



National Coalition for Arts' Preparedness and Emergency Response

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2023, Noon Eastern

Attendees: Stephanie Atkins, Cameron Baxter, Ted Berger, Eleanor Billington, Nolen Bivens, Pam Breaux, Kristen Brewer, Tom Claeson, Daniel Fitzmaurice, Jennifer Leff, Michael Orlove, Amy Schwartzman, Susie Surkamer

Excused: Barbara Davis, Ruby Lopez Harper, Eddie Torres, Mohammad Usman,

Staff: Jan Newcomb, Mollie Quinlan-Hayes,

Call to order by Jan Newcomb, Executive Director at 12:05PM.

Jan asked Steering Committee member to make self-introductions and to welcome new members:

Eleanor Billington, Civic Partnerships Manager, National Endowment for the Arts, was welcomed. Michael Orlove noted that

Kristen Brewer, new NCAPER Programs Associate specializing in communications and web design was welcomed.

Staff Reports: Written reports were distributed prior to the meeting.

Jan Newcomb shared photos and bios of the new CAM/Crisis Analysis and Mitigation Coaches training program participants. 11 new individuals have had six hours of training so far and will join the 10 certified coaches from the first round. She's very excited about each participant and they're off to a good start.

Mollie Quinlan-Hayes reported that since her start in November she has been absorbing a lot of information, and working with Jan, Kristen and Meghan on building out our communications infrastructure. A new element is that working with HENTF, NCAPER has agreed to be the repository for rapid impact assessment data being collected from artists and organizations following the California floods/mudslides. This is a good way to help position NCAPER as a leader in the field, and to make our resources known to more people who need them.

Working Group Reports: Jan moved to the heart of today's meeting, reports from the three working groups.

NEA/Structural Sustainability - Ted Berger, chair.

Ted reported that on November 29th, thanks to Michael's efforts, we (Ted, Jan and Mollie) met with chair Maria Rosario Jackson and other people from the NEA staff: Eleanor Billington, chief of staff Ra Joy, director of grants management Brenna Berger, Maria and I are old friends and colleagues so it was wonderful to see her. Our primary purpose was to talk about how NCAPER and NEA can reinforce each other in order to build a strengthened sector involvement in this area. We talked about a range of topics. Maria summarized her interest in these areas:

Convening. The White House is putting pressure on all agencies to act regarding climate crisis and other large scale disasters; we know this includes events such as civil unrest. The convening should be an opportunity to show the comprehensive nature of the work we're doing, especially so that other federal agencies begin to understand the role this sector is playing. Our sector is a critical catalyst for change and healing; people need to understand what happens to artists and arts organizations when there's a crisis; and how artists and organizations, while they're in crisis, are also responders and healers in the short- and longer- term. The arts are critical in helping people imagine what's next, what's possible, what could be repaired, what could be healed; and we have a role in helping people understand what climate change means to them, and how they can prepare.

Training. Maria is very interested in the next generation: the next generation of arts administrators and the next generation of artists -- how they're trained, what the curriculum is like.

Federal policy. It's critical that with other federal agencies we impact public policy and other public administrators.

I did note the need to find public and/or private money to support doing this work; I explained the Mellon situation, and the relationship we've developed with PAR. At the end of the meeting, it was decided that Mollie and Jan and Michael were going to talk about the next steps, and Jan and Mollie and I have talked about how NCAPER's Programming Working Group would be the appropriate NCAPER group to move this forward. Eleanor was brought into the conversation to be our point person on continuing the conversation.

Michael Orlove thanked Ted for the great summary of the conversation and made two notes/clarifications. One, Eleanor's position used to be just the LAA specialist. We've recalibrated that it's a Civic Partnerships Manager, and part of Eleanor's role is taking more of a lead in disaster connectivity among other federal agencies and NCAPER. That was something we didn't have at the agency before, we want to be sure to 'show up' and Eleanor will have more responsibility in those conversations. Two, regarding another convening, we did talk about the previous NEA convening in 2016, and Maria

thought it was probably time for a 2.0. Whether we're hosting it, or participating, was left for another conversation.

Merger Working Group - Tom Claeson, chair

Tom hoped that everyone had a chance to review the notes that came out of the group discussion and provided updates on PAR and LYRASIS.

