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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: PLANNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR THE CITY OF SEATTLE'S LANGSTON HUGHES PERFORMING ARTS INSTITUTE

Introduction

Randy Engstrom walked out of the interview for Interim Director of the City of Seattle's Office of Arts and Culture (OAC) surprised by what had just happened. He had been even more surprised a few weeks earlier to receive a phone call from the Mayor's office to ask him to apply for the position. Though he had applied on his own volition for the OAC Director role a few years back and had served on Seattle's Art Commission for six years, he thought that people knew that he had been traveling down a different career trajectory as of late by preparing for the upcoming 2013 City Council race. He couldn't shake the interview, though. The interviewee asked only a handful of questions and half were about how Randy would pursue a strategy to build a sustainable financial future for the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute (LHPAI), which represented a longstanding challenge for the City that many observers felt had led the previous OAC Director to resign a few months prior. LHPAI wasn't even housed in OAC yet; it was owned and operated by Seattle's Department of Parks and Recreation ("Parks Department") and plans for a transfer were merely rumors at that point.

As he thought more about the interview, Randy realized that if he was offered and took the job, carefully transitioning LHPAI out of the Parks Department and into OAC's portfolio, while establishing a plan for its future, would be the focal point of his near-term career. And while he had interacted with LHPAI before by attending performances and renting out the space, he knew few details about its financial and programmatic struggles beyond what he had read in

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the news. Most important, he knew that LHPAI was a source of emotional and cultural significance to the African-American community in Seattle. Making a decision about LHPAI's future without receiving input from the surrounding community – one who had experienced frustration and mistrust with the city government as of late – could hurt the future success of LHPAI and his ability to perform the role well. Randy felt he needed to carefully balance the community's desires for LHPAI's future with the City's interest in having LHPAI be financially self-sustaining. He also knew that, as a white man, his race might make any actions he took to change LHPAI's finances or operations appear disingenuous to LHPAI supporters.

To succeed at this job, he would need to put in place actionable steps for LHPAI while securing agreement from a variety of stakeholders, many of whom might not immediately see him as being capable of responding to, or even aware of, their needs. How would he pull it off? What was at risk if he failed?

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute History

Following the interview, Randy sought out more information on LHPAI¹ and its history. LHPAI held strong symbolic importance for Seattle's African-American community when it first opened in 1970, because it was housed in the Central Area, a neighborhood that served as the center of Seattle's black community. Though it began as a general community center, it became a de facto arts and cultural center for the African-American community because of the demographic make-up of the neighborhood and because LHPAI leaders prioritized afrocentric programming. Over time as LHPAI's surrounding community became more ethnically and socio-economically diverse, City administrators called into question the center's focus to provide programming by, for and about people of African descent. Each time this occurred, LHPAI supporters responded with passion and picketing. This dispute would likely be reignited regardless of how Randy decided to build a new plan for LHPAI's future. Knowing the full context of the center, its significance to the black community in Seattle, and its struggles and triumphs during its time in the Parks Department would help inform him on the best ways to proceed.

¹ LHPAI had many names throughout the years including the Yesler-Atlantic Community Center, the Langston Hughes Cultural Arts Center and the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center. The most recent name change to the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute occurred after Randy's interview with OAC. However, for simplicity's sake, the author will refer to the center as LHPAI throughout the case.

A Cultural Center for Community Renewal

“LHPAI gave birth to a lot of people, in the arts, in the profession, especially in the theater. It gave them a place to hone their craft, to develop their craft – to work – when they didn’t have a lot of other choices. And that is very important. These people have either gone on to do other things, or they’re building pieces throughout their community. That legacy – the people that have gone through here, and honed their craft here, the ability to create opportunity for folk who didn’t have other opportunities – they had one here. You look into a child’s eyes, you like to see a light. If you look into a child’s eyes and that light is not there, it makes you very sad. That light is hope, that light is opportunity, and that light is passion, and that light enables people to do what they can do. And [LPHAI] gave people the opportunity to shine that light, when other opportunities weren’t there to do that. That, in my mind, is the one of the most important legacies.” – Robert Nellams, Director of Seattle Center

Through the 1960s, racial deed restrictions had prevented people of color from living in most Seattle neighborhoods, and the practice of redlining² in the Central Area – which allowed banks to deny loans to homeowners or would-be homeowners in that neighborhood – shaped the demographics of the community. As a consequence of these two discriminatory policies, the Central Area was left underdeveloped and in disrepair, and was concentrated with people of color, many of whom were low-income. In 1960, not only was the Central Area majority African-American, the vast majority of Seattle’s black community lived there (see Appendix A).

An idea to establish a community center in the Central Area emerged in 1969 as part of Seattle’s faction of the federally funded anti-poverty program called Model Cities. The program was intended to improve the quality of life in economically disadvantaged communities like the Central Area. Seattle City officials wrote that investment was needed in the ‘Model Neighborhood’ of the Central Area and the International District,³ the neighborhood just west of the Central Area, because “it is the center of Seattle’s urban blight and poverty problem.”⁴ As a result of efforts by Walter Hundley, Director of the Seattle Model Cities Program and a prominent leader and activist within Seattle’s black community, the City purchased a Central Area synagogue in 1970 with federal and local funds. Seattle Model Cities Program oversaw

² Redlining refers to a discriminatory pattern of disinvestment and obstructive lending practices that prohibited home ownership among African Americans and other people of color.

³ The International District was home to many recent Asian immigrants primarily from Japan, China and the Philippines, many of whom lived in poverty. In 1960, the Model Neighborhood of the Central Area and the International District comprised 72% of Seattle’s non-white population.

⁴ Seattle Model Cities Program, “Planning for a Model Neighborhood, Part I.” September 23, 1968.

facility management and operations, while the City retained ownership of the building. Although city officials discussed transferring the building's management to a non-profit, ultimately Seattle Model Cities Program decided to give operational control to a citizen advisory council that they oversaw.

The new center met a variety of needs because of how expansive and impressive the building was itself. The orthodox Jewish congregation Chevra Bikur Cholim had hired a famous architect to build the Byzantine-style synagogue when its congregation was growing rapidly in 1915. Following WWII, the Jewish population began to migrate to other Seattle neighborhoods and the congregation saw the opportunity to sell the building so they could purchase a new one in a different neighborhood. Following the purchase of the synagogue, the City remodeled it, building an upstairs performance auditorium and balcony with room for nearly 300 guests, a downstairs multipurpose room suitable for meetings and dance performances, private classroom spaces, a kitchen, office space for staff, and a small parking lot (see Appendix B).

The permitted uses for the center were broad in nature, including social service, community welfare, recreation and cultural activities to help community members rise out of poverty. An arts-centric focus of the center had always been a part of the plans for two distinct reasons. First, Hundley believed that arts and cultural programming helped community members climb out of poverty. In the Model Cities application he stated, "Cultural awareness is a requisite stepping stone to individual growth and development, personal attitudes and aspirations, and even – matter of factly – employment and housing."⁵ Second, municipal advocacy to create more cultural spaces within Seattle, led by the City's Seattle Arts Commission, legitimized Seattle Model Cities Programs' proposal to have federal and local funds invested in the arts.

