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Hackney, Sheldon: Humanities Chairman Nomination Hearing (1993): News Article 44

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THE WASHINGTON POST
April 15, 1993

Actress Still Up for NEA Post

By Jacqueline Trescott
Washington Post Staff Writer

A spokesman for Jane Alexander denied yesterday that the actress has withdrawn her name from consideration as chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The New York Post, citing Broadway sources, said yesterday the actress's accountant had cheated her out of \$500,000, and the resultant financial strain would prevent her from taking a federal job.

While agreeing that Alexander had some financial difficulties, her agent said it was "absolutely untrue" that she has taken herself out of the running. "There are problems with the accountant and she is trying to sort them out," said Samuel Liff, of the William Morris agency.

"There's no truth that these [financial] problems would take her out of consideration," said a White House official. "She continues to be a candidate for the post."

Alexander, a four-time Oscar nominee who has the support of many in the arts and theater communities, is viewed as one of the leading contenders. Also on top of the list, according to sources, is Deborah Sale, a longtime Clinton associate who headed the arts and humanities team during the transition.

Earlier this week Clinton made the first of his three major arts appointments when Sheldon Hackney, president of the University of Pennsylvania, was picked as chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Besides a permanent head of the NEA, the president has yet to name a chairman of the Institute for Museum Services. Claudine Brown, the deputy assistant secretary for museums at the Smithsonian Institution, has been mentioned as a candidate for both posts but said yesterday she is not leaving the Smithsonian. "At this moment I am not a candidate for any position," Brown said, "and I haven't been offered any."