Our new Mellon Foundation grant was awarded on December 21. \$1.5M will run from January 2023 to December 2025. We will continue all of our current projects and programs and we have funding for new programs. One, a small-scale version of our Art of Mass Gatherings program called Festival Safety Audits, going in to work with six festivals over the three years on safety issues. The other addition is archiving visits for performing arts organizations, both analog and digital archiving, using the ten Dance/USA Fellows who've been working on archiving fellowships over the last two years. We have quite a bit of carryover funding from our 2020-22 grant which can be used for our support of the ArtsReady project and for speaker travel, networking activities, etc. I'm calling in from the IABD/International Association of Blacks in Dance conference in Toronto where Carol Foster and I are presenting on PAR, NCAPER and other activities; next week we'll be at Folk Alliance International in Kansas City; then Jan and I will be presenting February 12 to the National Association of County Executives. February 1 we will kick off a set of listening sessions/focus groups by the IMLS-funded Conservation Center for Art and Artifacts in Philadelphia. LYRASIS is a subcontractor for succession planning, and we will do focus groups, surveys, then roll out some educational material that can be utilized by arts organizations and cultural heritage organizations. Lastly, we have a new ED at LYRASIS. John Price Wilkin, formerly of the University of IL and the University of MI has started. Jan, Steve and I are doing an introductory session for him in mid-February and one of the things we'll talk about is the potential future merger.

Tom then turned things over to Amy and Stephanie. Amy recapped that at our November SC meeting, we did not vote but we took the temperature of the Zoom room, and everyone agreed the merger concept is a really good idea. The second takeaway was that the next step would be to put together a new Working Group to hone the details of what this could look like conceptually and logistically: phases, steps, the model, what we would be working with.

We also had a really rich conversation about the values and visions that should guide this merged group and I wish to reiterate them:

- Achieving a better wider safety net in disaster management that includes artists, other cultural workers and arts organizations
- Working through an equity lens - our own organization as well as those we help
- Addressing resource disparity for specific communities and individuals; we specifically named BIPOC organizations and individuals, and small towns as well as big cities

- Linking with and impacting the work of the disaster management infrastructure at the federal, state and local levels
- We also spoke about concerns with the issue of “resilience,” of bouncing back, given how do you bounce back if you’re living in a sub-par situation, so we want to think more of a guiding concept of transformational change rather than resilience

To note what the group felt we should *not* embrace, were meeting the climate change challenge, and serving community recovery through arts and culture. She wanted to highlight those now given Ted’s report on the meeting with the NEA, in which these were ideas that were exciting to the Chair. She does not recommend that we should be chasing what others feel appropriate, but as the lead agency working nationally on these issues, in light of that the group may at some point want to consider whether or how those issues should be integrated into what we do and how that might happen.

Jan said that while Barbara wanted to make sure people don’t feel forced to vote now on whether to have a merger, we want to call the question conceptually. Should a small working group further explore the specifics of a merger? We’re not approving a specific model until that model is presented. Susie fully concurs and supports the idea of a small group to look at logistics, models, etc. Jan asked for a straw vote: ***Do you feel that studying an effective merging environment is the way to go?***

A hands vote showed at least one Yay vote from each organization.

Jan asked Amy if she, Tom and Stephanie wished to continue, and they agreed. Others volunteered: Ted, Susie, Jennifer.

Programming Working Group - Mollie Quinlan-Hayes, chair

Mollie reported that the programming workgroup has been incredibly energetic and persistent. Emily, our at-large member from Kentucky Arts Council is both a brilliant thinker, and a really good reality check. She presented a slide deck [attached] and elaborated.

PWG Charge:

- Looking at existing programming
- Looking at ways to support what Kentucky Arts Council is doing
- Explore our own programming and decide what to maintain, sunset, expand
- Clarify how NCAPER should support AR fee waiver. *Sidebar - the best way is for you to let your constituents know about it! That builds participation and is also an earned income stream for NCAPER.*
- Consider the overall field’s needs, patricianly but not exclusively SAAs, RAOs and LAAs since they have such responsibility to the field.

Progress:

- We’ve met six times
- Reviewed our existing capacity, in your report you saw Jan’s graphic showing how current time and money is spent.