Due to the racial demographics of the Central Area, the center became a 'de facto' afrocentric facility with programming run by and for the black community. The center's citizen advisory council implemented a variety of programs at the center, such as a daycare, a free meal program, and elderly health services, and taught classes such as African history, afro-hairstyling, Japanese cooking, cinematography, and modern dance, and charged minimal fees to be able to serve the most in need community members. The center also became a place for members of the black community to congregate and mobilize in civil rights advocacy efforts.

⁵ Seattle Model Cities Program. "Proposed Neighborhood Center in Yesler Area Draft Part I Application." March 4, 1969.

Preservation of Afrocentric Programming Amidst Changes

Seattle Model Cities Program had intended to run a financially self-sustaining center by offsetting the operating costs with funds received through grants, donations and facility rental fees. However, just three years later in 1973, the administration and operation of the center was taken over by the City's Department of Parks and Recreation because the center had been unable to raise enough funds to cover costs. To stay true to the original intentions of the Model Cities program, the Parks Department named the center after African-American social activist, poet and novelist Langston Hughes and maintained cultural and arts-centric programming targeted at residents of the Central Area: the center was officially LHPAI. However, as the black consciousness movement from the 1970s faded, LHPAI became less a place for cultural development and more of a traditional community center like other Parks Department facilities in Seattle: space was rented out to outside groups and the center began to charge fees for classes. LHPAI staff, now Parks Department employees, continued to experience tension between serving the community and becoming financially sustaining. A former LHPAI director explained in an appeal for continued funding from the Seattle Model Cities Program that low fees were essential:

“Community participation depends upon the lack of fees, as the residents of the area cannot afford them. What will happen when they are asked to begin paying for a class, or for a meal? The center is [also] a place where community programs can be organized and in turn direct their services back out in the community. With the advent of the predicted limited budget...our motto of service would be severely limited.”⁶

In the 1980s, an economic crisis put all of the cultural and arts facilities that Seattle's Parks Department operated on the chopping block; LHPAI was the only one that survived and continued to receive dedicated City funds for its operations. At the time, some observers felt that LHPAI was the only arts center saved because of special protections the center enjoyed, not because it was more popular than others. They said that Hundley, who had then become Superintendent of the Parks Department, used his political and social capital to protect the building from change. For instance, the building had been declared a historic landmark in 1980, which qualified it for historic preservation grants and other economic incentives. In the subsequent years while LHPAI continued 'business as usual' programming targeted at the

⁶ Thomas Turner, Director of Langston Hughes Cultural Center. "Petition to the Model Cities Advisory Council." Letter from Department of Parks and Recreation to Model Cities Advisory Council. April 25, 1974.

largely black population of the Central Area, the other arts facilities that had been cut struggled to emerge as viable non-profit entities.⁷

In 1996, Washington State voters passed a statewide initiative⁸ that added a new state statute prohibiting discrimination or preferential treatment on the basis of race and ethnicity in public contracting, education, and employment. This law raised new concerns about the afrocentric focus of LHPAI as a publically funded entity. Some municipal employees felt that the new statute meant that the City could no longer run a facility that was set up to solely serve one specific racial community. In 2001, when the Parks Department reorganized LHPAI to focus on performing arts rather than arts and recreational programming, they wrote a new mission statement that made no mention of an afrocentric cultural focus:

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center builds community by providing opportunities for artists and audiences to connect through the medium of art as a catalyst for community dialogue and social change.

Long-time LHPAI supporters and vocal black community members felt threatened by the mission statement change, because LHPAI was one of the only places left in the Central Area that had consistently celebrated and represented their culture. Many black theater companies, dance troupes, and other private or non-profit afrocentric artistic endeavors had failed in the 1980s and 1990s due to financial struggles. However, Parks Department not only pointed to the new state statute, but to the demographic shift within the Central Area. By 2000, the Central Area had become predominantly white and higher-income, with the black population decreasing by 60% since 1970; by 2010, the Central Area was no longer majority black (see Appendix C). The majority of the African-American community now lived close to an hour bus ride away from LHPAI, in either Southeast Seattle neighborhoods or suburbs with cheaper housing miles from the city's southern border.

Tension between the City government and the black community, exacerbated by the growing gentrification of the Central Area, instances of racial profiling in local policing, and the demolition of a venerable low-income housing project to build high-rise market-rate condominiums a few blocks from LHPAI, continues today.

⁷ All arts facilities that the Parks Department once operated existed as non-profit entities in Seattle in 2015.

⁸ Initiative 200 in 1998 added to Washington's law the following language: "The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting." Initiative 200 notably did not gain a majority of votes in the city of Seattle.

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute Identity and Struggles

Constraints for an Arts Facility within the Parks Department

Initially, LHPAI's mission and programming was largely dictated by the Model Cities grant funding. When the Parks Department took over operational and financial responsibility for LHPAI from the Model Cities program, various bureaucratic constraints emerged for LHPAI leaders intent on staying true to the center's original purpose.

LHPAI programming was largely influenced by the willingness and dedication of the center's leadership to work beyond the constraints of the Parks Department's staffing structures. Parks Department facility leaders were *Facility Coordinators*⁹ trained in organizing class schedules, coordinating outside rentals, and supervising staff. Facility staff, or *Recreation Specialists*, were trained to schedule and promote facility activities and manage basic daily operations. The expectation was that people in these roles could successfully perform the duties of their job at whichever Parks Department facility they worked. LHPAI, as the only performing arts center in the Parks Department repertoire, needed staff with more specialized skills. Typical roles found at most performing arts organizations, such as artistic director, lighting and sound specialists, stage managers, grant writers, and marketing staff, were filled at LHPAI by Parks Department staff not formally trained in – or expected to perform – any of those duties.

The ability to fulfill its role as an arts organization intending to serve a low-income community was further constrained by the funding structure. The majority of LHPAI's budget came from Seattle's General Fund via the Parks Department. Being largely dependent on tax rolls – and, therefore subject to massive fluctuations during economic downturns – the General Funds' revenue source suffered from extreme volatility. Also, only LHPAI's operating budget came from the Parks Department, so production costs needed to come from other sources, such as grants, donations, and production revenues. Further, some Parks Department central office staffers did not understand the needs of an arts organization. One time an LHPAI Director requested money for a computer ticketing system, and Parks Department central staff responded, "Why do you need that? You should be doing arts and crafts, not high-quality arts."

Finally, rigid municipal compensation structures meant that LHPAI spent the majority of its operating budget on staffing. As LHPAI hired more staff, and staff became more experienced, the center needed more operational funding from Parks Department to compensate employees as they advanced through ascending salary steps. OAC estimates indicated that typical non-profit and private arts organizations usually spent a quarter of their operating budget on staff;

⁹ In other contexts, this position might be considered an Executive Director or Manager.

however, at LHPAI this was closer to 90%. For instance, in 2012, the Executive Director of LHPAI made \$130,000 a year, significantly higher than a leader for a typical independent arts organization might make.

Transition to a Performing Arts Center

One leader in particular stepped beyond these constraints and turned LHPAI into a well-known performing arts facility. Steve Sneed, an African-American man who grew up in the Central Area and attended LHPAI performances as a teen, is hailed as the leader who “built a struggling institution into a vibrant showcase for the arts.”¹⁰ He was hired as LHPAI’s Assistant Coordinator in the late 1980s following time spent as a playwright, theater producer, and acting instructor, and soon took over the Coordinator role in 1989. He recalled wanting to offer opportunities to youth of color that they did not receive in their schools: “If you’re an African-American high-school student in this area, and they do a production of ‘Peter Pan’ at your school, chances are you’re not going to get the opportunity to play Peter.”¹¹ He quickly realized that he would confront many institutional barriers as he pursued this vision, because he found out his recreation experience of running a music club at a community center was what qualified him for the job, not his extensive theater background.

