The Board of Directors met at 3:00pm Tuesday, June 29, 2010 at the Regional Enterprise Tower in the A. E. Hunt Conference Room. Present were Board members: Mr. Rob Jones, Chair, Ms. Dusty Kirk, Mr. Dan Griffin, Dr. Herman Jones, Jr., Mr. Rick Pierchalski, Mr. Stanley Parker, Ms. Connie Yarris and Chief Counsel Jim Norris. Executive Director, David Donahoe, staff and members of the public were also present. Notice of the meeting was published in accordance with the Act and By-laws and posted on the District Website.

Public Hearing and Comment Period

As required by law, the Chair opened the meeting for public comment prior to proceeding with the agenda. As no one registered to speak, the Chair proceeded with the meeting.

Connections Committee Report

Mr. Jones called on Ms. Kirk to give the following report:

Board Members:

The Committee met to review three connection grant applications received in the second quarter. Based on that review, we are recommending the award of a grant to the Pittsburgh Opera in the amount of $49,080.

Last year Pittsburgh Opera and Attack Theatre connected in a shared facility arrangement. To maximize the impact of that partnership, they are seeking funding for a new shared full-time position of Event and Production Associate. The individual will be employed by the Opera but will report to each organization. The individual will manage scheduling of both Opera and Attack rehearsals and events needs as well as renting the building. This will increase the earned revenue for the Opera through rental and Attack will earn revenue through additional programming in the building. In addition it will reduce the need for contracted labor/technical expertise saving approximately $8,000 annually. Both organizations will incorporate the costs into their respective budgets after the grant period. The grant would cover salary and benefits for 18 months as well as computer and software costs to link the person to both organizations.
The committee believes that this project directly meets the goals of the Connection Grant program and recommends that it be funded at this time.

Submitted by
Connections Committee
Dusty Kirk, Dan Griffin and Connie Yarris

Mr. Pierchalski opened discussion on the recommendation saying that he thought the project did not reflect the spirit of the Connection Grant Program, which was to foster asset mergers. He noted that both assets in this project were already doing the reported functions on a part time basis and that the conversion to a full time employee was not actual streamlining.

Ms. Kirk noted that the report may not have reflected all of the benefits, which included increased revenue as well as cost savings. Asset collaborations like this one were very much what the program guidelines called for.

Mr. John Federico representing the Opera was called on to provide additional information. He said that while it was true that some of the functions were being done on a part time basis, this was not a successful model. Funds were needed to move this to full time status and those funds are not currently available to the organizations. In response to a question from Mr. Pierchalski, Mr. Federico estimated that the Opera was spending $10,000-$12,000 on a part time person performing the functions.

Ms. Yarris noted that the Committee felt that encouraging assets to share positions was an important objective and that there was nothing in the program that prohibited funding costs already in existence.

In response to a question from Mr. Pierchalski, Mr. Federico said that the technical assistance to be provided to Attack Theater involved making sure that support elements were in place for productions.

The Chair then summarized the request and called for a motion to approve the recommendation of the Connection Committee. The motion was made by Ms. Yarris and seconded by Mr. Griffin. All members voted in favor except for Mr. Pierchalski who voted no. Having achieved the required six votes, the grant was awarded.

Election of at large board member

Mr. Rob Jones announced that the term of Dr. Herman Jones expires on June 30, 2010. And that pursuant to the provisions in the statute, The District advertised for nominations for this seat from regional economic and community development organizations. In addition to direct letters to such organizations, information was issued to the press and in District publications.
The process resulted in three nominations. The District was advised on the day of the meeting that one of the nominees, Marcie Eberhardt, withdrew due to demands on her time. The remaining candidates have indicated that they meet the eligibility requirements and are willing to serve the two year term.

The remaining candidates were Dr. Herman Jones, Educator and the current at large member, nominated by the Manchester Citizen’s Corporation.

Dr. Daniel Rosen, Educator nominated by the Friendship Development Associates.

The Chair also mentioned that at the last meeting, members requested that staff invite each of the nominees to address the Board at this special meeting. He then called on Dr. Rosen who thanked the Board for the opportunity to participate in the process and outlined four themes that appear to him as District interests: Collaboration and coordination, leveraging funding, outcomes measurement and interest in smaller assets.

In response to a question from Ms. Yarris, Dr. Rosen said that he understood the time requirement and indicated his service on other groups was coming to an end.

The Chair then called on Dr. Jones for remarks. Dr. Jones said that he was honored to serve on the Board for six years and that while willing to serve another term, he understood that members might want to rotate the position. He said that two important accomplishments during his tenure was the focus and now requirement for diversity planning among the assets and the retooling of the ACLA formula process, which has resulted in a proposed formula that received a 34-7 approval vote. He thanked the members for their support and service.

The Chair then called for paper ballots on the election and appointed the Executive Director/Assistant Secretary as the teller. On the first, second and third ballots the votes were the same: Ms. Yarris, Mr. Parker, Mr. Griffin and Ms. Kirk voted for Dr. Rosen and Mr. R. Jones and Mr. Pierchalski voted for Dr. Jones.

After the third ballot, the Chair asked if the members wanted to have some discussion. Members then discussed the candidates and the requirements for the position. The candidates left the room during this time but the meeting remained opened to the public.

Following the discussion, a fourth ballot was taken with the following results: Ms. Yarris, Mr. Parker, Mr. Griffin, Ms. Kirk and Mr. R. Jones voted for Dr. Rosen and Mr. Pierchalski voted for Dr. Jones. Having received the required five votes, Dr. Rosen was elected as the 7th member of the Board for a term of two years.

The Chair thanked Dr. Jones for his service on the Board.

The Chair then asked that the Library Committee meet on June 30 and instructed the Executive Director to coordinate the meeting.
Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:20 PM.