- Received a lot of good information from Emily about her dual disaster experience which I'll share in a moment.
- Raised lots of good questions about CAM, what is it really and what does it do? That was an impetus to conduct a series of interviews with members of the first cohort and be better able to tell that story. there was a blog post published last month.
- We've begun exploring database needs. Right now, we don't really have one. Mohammad on this SC has been good enough to begin exploring our needs and potentially move to a relational database over time.
- As Ted reported we participated in the conversation with the Endowment leadership.

Capacity and Timing Slide. Pam is always pointing to our need to work within our capacity. This is the reality of our capacity over the next two calendar years. Thanks to those of you who've paid 2022 dues, we now have 85% participation, which allows us to maintain Jan's time, 20 hours/week through the end of this year. Mollie's work is to find resources to retain that as a halftime position. Regarding timing, we all know how fast time is passing and 'm feeling a real sense of urgency on moving with these things because some opportunities are coming up quickly. The GIA member conference will be happening in Puerto Rico this fall, and then the NASAA full Assembly in Puerto Rico a year from this fall - great opportunities for us to work with the field.

Kentucky Map Slide. This is something Emily shared with us, and it was a gut-punch. Counties in blue were under and many still are under Presidential disaster declaration from the tornadoes in 2021; red counties are those impacted by the floods in the middle of 2022. Together those comprise almost half of Kentucky's counties and are also locations where the greatest number of KAC's general operating support grantees are located. So just within 15 months this was the hit on Kentucky. Emily's big message to us was that she didn't know where to go as the SAA. NCAPER was a help, I know she spoke with the Endowment, but there was no structural assistance for her.

Programs Slide. These are those we feel are strong and should continue:

- Arts Admin programs
- CAM - including one more cohort next year
- Conferences/field education
- dPlan/AR tool waivers
- Response call facilitation
- Website
- Tools/publications

In limbo: Creative Placekeeping Guide; it was written some years ago and also had not been field tested. There are a number of networks that have used it, we've never assessed the value or impact of them.

Three new areas we feel we need to move into.

- Field conversations.

- Expanding targeted policy and advocacy work. How do we find our positions and then be more active?
- KAC and UKY are doing a number of case studies from the recent disasters and NCAPER could benefit from being a part of that and having access to the findings

Main Themes Slide

The next slides get out of the weeds and up to 30,000 feet and this is where we really want you all to respond and discuss.

1. Lack of a centralized response and funding system post disaster in both public and private sectors
2. What do we want to impact? We all are aware of the crisis cycle of mitigation, readiness, response, recovery, and right now our capacity is such that we're primarily working in the response and recovery space, but we all know that the preparedness space is where we limit or ward off impact. So, is that a space we really want to commit to actively work in?
3. The need for data and information. We don't have information on the sector, how it's been damaged, what the impact is for both large-scale disasters, and those daily mundane disasters that happen to one studio or one arts space but still have a devastating effect on that community.

Realizations Slide

- We feel that we have two years to take a shot at moving the field toward readiness. We've tried a number of ways, we can engage leaders in the field to figure out what has worked and what has not but take this space and time to look at that readiness/preparedness space and move the needle on it.
- Be mindful of our capacity to decide what we should be doing, what we can be effective at, what we have the resources for to be successful.
- We can be well served by refocusing on the nature of how a Coalition exists. We were founded as a coalition, which is groups coming together voluntarily to work on one particular issue and move it forward. We have the opportunity now to expand that (not necessarily the SC, although the Nominating Committee is working on that.) What are the concentric circles of organizations/affiliates/partners we can be working with, because then we have that collective capacity and that collective impact.

Next Steps Slide

- Continue conversation with the Endowment moving toward shared action and events/field conversations.
- Home in on what kind of specific data and information we need
- Based on an agreed upon focus, if we're really going to commit to this readiness, what will it take to do that?