It took political maneuvering and risk-taking to bring his vision to fruition. For instance, in anticipation of the Parks Department shutting down LHPAI for earthquake proofing in 1991, Steve saw the opportunity to make other changes that Parks Department would not agree to fund. He secured grants to install new carpeting, new theater seats, a lighting grid, and a genie lift, all staples of performing arts theaters. He also obtained a National Endowments of the Arts planning grant that after nearly two years of work produced a report recommending how LHPAI could become a strong performing arts theater: implement a subscription theater season, restructure staff positions to be arts-specific, and become a non-profit entity to have more control over the future of the facility.

He implemented many of the recommendations fundamental to how private performing arts facilities operate, and left a legacy that continues today. He established a four-play subscription season and sold annual memberships. He successfully lobbied the Parks Department to recognize the facility’s progress, which subsequently led Parks Department to change LHPAI’s name to ‘Performing Arts Center’ and replace the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator positions with Executive Director and Artistic Director roles, respectively. The Central Area

¹⁰ Bargreen, Melinda. Seattle Times. “Arts council’s 2001 grants to stay at last year’s level.” 19 October 2001.

¹¹ Berson, Misha. Seattle Times. “Song-and-dance show raises money to jazz up teen summer musical.” 22 June 2001.

community met these changes with overwhelming support. His summer youth musical program annually brought in over 200 kids, primarily African-American youth, to audition, and over 2,000 people to the performances. After one of the plays, an elderly black woman from the neighborhood pulled Steve aside and said with tears in her eyes, “Oh, to see that chocolate girl up there! It did my heart so good!”

But his ambition came at a cost. Steve had finally convinced Parks Department to lend LHPAI extra funds, and his staff prioritized the subscription season over facility rentals. Due to a low cash flow from a low rate of facility rentals and a meager subscription rate, LHPAI could not make up the revenue to cover their borrowed money and ended up in debt. Even if LHPAI made revenue to cover their debt, the center did not come close to covering their total costs with program revenue. Like LHPAI leaders before him had done, Steve had purposely designed programming fees to meet LHPAI’s mission: youth involved in the Summer Musical paid low fees, people who attended LHPAI-run performances paid lower than average ticket prices, and the center often donated space to community organizations and struggling artists. These financial difficulties raised challenging questions of whether LHPAI could fully achieve Steve’s vision of a premiere performing arts facility if it continued to exist as a municipal entity.

Growing Community Mistrust of City Government

Supporters of LHPAI and long-time residents of the Central Area, in particular African-Americans, had felt mistrust and frustration with the City government for many years because of police shootings in the neighborhood, poor support for local schools, and the lack of support for affordable housing in the Central Area to counteract growing gentrification. Tensions became even more personal in 2008 when LHPAI’s first Artistic Director, Jacqueline “Jackie” Moscou, a 30-year stage actress and playwright veteran well known in Seattle’s African-American arts circles, was placed on administrative leave by the Parks Department. In the few years after Steve departed, LHPAI had floundered financially and programmatically until Jackie helped launch new, successful ventures like the Langston Hughes African-American Film Festival and the Black Nativity play. A few years after Jackie began work at LHPAI, however, some of her colleagues complained to the Parks Department about her workplace behavior and leadership style. An independent consultant hired by Parks Department to perform a workplace assessment wrote a 22-page report suggesting that Jackie had used personal ties at the mayor’s office to get her Artistic Director job over higher-ranked candidates, and had made racially intimidating and offensive comments to her colleagues. After reading the report, the Mayor’s office asked Parks Department and the City Attorney to investigate the claims, placing Jackie on leave pending the investigation’s outcome.

The report also suggested that Jackie’s interpretation of LHPAI’s mission differed significantly from other staffers, who claimed that the center should provide opportunities for people of all ages, incomes and races. Jackie said of the accusations, “I’ve been accused of this being a personal agenda of mine. Over and over again I’ve said ‘no, this is not my mission, it’s the historic mission upon which Langston Hughes is built and I’m just standing up for it.’”¹² Jackie had openly maintained that LHPAI programming should be for and about black artists and black culture, and that LHPAI staff should reflect the community that the center served. At this time, many of LHPAI’s staff were non-black, including LHPAI’s first non-black Executive Director, who had been hired a few years earlier in 2004. The staff themselves split along racial lines over whether LHPAI’s purpose and programming needed to change to reflect the new demographics of the community.

Supporters of Jackie thought that her short-term removal and investigation were part of larger City plans to change the mission of LHPAI to one favoring more ethnically diverse programming. Her supporters took over a Parks Department meeting where Jackie’s attorney announced to the concerned community members,

“Jackie’s been accused of being too pro-black. Langston Hughes is a culturally and racially specific building, and the Parks Department can’t support that kind of programming. Anytime we talk about black, it’s bad; every time we have a room, we have to share it with everybody else. [Jackie’s investigation] is about trying to change the purpose of this building.”¹³

In the Parks Department meeting, some members said the building was mismanaged and needed new leadership. Others said that it should leave the bureaucracy of the Parks Department and become its own nonprofit. Later that week, LHPAI supporters organized candlelight vigils outside of the center to encourage the city to reinstate Jackie and preserve the center’s mission. Not every LHPAI supporter or member of the black community felt as though Jackie’s temporary leave was an attack on the black community or the Central Area. Many believed her investigation was simply a move by the city in response to concerns that she had performed poorly at her job. Jackie was reinstated six months later, and the difference in opinions of whether she deserved her job back, or deserved the unnecessary investigation and bad press, continued to weigh heavily in the community for years.

¹² Turnbull, Lornet. The Seattle Times. “Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center in crisis.” 7 January 2008.

¹³ Kiley, Brendan. The Stranger. “Town Squall.” 6 December 2007.

A Return to Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute’s Historical Purpose

Parks Department responded to the strong community concern regarding Jackie’s temporary removal by bringing in an African-American artist with veteran City municipal experience to lead the center in 2009. As an older African-American woman with a disability, Royal Alley-Barnes was known as a champion of equity and of providing opportunities to those who have been historically disenfranchised. Parks Department also contracted with a consultant to study the center and provide feedback on how it could become successful. As a result of these efforts, the mission was changed back to focus the center’s work on afrocentric cultural arts. The mission of LHPAI now reads:

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute celebrates, nurtures, preserves and presents African American and Diaspora performing arts, cultural wealth and iconic legacies.

The City also hoped that Royal’s experience working for over 30 years in city government would provide some administrative structure to the center and help grow its revenue. Royal began new programming to support LHPAI’s mission, including an artist-in-residence studio supporting emerging black artists, an annual partnership for a dance-company-in-residence program, and monthly open mic nights led by a local hip-hop group. She also successfully maintained LHPAI programming at alternate sites for two years while the building was remodeled for seismic and structural upgrades.

