

1982

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992): News Article 19

Channing Gray

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_I_81

Recommended Citation

Gray, Channing, "Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992): News Article 19" (1982). *Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992)*. Paper 63.
http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_I_81/63

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Education: National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, Subject Files I (1973-1996) at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992) by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu.

AC

Reactor?
Can meeting be
closed this way?

B-8 E The Providence Journal, Friday, November 19, 1982

Council on Arts gives out grants, but ignores some recommendations

By CHANNING GRAY
Journal-Bulletin Arts Writer

PROVIDENCE — The state Council on the Arts yesterday gave out grants totaling \$45,908 to some 30 arts groups, and in the process it overturned a number of recommendations made by its advisory panels.

The council depends heavily on panels of experts who review grant proposals and recommend how much money groups should get. The council usually goes along with the panels, but yesterday it made some significant changes.

At one point in the meeting, which took place at the council's Wickenden Street offices, council member Roberta Holland asked the agency's grants officer, Janice Irwin, how the panelists might react to the changes the board was making. Miss Irwin replied that she was concerned about the "radicalness" of its decisions.

The council barred a *Journal-Bulletin* reporter from covering a publicly posted meeting on Monday. During the session, the council reportedly met with the advisory panel chairmen to discuss yesterday's awards, which are made from public funds.

Christina White, the agency's executive director, told the reporter the board considers the panel's deliberations confidential and since the

substance of those proceedings was to be discussed, the meeting was closed.

Miss White later said that no vote was taken to close the meeting, nor were any minutes kept. She said notice of the meeting had been posted in two places at the council's offices.

The *Journal-Bulletin* filed a complaint with the attorney general's office Wednesday, arguing that the council violated the state Open Meetings Law.

* * *

AMONG THE recommendations altered yesterday, the council voted to give \$1,000 to Rites and Reason, Brown University's black theater component, which had applied for \$1,500 to conduct an audience development program. The panel had recommended no funds for the proposal and said in written comments that the project "needs more structure" and "seems to provide a plan for public relations rather than audience development activities."

But council member Dorothy Licht said she supported the proposal, calling the panel's comments a "little bit of semantics."

Rites and Reason's director, George Bass, is a member of the council, but left the room during the discussion and voting.

The board also approved a \$4,000 award to the Rhode Island Philharmonic to subsidize tickets for the disadvantaged, instead of the \$1,800 the panel suggested. Miss Irwin said that the panel felt this was one of the "most poorly constructed proposals of all."

Council chairman Daniel Lecht said he felt the council would be penalizing the public if it didn't award the orchestra the money it had requested. At least two council members, Mrs. Licht and Ernest Falciglia, both of whom were present yesterday, also sit on the board of the Philharmonic.

7 of 17