- Work with the Nominating and Steering Committees to refresh and reframe our Coalition model and how we behave as a Coalition
- As we've just agreed on, working with the Merger group as needed/appropriate

Other Working Group members were asked to comment. Pam added dotted lines between two ideas amongst the last couple of slides. We talked about the programmatic needs and information, and she would draw a line from that to the idea on the following slide under Realizations that we need to take our shot to move the field toward readiness. The reason I draw the dotted line between is that part of the Working Group's conversation was that what we've tried already hasn't really worked. People move on from one disaster to the next, and the last disaster is forgotten. What we don't have is this collective data that helps our field understand collective loss and what the potential [collective loss] could be. To gather the data and stories could be pivotal to taking our shot to move the field toward readiness. We haven't really faced what we've lost collectively across some number of these disasters.

Jan felt that the readiness piece is so important. We've been doing a lot of educational pieces but it's human nature that people block it out. We've got to be able to crack this nut. The data is part of this: "Remember people, you've lost this, you've lost jobs, all of this important work."

Amy noted that she'd like to look at the idea of readiness differently - we need to give up on that ship, that ship has sailed. No matter how much work we do, we cannot change human nature. The folks in Houston decided not to do that with the individual artists. What she'd like us to ask Emily, who's just gone through this, is "What would you have done differently? What could you have done differently? What did you need to feel prepared in terms of helping your community?" She's really saying we need a larger system. We need a support system. Our model has always been, because there has been no larger system, the federal government is not going to take care of the community - that's why we created a self-help system. You create your self-help system, you go to your funders, you get their money. But maybe the preparedness work should be that we're the people who need to help them create those systems. It should be us preparing the field to respond. With CultureAID project in NYC we've found that most artists are prepared: they know what they're doing, they know what they need to do to protect their work (what they don't have is affordable insurance). So, what would make an actual difference, that they would have responded differently when a disaster happened? If it's nothing, then we really have to start rethinking what we're doing and how we're doing it.

Jan thinks the idea of using the CAM coaches with State Activation Teams is important. Being State-centered, they know where the State-centered - where are the community foundations, where are the people who can actually make things happen? That's what happened in Kentucky, and in Houston [after Hurricane Harvey] with the Houston Endowment. She agrees we shouldn't stop doing our educational work. Tom

agreed with Amy about helping creating the systems, and with Jan about the idea of SATs. The other thing we could look at in this merger is how some of PAR's work can spread more widely to other types of art. We can also shine a spotlight such as what the Houston Arts Alliance is doing now with an organization of 110 artists that was affected by arson; they're coordinating everything from fundraising to helping them move, and having things fixed by conservators.

Susie closed by reminding us that the field is wide, and there are many, many types of organizations, so when we're talking about what NCAPER's role can be, there is a whole variety of things that NCAPER can/should do, and we just need to either focus on we're not going to worry about this segment, or we're going to do some general things and some more focused things. Be watchful of our capacity, we can't do everything for everyone. Mollie thanked everyone and noted that this leads to engaging more members of the field in the programming conversation. Jan believes this should include funders, if they're involved you can get others on board. Ted recommended we talk to some people involved in a conversation with the Ford Foundation and the New York Grantmakers. It's about what happens to organizations when they fall off the cliff, when funders stop funding something because they want to move on to another initiative, or when there's a disaster, etc. Others are starting to talk about the lack of a safety net and nobody's coming to our field's help.

AFTA Presentation: Jan has asked General Nolen Bivens to share his vision of Americans for the Arts and where it's going, and how we can work with AFTA. AFTA was one of the founding/Charter members of NCAPER and has undergone changes over the last year or two.

Nolen said he came up with some remarks but after listening to today's discussion wants to respond to that. Jan asked me to share on two issues: one, my perspective on disaster and readiness from my military experience; and two, how AFTA today can plan a role.

Many of you may know I retired from active duty as a Brigadier General Officer and I've had a lot of connection with the area of disaster, including in conflict. I did a lot of extensive work with the Smithsonian Institution when Haiti had their disaster, trying to preserve and take care of some of the cultural and artistic artifacts. I was coming out of the role of Chief of Staff of U.S. Southern Command which is primarily responsible for all of Latin, Central and South America. I was also Deputy Director for all infrastructure development during the war in Iraq, which also got into the whole artifact issue and the disastrous impact. Though there was internal thievery we still needed to have a plan because preserving the cultural heritage is really the life of a country just as it is for a community.