But her efforts did not increase LHPAI’s revenue. Akin to LHPAI leaders over the years, Royal believed that LHPAI was a space not only to celebrate and showcase black arts in Seattle, but a place to provide opportunities to engage with arts for low-income community members. She said,

“You have to understand when you’re serving underserved or marginalized communities it’s not about raising ticket prices. We make jobs for local artists here, and that’s important for keeping them here. A city at its artistic and aesthetic core needs to be mindful of its grass-roots artists.”¹⁴

In 2012, LHPAI donated 626 free hours to 38 organizations – Parks Department estimated this was about \$75,000 worth of time – and took in approximately 12% of its revenue through class fees, grants, and facility rentals (See Figure 1).

¹⁴ Heffter, Emily. Seattle Times. “Langston Hughes center’s city subsidy under review.” 29 January 2013.

Figure 1: LHPAI 2012 Operating Budget¹⁵

Revenue	Dollars (\$)	Percentage of total (%)	Expenses	Dollars (\$)	Percentage of total (%)
Parks Department funding	\$645,907	90%	Personnel (7 FTE)	\$628,878	88%
Program fees, grants and rentals	\$70,880	10%	Operating	\$87,909	12%
<i>Total Revenue</i>	<i>\$716,787</i>		<i>Total Expenses</i>	<i>\$716,787</i>	

A NEW COURSE FOR THE LANGSTON HUGHES PERFORMING ARTS INSTITUTE

Learning the Political Landscape

Randy was offered and accepted the Interim OAC Director position amidst the 2013 budget process in fall 2012. He believed he was chosen for the position because he had done a lot of work with diverse communities and for arts and cultural facilities in the Seattle area for over a decade. In addition to serving as chair of the Seattle Arts Commission, he was founder to a multi-media artist development company, served as founding director of a community cultural arts center in another low-income neighborhood in Seattle, consulted with prominent arts organizations, and had been the recipient of local leadership awards. “My background as an artist and an administrator and an advocate has been about how we serve the community and how we create public value, and public benefit,” he said. “That’s the lens I look at and work through.”

Given the rumors surrounding his predecessor’s resignation, Randy also knew he had to understand the political and financial landscape surrounding LHPAI. He also set out to learn more about behind-the-scenes discussions about LHPAI that were not a part of public record.

15 Memo from Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent for Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation to Sally Bagshaw, Chair of City Council Parks and Neighborhoods Committee. “Funding Options for Arts-related Programs at Seattle Parks and Recreation.” 1 June 2012.

Emerging Dire Financial Constraints

Though Seattle citizens consistently voted for funds to support city parks, there was a limited, dedicated source of revenue to operate and maintain existing facilities like LHPAI. Due to the economic recession in the late-2000s, Seattle's General Fund revenues declined, and departments whose budgets relied on the General Fund suffered. Nearly 70% of the Parks Department's operating budget came from the General Fund. Because LHPAI in turn relied on Parks Department funding, the City's Budget Office decided to transfer a significant amount of Admission Tax funds from OAC to the Parks Department in order to keep arts-specific facilities and programming in operation; LHPAI was one of three Parks Department programs to receive these funds. The City Council ("Council") passed an ordinance to limit this transfer of funds to last for only two years. The transfer of money from OAC to Parks Department was perceived as 'a big hit' on OAC's budget, because Admission Tax money came from people purchasing tickets at arts and cultural events in the city – not from fees received at Parks Department facilities like LHPAI. Though LHPAI staff and patrons saw LHPAI as a performing arts center, many people in the arts community saw it as a center unworthy of these funds because the center was funded through the Parks Department budget.

During the 2013 budget process as the Admissions Tax subsidy to support LHPAI was running out, the Council required the Parks Department to submit a report detailing future funding options for LHPAI, because, as Councilmember Sally Bagshaw explained, "The potential evaporation of almost all the funding for one of Parks' programs was cause for concern."¹⁶ Councilmember Nick Licata remarked that LHPAI was "an unsustainable model. I think that's pretty much accepted by everyone."¹⁷ The Council directed Parks Department to present potential options that could provide long-term financial support to maintain and operate LHPAI. Parks Department Director Christopher Williams presented this report at a City Council meeting in July 2012 that explained a variety of options for LHPAI's future, such as leasing LHPAI to an outside organization, expanding rentals within the current funding model, or eliminating multiple staff positions. Councilmember Bagshaw remembers getting to the core of the problem in the lengthy Council discussion, "which was whether producing 'commercial grade' performing arts is really the core business of Parks, and what the loss would be to the community if Parks ceased that function."¹⁸

16 Bagshaw, Sally. "A SLI maneuver: Navigating the City budget for parks and arts." Blog post. 23 October 2012. Accessed 12 February 2015. <http://bagshaw.seattle.gov/2012/10/23/a-sli-maneuver-navigating-the-city-budget-for-parks-and-arts/>

17 Heffter, E. "Langston Hughes center's subsidy under review."

18 Bagshaw, S. "A SLI maneuver."

Transferring LHPAI out of the Parks Department

Due to City Council deliberations, report analysis, and the expiring Admissions Tax ordinance, Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn decided he wanted to transfer the management of LHPAI out of Parks Department and into OAC, writing it into his 2013 proposed budget plan. Some people opposed the plan, most notably former OAC Director Vincent Kitch. Kitch and his staff saw the proposed transfer as presenting significant challenges to OAC, because at the time they believed that OAC should stick with its mission of providing small grants to arts and cultural partners, not producing art themselves. For instance, in 2012, OAC invested \$2.4 million in 353 organizations and artists in Seattle which manifested itself as many small grants to most arts entities in the city. In comparison to LHPAI, cultural organizations with similar programming as LHPAI covered between .19% and 1.31% of their budget with OAC grants, and arts organizations similar in operating budget size to LHPAI covered .41% and 1.11% of their operating budget with OAC grants. Investing in LHPAI at the level that Parks Department had maintained for years, covering 90% of LHPAI's operating budget with city funding, meant that nearly 27% of OAC's cultural arts funding would go to just one entity: LHPAI.

In a memo to the Mayor's office after receiving the proposal, Kitch and his staff wrote that the administrative needs of LHPAI would be a burden for their office, questioned the size of LHPAI's staff and thought that the center should be more financially self-sufficient. They also questioned LHPAI's afrocentric mission, stating that it should instead be a center "representative of all communities of color." The Mayor's Office insisted that OAC assume administrative responsibility of LHPAI without making changes to the center's focus and mission, and a few weeks later Kitch resigned as OAC Director. Kitch did not publicly explain why he decided to leave this post.

Some artists welcomed the transfer of LHPAI to OAC, because many found that Parks Department procedures and paperwork were difficult to navigate compared to working with other performing arts venues. An Arts Commissioner stated, "It made sense that [LHPAI] was moving over to Arts. It didn't seem like it was that big of a deal. LHPAI has been languishing in the Parks Department, and arts organizations hated going into that venue." She heard that LHPAI staff worked with arts organizations "as if they were scheduling soccer matches. The expertise and customer service was lacking." Royal agreed, stating,

"This is an amazing opportunity for underrepresented and marginalized grass-roots communities to become highly visible in the city's public performing arts scene. Mayor

McGinn has touched many hearts with this proposal, and has generated civic excitement by making LHPAI an operating unit in the Office of Arts and Culture.”¹⁹

On the list of first steps for OAC to help LHPAI: create an independent website and publish a calendar of events, two things that had never been done during the forty years that LHPAI was run by the Parks Department.

