivan, Wil Trower, Laura Sue Wilansky

**Absent:** Barbara Barber, Dawn Dubriel, Patrick Flynn, Amy Hever, Franklin Nickens, Dolores Sukhdeo, Joy Veasy, Robyn Vegas, Stanley Zamor, Terrance Wilder, Patricia Zeiler

**Meeting Start Time:** 12:03 PM

**Agenda I: Welcome –Call to Order**

Janet Erlick (JE) called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. JE introduced Josh and offered all attendees to receive a complimentary chair massage. JE told the group that they each would receive a bag of miscellaneous cultural organization promotional items and thanked the organizations who participated. JE expressed that the reason for the bags and massage was to thank all the hard-working executives for their tireless contributions to fostering a healthy arts environment. JE thanked Bonnet House for hosting the meeting.

**Agenda II: Self Introductions**

JE introduced Hal Axler (HA) and asked that attendees introduce themselves.

**Agenda III: Director Updates & Announcements**

Jody Leshinsky (JL) informed attendees about the Knight Foundation Arts Challenge; also introducing the 3 attendees that had received funds from the Knight Foundation and asked them to share their stories with attendees. JL then spoke of the Winter edition of Cultural Quarterly that had recently been uploaded online; the upcoming Cooperative Marketing meeting on March 24, 2009; Arts Economic Summit on February 23, 2009 and the new appointee for BCCD's Pad Administrator, Ken Kahn. JL asked that Maureen Kohler (MK) speak about ArtsCalendar.com. MK told attendees about the new site along with a brief description of how it works and upcoming features that the site will provide.

**Agenda IV: Director's Celebrating Our Arts Leaders in Difficult Times**

JE showed attendees a chart of 2008 Tourist Tax Funding and listed which county each bar in the graph represented. The graph showed the figures for each county and JE pointed out that Broward was the lowest recipient of funds and asked that all attendees advocate for more tourism dollars in the upcoming 2010 reassessment of allocation of tourism tax funds. Mary Becht (MB) informed attendees that there was a lot more work needed to build relationships between cultural organizations and their representatives with commissioners. MB reminded executives to invite commissioners to events and help create awareness of the arts and events as much as possible.

Karen Beard (KB) told attendees about her experience of attending the budget workshop and the tough job it is to get funds for arts when the county has to find ways to also cut the budget. JE said the county has the struggle of juggling wants verses needs. KB said it is a reminder of the importance of cultural organizations getting actively involved. JE said that there is the new idea of "1 tank travel" and how it is important to market to locals now in the suffering economy. MB informed that the budget had been cut by 14%, 600 county positions, and how important advocacy is in a time of little discretionary funds. Mindy

Shrago (MSH) said that the economic stimulus proposal by Obama should trickle down and affect arts organizations in a positive way. MB spoke about the importance of support and advocacy of the arts and renewing or joining the Florida Cultural Alliance for the Arts. HA spoke about the film industry also being affected by the economy and reminded attendees that all cultural organizations are affected. MB said that her trip and research of California showed that they experienced similar issues to Broward. MB suggested that the cultural organizations should find sectors of the community they can cross-support, such as Young at Art's program working with the homeless.

JE reminded attendees that everyone was in this together and need to help each other out and find ways to assist each other. JE asked attendees what their wants were from the CEC Meetings and if anyone had suggestions of thing to change in order to meet the needs of attendees. Gustavo Ortiz (GO) said that residents still want to experience the arts but that they just didn't have as much funds now so we have to think of creative ways to incorporate arts activities in one day and relate and market them. GO added that a call-to-action request for the end of CEC Meetings explaining that it would keep members motivated.

HA suggested that sub-committee be formed to work on this type of idea. MK said that ArtServe was currently working on a similar idea and would keep attendees informed of the progress. Mark Solomon (MSO) suggested a festival in Riverwalk that incorporated many disciplines of the arts.

JL said that through the new Facebook group this type of discussion could be held. HA mentioned the success of his Facebook group and how two events were created because of the interaction. Meredith Lasher (ML) said that letting board members dial into meetings had helped their growth and offered a new way for members to interact. MSH reminded attendees about the importance of banding together.

JE then asked that all attendees split up in to smaller groups at their seats and discuss collaborative ideas with each other and how attendees can advocate for the arts; after 10 minutes of discussion with each other to give ideas that attendees came up with.

#### **Agenda V: Discussion**

Attendees each gave ideas for advocacy, marketing and collaboration ideas. MK told attendees about the upcoming Encore awards. JE thanked attendees for their contributions and work towards arts advocacy and invited all to next meeting.

**Agenda VI: Next Meeting, April 22, 2009, at Hollywood Art & Culture Center**

**Agenda VII: Meeting Adjourned: 1:31 PM**