You've talked about the cycle of mitigation, preparedness/readiness, response and recovery - that's a real model. Defining where you want to play in that circle, or in a

broader way, is so important. I encourage us to decide where to focus, but not for us to abandon the whole cycle. I believe in this idea of network of networks. Just because I'm not doing it doesn't mean I can't network with someone who is. We do need to focus, because with minimal resources, to Pam's point, you can't exceed your capacity. But that cycle is so real we won't serve the entire community equitably if we don't at least keep that cycle in view and find a way to partner to get there.

I've discovered that in order to do this thing right, you have to start in this world thinking interagency. Nobody has all the resources to do what they need to do. What is the interagency equivalent here? NEA is at the table. Which are the other agencies we should have at the table? We've got to see what we are building towards, and then what's the interagency capacity we're trying to build towards? Who needs to be at the table as we're building these conversations? Getting those voices around the table is also going to add another aspect of equity.

I want to share the thought of the anatomy of a disaster. It goes back to the cycle we were talking about, but the end game, the anatomy of a disaster is the impact at the community level. There are federal actors and state and local, but the endgame is at the community level. This is where the arts come in: recovery becomes very important and dealing with the trauma is one of the most important things the arts do in recovery. COVID showed that. When we think about the anatomy of disaster for NCAPER, we want to play at these points but understand what we're bringing to it.

We need to look at this other aspect that became apparent to me. I had an interesting experience a couple of months ago I'd like to share with this group. I was in Baltimore in a discussion about arts and health, and one of the community leaders that was there made a point about philanthropy, 'all of the contributors do a great job to get me started, after five years I've got to figure out how to survive.' That triggered my brain to see sustainability in a whole different way. Sustainability became an equity issue. As I was listening to our conversation about preparedness, I've got to be more helpful in making readiness and preparedness an equity issue among legislators and leaders, to understand that is why we need more funding and resources. That's where me and my organization can understand our role in advocacy, that's something I can do more of.

Nolen then shared a slide presentation on AFTA's recent transformation [attached]. We spent 2022 doing a lot of internal work, a strategic realignment and a concurrent workplace culture rebuild. It's very, very important to me as CEO to reconnect with the field and we had 90 real-time co-creators from the field going through this weekly, we had 800+ surveys, a broad and expansive process. Responding back to us, they told us we could do one of three things. We could take a transformative approach, or a progression idea, or just totally redefine. We decided we had to take a transformative approach, small steps were not going to work. Also, our strategy had to be one of going deep, not wide. We're constantly trying to boil the ocean, be everything to all people - and it goes back to that capacity thing. We want to go narrow and deep, **but**

that doesn't mean we're abandoning things. These are the four asks from the field I would like to leave you with before I close talking about advocacy in terms of this conversation.

1. Advocacy at the federal level, connected to
2. Research at the state and local level
3. Be a communicator for the field, and how we communicate with each other collectively
4. Convenings, bringing the field together or being the sponsor, enabling those conversations we need to have together.

Looking at AFTA's Mission Impact, I always start with the Why, thanks to my old military background. Why are we doing what we're doing? We want to strengthen four things about the arts: the economic, cultural, social and educational power of the arts. That's where we've seen a lot of the value added to the community. How do we do that? I want to do it through equitable advocacy. We're going to transform ourselves through our values, but I'm also interested in Collective Leadership, that 'doesn't' mean collective decision-making, it means we are all leaders, and we are all leading in some way to get us to that equitable advocacy.

To do that needs the right strategies, connecting to the field through conversations like this one, getting the structure right, and also making sure I have the resources to do that. Looking at the Mission Impact Equitable Advocacy chart, in order for me to do equitable advocacy, I've got to think about the sustainable components in legislation, that I need to be working toward and advancing. Our three components are having the right programs, the right partnerships, and legislation we can work on. There are seven pieces of federal legislation right now that I work aggressively to get these things into, to get attention to legislators at the federal level, so I also want to point out that I recognize, without a doubt, that the value for us is at the local arts agency engagement level, because whatever I do there, if I spend a dime there, it's worth .50 to the overall sector, because it's helping everybody. [Slide: POWER OF ARTS + CREATIVITY] This is where I think it lands in this conversation. Culturally we have to preserve the cultural aspects of our nation, and this is one of the cornerstones of why emergency management and preparedness are so important. I think this is an area where I can continue to do equitable advocacy for.