Questioning the Future of City Financial Support

The City Council was more wary about the long-term implications of the transfer, and saw it as having significant budgetary implications for the OAC, as former Director Kitch had observed. Councilmember Licata remarked, “A concern I have is that LHPAI costs the City over \$700,000 annually to run, while it earns only about \$70,000 per year. Other City-owned properties conducting arts operations are leased to independent arts organizations that run their own programs.”²⁰ Before the Council adopted the mayor’s budget, Councilmember Licata added a Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI)²¹ to the transfer (see Appendix D). Because he didn’t want to “maintain an unsustainable precedent” of having the city or OAC financially support LHPAI indefinitely, the SLI required OAC to develop a plan for LHPAI’s long-term sustainability. It mandated that OAC, in collaboration with the Arts Commission, establish a mechanism for long-term financial support and stability for LHPAI by considering and recommending whether LHPAI should:

- Continue to be operated by the City;
- Be leased or transferred to a group or organization to carry forward LHPAI programming; or
- Be managed by a third-party organization for the City.

The SLI was basically a mandate to OAC that LHPAI’s organizational structure and business plan needed to be examined thoroughly. The SLI also required OAC to “create a stakeholder group in developing this plan, comprised of LHPAI’s audiences, its patrons, and the arts and culture community” which addressed City Council concerns that LHPAI advocates might not support the transfer. Finally, the plan would need to include a financial review of why the preferred option provides the best opportunity for long-term fiscal stability for LHPAI. According a Council

¹⁹ Fucoloro, Tom. Central District News. “Mayor proposes changes to Langston Hughes PAC, Licata and Bagshaw call for community meeting.” 17 September 2012.

²⁰ Licata, Nick. “Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center.” Blog post, Council Connection. 13 November 2012.

²¹ According to the Seattle City Council, a Statement of Legislative Intent is a mandated requirement and is used for various purposes, such as to explain an action, call for an additional study, give guidance for City policy, or create a work program for a City department.

staff member, “the SLI was a step to acknowledge the budgetary constraints, and allow [the Council] to check on the progress as it moves forward.” The Council unanimously voted to include the SLI in the 2013 budget. An artist remarked, “The SLI was a game changer by giving purpose and direction. It was the first time the question changed from ‘What to do we do about LHPAI?’ to ‘How do we help LHPAI become self-sustaining?’”

LHPAI staff members and supporters were not as outwardly supportive of the details of the SLI. While they had welcomed the departmental transfer, they were worried about the potential for LHPAI to potentially undergo an organizational change and receive less city funding. Royal said she felt “absolutely no unease” about subsidizing LHPAI’s operations with city funds, and she dismissed the idea that LHPAI should cover its costs solely through fundraising and higher ticket prices, or that the center should be run by a private entity. “Any municipality pays for what it values,” Royal said. “It may be difficult for a municipality to pay for something they don’t understand.”²²

PLANNING FOR A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The OAC was tasked with many important projects when Randy took over in fall 2012. But right away, Randy recognized the need to make LHPAI’s organizational plan a priority. An interim plan responding to the SLI was due to the Council on September 1, 2013, only nine months later. “The SLI felt like clear marching orders,” Randy stated, but also “a big undertaking to bring people and information together.” In his research, he had uncovered that over the last five years Parks Department had commissioned three separate reports to study LHPAI’s leadership, programmatic and financial struggles. While these studies provided many recommendations to help the city reduce its investment and drive LHPAI to become more self-sustaining, Randy discovered that a “lack of political will” left the reports largely untouched and nobody at the City had been tracking any progress (or lack thereof).

While these studies gave Randy many recent detailed recommendations that he could use to address the SLI, he felt that giving voice to a stakeholder group would be essential to the success of whichever plan OAC would eventually implement. He decided he needed to bring people together and hear what they wanted first. Because he held extensive community engagement experience, he knew it was important to hear from LHPAI supporters and artists, and representatives from the black community. Given that the lack of political interest had prevented changes from taking place at LHPAI before, he recognized that the stakeholder group would also need participation from city staff members. Randy was also especially mindful of

²² Heffter, E. “Langston Hughes center’s subsidy under review.”

Royal and LHPAI staff, given the community unrest only a few years earlier with the City's investigation of Artistic Director Jackie Moscou. He wanted to work closely with Royal and planned to ensure that she signed off on every proposal he had. He then convened and led a small, ad hoc 'leadership team' consisting of himself, Royal and Michele Scoleri, a senior advisor in the Mayor's office, to get the process started.

Randy also determined what goals he had for the stakeholder group and how best to structure the process to allow them to successfully create those outputs to meet the goals. The SLI was vague in this regard, so with input from his leadership team, he determined that the role of the stakeholder group would be to produce a report for LHPAI recommending an organizational model, a fundraising structure, clear steps on how to manage the facility, an outline of new revenue sources, and a defined level of funding from the city. He expected the committee to review the three previous studies conducted and the recommendations, giving particular attention to earlier efforts aimed at helping LHPAI become a "freestanding community based performing arts organization" as the committee formalized their recommendations. He decided to hold two-hour meetings once a month for six months at LHPAI, with the sixth meeting only needed in case the process required further time for decision-making. Randy identified a topic for each meeting (see Appendix E) and chose to invite two outside experts to provide support to the process: one in the third meeting to present relevant examples of local and national organizations that had been in similar situations to LHPAI, and the other during the fourth and fifth meetings to facilitate the decision-making process for the group's recommendations.

Randy collaborated with his leadership team to carefully select stakeholders to involve in the process. He asked himself, "Who do we need to make sure is at the table so that later they can't say 'I don't like [the plan] because I wasn't there?'" He relied on relationships he had built working with both racially diverse communities and arts communities in the Seattle area, and focused on forging new relationships with city staff during his first few months on the job. He called the group of stakeholders the 'Action Committee' to "conjure up forward movement." He asked representatives from the Arts Commission, the Mayor's Office, the City Budget Office, and the City Council to serve on the committee, and recruited city staff working in various arts and film departments, members from the nonprofit arts community, prominent members of the African-American community in Seattle, and supporters of LHPAI to also join (See Appendix F).

The majority of the members of the committee identified as African-American and many were either artists or active supporters of the arts outside of their day jobs. A handful of members had also grown up in the Central Area. A city staff person stated that Randy "really invited everyone to the table. Too often people are assembled that are not as representative of what

they could be – either of the issue that’s being addressed or the geographic area of the concern.” Randy was worried that people would see the committee process as replicating processes that created the three previous LHPAI reports, so he made sure that he spoke with potential members when they were asked to join the committee. “A lot of people had been gun-shy about this process based on [LHPAI’s] history. I reassured people that this was going to be a productive process and that we were going to follow through.”

To help lead the committee, Randy created a leadership structure by asking two members of the arts community to act as co-chairs for the committee. “I hoped the co-chairs would plan the meetings and steer the process,” he said, “And that they would be partners to [the leadership team] in the process.” Randy wanted the co-chairs of the Action Committee to “have legitimacy with the arts community and the people of color community,” so he asked two women of color who had served on the Arts Commission to take these roles. Dorothy Mann, an African-American civic leader who had been the lead consultant on a previous report about LHPAI and previously served on the Arts Commission, “had bulletproof credibility with LHPAI and the Arts Commission.” Terri Hiroshima, an Asian-American arts professional and current member of the Arts Commission, could bring key pieces of information back to the commission to “keep them abreast of plans and give them the chance to weigh in about the process.”

Randy also decided that his leadership team of Michele and Royal would be present at each meeting in case people needed detailed information. He recalled, “The staff role was to provide history and context of the SLI, OAC, the transfer [from the Parks Department] and LHPAI.” Randy and Royal each chose one additional staff member of their respective units, OAC and LHPAI, to join committee meetings because while Randy wanted staff to be present, he wanted to limit the number of them to encourage the committee to feel as if they had decision-making power. Randy also created a briefing folder for members that included the Action Committee’s roles and responsibilities, contact information for members and LHPAI staff, ground rules for meetings, slides for the first meeting, recent news articles about LHPAI, and the three previous LHPAI studies. Each member received the folder before they formally accepted their role on the committee so people had enough information to decide whether they wanted to serve on it, and so that they could be in a position to make informed decisions during the process.

THE ACTION COMMITTEE PROCESS UNFOLDS

After the second meeting, despite the groundwork Randy had laid, the process was not going as he had planned and the committee was behind on making progress toward his goals. “Everything you can imagine happened,” recalled a committee member. “The process got messy; not everybody was on the same page and not everybody wanted the same outcomes.” Randy knew that people might have strong opinions about LHPAI’s future, which is why he

spent the first meeting providing context and reviewing the Action Committee's role, his goals for the committee process and what outputs they would produce. He led the group through a lengthy presentation, providing a thorough overview of LHPAI's finances, the SLI, past recommendations from the three previous studies, and outlined common goals for LHPAI that were either accomplished, in process, or requiring action (See Appendix G). He had explained in the first meeting that the Action Committee was charged with only addressing goals that 'required action' because the others had already been decided by the leadership team.

"To me," Randy said, "It was clear that we needed to reduce the City's investment *and* preserve its historical mission." He believed that the Council's intention with the SLI was to ask OAC to build a non-profit structure for LHPAI because of these two goals. He continued, "The previous reports all said the same thing: the bureaucracy makes it too challenging for the city to run a cultural arts center." But committee members challenged this opinion. During the first two meetings, this conflict manifested itself in divisions between Action Committee stakeholder factions and debates regarding the mission, staff roles and LHPAI programming, preventing the group from reaching any agreement on what organizational structure LHPAI should take.

Debates about City Investment and LHPAI's Mission

LHPAI supporters on the committee were worried that reducing the City's investment might decimate the history of the center. For instance, in the first meeting, a prominent leader within the African-American community and LHPAI supporter said he didn't share the goal of LHPAI becoming independent. "I'd like to see the City continue to support LHPAI." Other LHPAI supporters chimed in. They pointed to how the City had dedicated funding in the past to seemingly superfluous projects such as fireworks celebrations and professional sports arenas, and argued that the city should instead see preserving art opportunities for the black community as a societal benefit. "If LHPAI becomes a non-profit," an LHPAI supporter stated, "Will we take away the city's sense of responsibility to the cultural base? Would the city feel absolved? This is bigger than just arts. It could change Seattle's climate."

Committee members shared a variety of concerns regarding LHPAI's mission, too; some felt it was too constraining and should be a part of the committee conversation, others felt that the mission was fine, but that LHPAI needed better marketing to generate revenue. Some committee members felt that keeping a mission with exclusive focus on serving the black community appeared to have limited LHPAI's prospects for financial success for decades, so would benefit from a change. Others wondered whether the community was holding onto the mission for historical reasons, rather than practical reasons. An Arts Commissioner recalled,

“The biggest thing at risk during this process was losing the older African-Americans’ trust and interest and love in that venue. That came up as a question. How trusted and loved is that venue? Because [community members] don’t support it with their feet and their dollars. Instead, it’s an emotional thing.”

Some members thought that LHPAI needed to expand the audience if they were going to preserve the mission. “LHPAI can either be rented out as professional space with higher rental fees,” said an Arts Commissioner, “Or it can start advertising extensively to the gentrifying community.” Many committee members, especially LHPAI staff and supporters, balked at that idea, claiming that would change the nature of the programming. Royal acknowledged that LHPAI had a revenue problem but asserted that it had nothing to do with hers or Jackie’ management. Others felt that Royal and Jackie lacked the necessary skills to help LHPAI generate revenue, and pointed to Royal’s decision to rent LHPAI space to artists for free and a finding from one of the recent LHPAI studies stating that the facility was used at only 26% of its capacity. A member of the non-profit arts community stated,

“[LHPAI] isn’t doing what it’s supposed to be doing. And it hasn’t been doing what it was supposed to be doing for a long time. It’s going to take a dynamic leader with some serious vision, who isn’t going to be caught holding the baggage that we seem to not be able to let go of.”

Tensions between City Staff and Community Members

Community members became somewhat disillusioned by the presence of so many city staff members involved in the process. Randy and the co-chairs facilitated the first two meetings together, and he had brought City and LHPAI staff to the table to ensure that all realms of local government were a part of the process to encourage collaboration when it came time to implement the plan. Some committee members wondered if city staff could be objective because they thought their careers were wrapped up in how smoothly the process went and how constituents might perceive the final recommendation. A staff person within a municipal arts office explained,

“This is a political process, and we have an election coming up...There are council members, there are those from the Mayor’s Office, who will be in a completely different place four months from now...then there’s the [City] Council and the Mayor’s Office people: ‘We don’t want the recommendation to harm us politically, even if we’re not running for reelection. We don’t want to upset the community, we don’t want to be viewed as bigots or whatever.’”

Having LHPAI staff present at the meeting also created tension and confusion. For example, in the second meeting, Royal provided an overview of LHPAI's current organizational model and business plan, including its values, goals, mission, and funding sources. Randy had asked Royal to address questions that were raised in the first meeting so that members had sufficient information. While a lively discussion ensued, it was dominated by City and LHPAI voices, not by Action Committee members. Some members felt that LHPAI staff had so much invested in the process that it was disruptive to making forward progress. A member of the arts community recalled,

"Everybody's walking on eggshells because the [LHPAI] staff came up and said, 'We're not going to talk about changing the mission, we're not going to talk about changing the staff, we're not going to do that.' It was a whole laundry list of what we weren't going to do. If you're going to define the process by what you're not going to do, you're not going to do anything."

Having LHPAI staff present also meant that some committee members did not reveal their true views of what LHPAI's future organizational model should be. For many community member, it felt awkward that there were direct implications for the jobs of LHPAI staff members who were participating in the Committee meetings. A community member stated,

"Everyone felt respect for the current leadership, and people were navigating really hard to be careful around the leadership in the room...When people in that room talked about money they were essentially talking about staff positions and people's futures when some of those people were in the room. That was complicated and awkward."

Divisions between LHPAI Supporters and Arts Professionals

As the Committee process unfolded, it became clear that the Committee members who were LHPAI Executive Community Members²³ and members who were arts professionals held very different perspectives on how an arts organization should be run. This tension manifested itself in discussions about LHPAI's future organizational model, staff roles and compensation, and funding. The tension itself was puzzling to some arts professionals, because they thought that many LHPAI supporters protested to care about the center but did not appear to be active in supporting it. "You talk to people who have strong feelings about it," an Arts Commissioner

²³ The LHPAI Executive Community Members were a volunteer group of people who provided advice to Royal regarding LHPAI programming and funding opportunities. They also supported LHPAI by hosting fundraisers.

said, “but they aren’t donors, and they don’t anticipate being donors. They are just averse to change.”