If I were to put my gear in place to advocate for more resources for readiness and disaster management, to do that, I would try to figure out with the NEA and NEH, where else do I need to be engaging on Capitol Hill and legislators to make sure that resources are allocated and brought to bear in this area. So, advocacy is what I think about. How do I bring that strength to this situation, in support of what you are doing? If you start thinking about those things, I'll turn that into visits. I should know the FEMA director, I should be able to talk to them as the director of one of the national service organizations about the value of the arts and how that should be part of their disaster planning. And having a little bit of military background would help them understand the seriousness of it. There's a lot of legislative packages up there which the arts could

find themselves in, if I understand that's the focus of what we're working for. So, I see myself as an ally coming alongside what you're trying to do, and supporting it where my organizational strengths lie. I'll close with this and would like to get comments and feedback.

Americans for the Arts is working in an ecosystem, I'm trying to make sure we find our orbit, the place where we circulate and contribute to it, and make our value added. As long as we can do that in a genuine power-sharing relationship, understanding the strengths which everyone brings to the table, and bring in what I can, which is certainly continued engagement with the local arts agencies, at the same time understanding them in a way and bringing those voices up - that chart you showed about Kentucky, I have to grab that chart and five or six people from local arts agencies, and create a Hill moment where a lot of people, not me, go in and voice their concern to legislators. That really is an impact chart that shows how it's not only one point in time, but there's also a front end and a back end to this, and that recovery is so important, and arts can play a part there.

Discussion. Jan pointed out that America's top disaster counties are Lawrence County in Kentucky and a county in Oklahoma that are tied for the most major disaster declarations since 1990. The other thing that chart with KY tells me is, this is not new. These counties have been under declaration quite a bit in the last years, it's kind of mind boggling. Nolen noted, from an equity perspective, it cuts differently in rural areas than urban areas. From an arts perspective, we already have disparities in those aspects, so it just further compounds that... Jan noted that the successful responses have strong local leadership. I know that from Corning after the flood. The problems were solved almost immediately, and it was through an equitable lens. Nolen would like to engage General Russel Honoré, he was a Katrina guy, from a network perspective, his insights would help us understand how to do this more strategically. We need to find these sweet spots - that puts you in a network of his network because he picks up the phone and calls FEMA. I'd like AFTA to help with the convening piece. It doesn't have to be a national convening but bringing resources into this conversation to help us understand how to do it more systemically, and also where to get resources. If you all are welcome to that. Jan feels yes, absolutely, including that would be perfect for the CAM coaches.

Ted thanked Nolen for his comments, they are right on. Ted has long believed that there are members of Congress who are on the arts caucus but also on the FEMA committees and the disaster committees, and they've never made the connection between the two. People are so compartmentalized that they don't see it, and we need non-arts voices saying how critical we are and have us built into legislation. Nolen agrees, we need all of the pieces of it to work together. Figure out the interagency equivalent of what we're doing here, and build toward that - we've got to do that right now. I appreciate that thought and I do share it wholeheartedly.

Sometimes the best advocacy we can do is showing up together with one voice about something. That's the most powerful advocacy message we can make. That's where I come from.

Jan will take this information to the February National Conference for County Executives. She was really excited to get that invitation because it's fine to talk to arts administration groups, but to have them request us speak is an opportunity that we're going to really prepare for. That reminded Nolen of traveling to states with the NEA on their Creative Forces program. Some invited him to be part of their state legislature testimonies. I just powerfully realized that being part of what they're doing is just as important as them supporting the federal piece of it. You can't have one without the other. It was amplifying them in front of their decision makers: "If someone from the national level thinks this is important, I should probably take a look at it." Going to their terrain, and them coming to ours. That's that equitable advocacy again.

Meeting wrap up: Jan stated that this is a perfect segue to end our conversation until the next quarterly meeting March 23. Hopefully the Merger Work will have some news, and we will follow up with the General. With the permission of the group, he will reach out to General Honoré as well.

Jan thanked everyone for their wonderful, hard work.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marie Quinlan-Fay". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.