A key issue of contention was the model for LHPAI. In the first meeting, a committee member pointed out that the agenda Randy had constructed for the group indicated that the committee would engage in research on 501(c)(3) non-profit model in the future, stating, “Has it already been determined that this is the direction LHPAI is to go? If so, what is this committee here to do?” Randy clarified that he did not mean to imply that the committee should pursue one particular direction. Once it was underway, the committee’s conversation about which model to pursue brought to light different perspectives. LHPAI supporters worried that a non-profit model would put LHPAI’s mission at risk, require extensive fundraising in an already saturated non-profit arts community in Seattle, and would likely result in substantially reduced salaries for LHPAI staff. They believed a different organizational model might allow current LHPAI employees to stay on as City employees on loan. In response, an Arts Commission member stated that LHPAI staff “was overpaid both for the [arts] sector and in general,” and that most of LHPAI’s revenue should be going to programming. An LHPAI supporter replied that they believed that the staff was actually underpaid, because the value of LHPAI to the broader community was so great.

Regardless of what model was chosen, the arts professionals on the Action Committee felt that LHPAI needed staff members who were stronger at both fundraising and programming. According to one of the previous studies, a successful performing arts company generally raises 35-50% of its annual budget through fundraising; one of the recent reports found that LHPAI’s fundraising only covered 10% of its expenses. A member of the non-profit arts community said,

“To be in this sector, you have to do this thing called ‘fundraising.’ Fundraising is a big part of the work, and will be a part of this entity, too. Non-profit arts is like the restaurant business; it’s competitive. You’re not going to automatically make it because you have a good idea.”

A tension that went unspoken between these two groups was a perception of power. Arts professionals felt as if LHPAI supporters and LHPAI staff had the power to turn the African-American community against them if they supported a drastic organizational change for LHPAI. Many of these arts professionals had to work really hard to sustain their audiences and maintain sufficient revenues, so the threat of losing audience members was significant. African-American municipal employees working in the arts felt similarly. A staff member of a city arts department explained, “If we say the wrong thing, [LHPAI staff and supporters] are going to go out in the community and tell everybody that we’re trying to destroy LHPAI.”

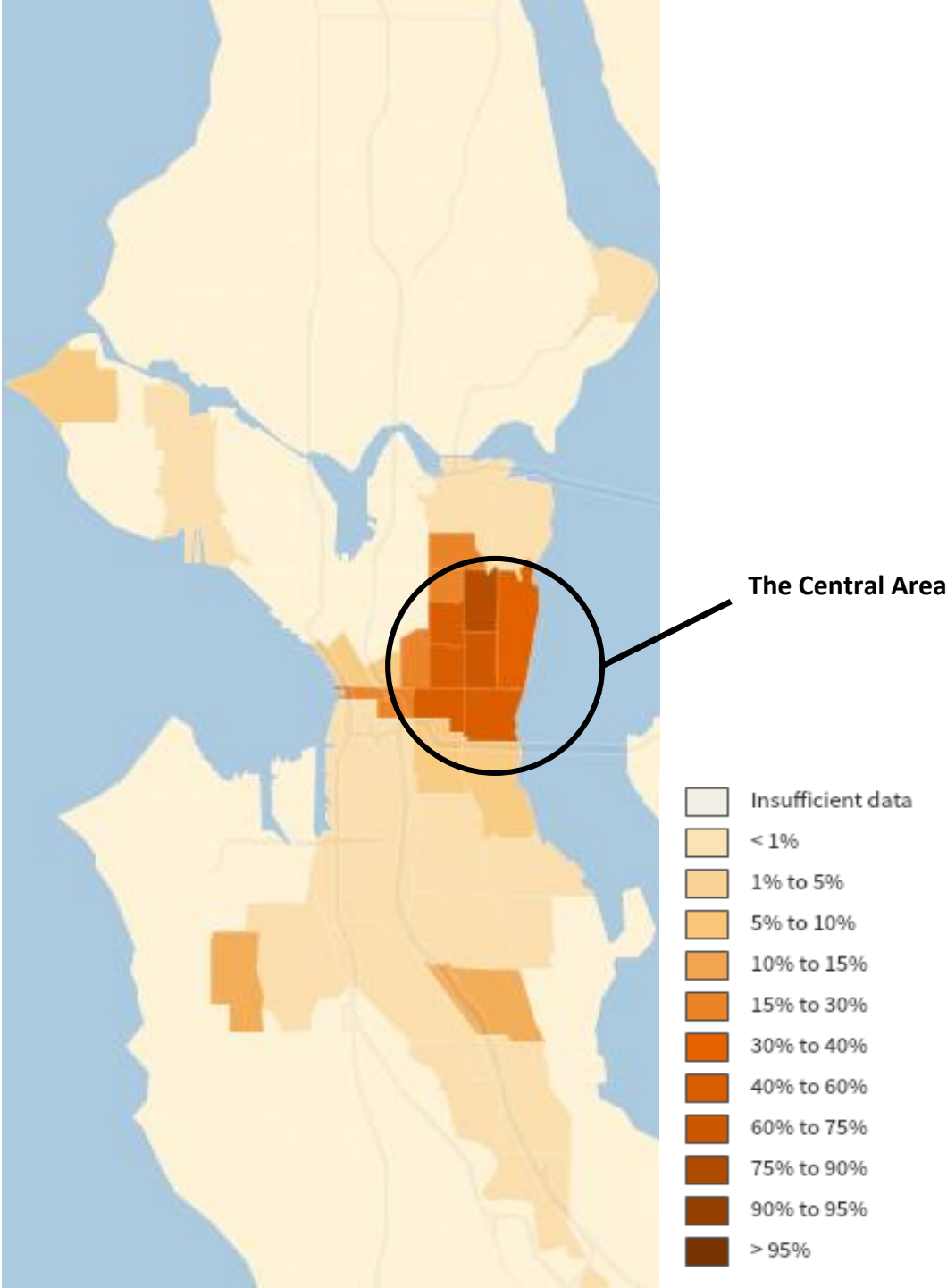
CHALLENGES IN THE PROCESS

The day after the second Action Committee meeting, Randy sat at his desk feeling unsettled about how the committee process was unfolding. In many ways, he had expected that the committee members would have very different – and equally valid – opinions about LHPAI’s future. But he had also expected the group would agree from the get-go that City bureaucracy had held LHPAI back from reaching its potential, and that a non-profit model would allow LHPAI to preserve its current mission while gaining independence to flourish. Randy thought that the tough conversations would be about the details of how to structure the non-profit model or what funding sources to pursue. Instead, the committee challenged his assumptions and the group appeared to be at a stalemate. Different factions expressed vastly differing perspectives about the best organizational model for LHPAI, and not everyone agreed that LHPAI’s current programming, staffing and mission should be preserved.

Randy looked at his calendar. He had three scheduled meetings left with this committee, and five months before he was required to present a final organizational model and financial sustainability proposal for LHPAI to the City Council. Could he do anything to change the course of the process? Did he need to intervene, or did the group need a couple of meetings to air out their concerns before they could move forward? If he chose to intervene, what could he do to get the committee on track to meeting the expected outcomes? He pondered what he should do next.

APPENDIX A: PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS AFRICAN-AMERICAN IN SEATTLE, BY CENSUS TRACT IN 1960

Map created by using Social Explorer, data from 1960 Census



APPENDIX B: PHOTOS OF LANGSTON HUGHES PERFORMING ARTS INSTITUTE

(Left to right): Chevra Bikur Chilom synogague, c. 1920, and northwest corner of LHPAI, 2012.

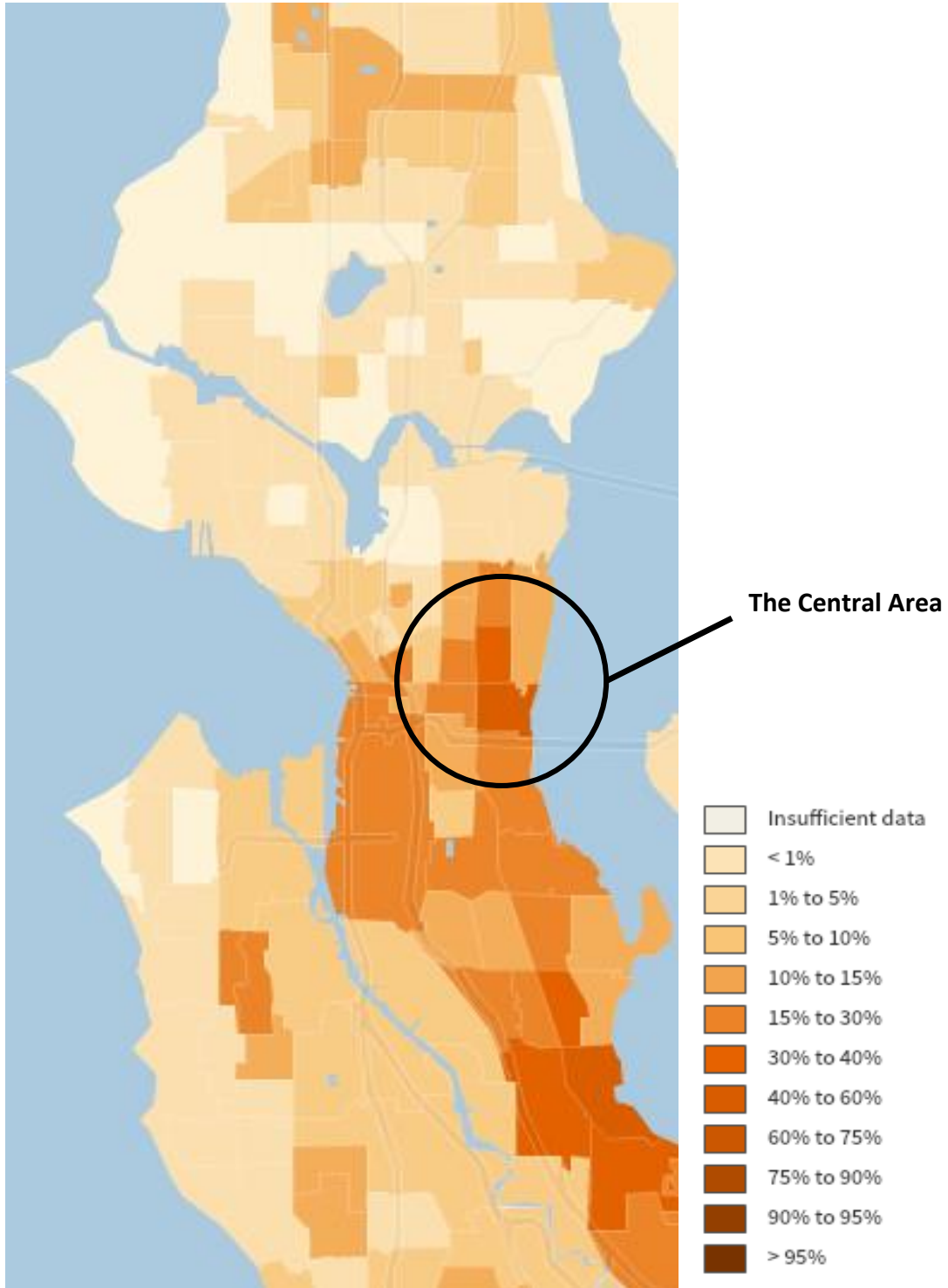


(Top to bottom): Southwest corner of LHPAI and inside theater, 2013.



APPENDIX C: PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS AFRICAN-AMERICAN IN SEATTLE, BY CENSUS TRACT IN 2010

Map created by using Social Explorer, data from 2010 5-Year American Community Survey



APPENDIX D: STATEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE INTENT 3-1-A-2

2013 - 2014 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Approved

Budget Action Title: Long-term options for Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute

Councilmembers: Burgess; Licata; O'Brien

Staff Analyst: Michael Jenkins

Budget Committee Vote:

Date	Result	SB	BH	TR	RC	TB	NL	JG	SC	MO
11/07/2012	Pass 7- 2-Absent	Y	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Statement of Legislative Intent:

The Council requests that the Office of Arts and Culture (OAC), working with the Seattle Arts Commission (SAC) present its final recommendations, and a plan to implement those recommendations, concerning long-term operations of Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute (LHPAI). The plan should focus on maintaining LHPAI's existing programming for the African American community while 1) enhancing other types of programming and events at LHPAI and 2) establishing a mechanism for long-term financial support and stability for LHPAI.

In developing this plan, OAC should consider, and then recommend, whether LHPAI should:

- 1) continue to be operated by the City;
- 2) be leased or transferred to a group or organization to carry forward LHPAI programming; or
- 3) be managed by a third-party organization for the City

The plan should also include a financial review of why OAC's preferred option provides the best opportunity for long-term fiscal stability for LHPAI.

Finally, Council requests that OAC, in concert with SAC, create a stakeholder group in developing this plan, comprised of LHPAI's audiences, its patrons, and the arts and culture community.

The plan should be provided to the Council in two parts – an interim report by September 1, 2013 with the final plan presented by June 1, 2014. The 2015-2016 Proposed Budget should assume implementation of the preferred option.

Responsible Council Committee(s): Housing, Human Services, Health, & Culture

Date Due to Council: September 1, 2013

APPENDIX E: ACTION COMMITTEE PLANNED MEETING AGENDAS

(1) February 27th meeting:

- Welcome and overview
- Lay out goals for LHPAI and committee

(2) March 27th meeting:

- Review LHPAI's current organizational model and business plan

(3) April 24th meeting:

- Explore relevant local and national models – presentation by outside expert

Between April & May meetings:

- Breakout groups focused around action items
 - 501(c)(3)
 - Facility

(4) May 22nd meeting:

- Breakout groups report back
- Identify top ideas for further exploration of financial impact
- Committee discussion of strategies facilitated by outside consultant

Between May & June meetings:

- Financial modeling prepared for recommendations

(5) June 26th meeting:

- Review financial implications and make final recommendations
- Committee discussion facilitated by outside consultant

(6) July 24th meeting:

- Additional meeting if needed for further discussion and final recommendation

APPENDIX F: LHPAI ACTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ACTION COMMITTEE CITY SUPPORT STAFF

LHPAI Action Committee Members

Dorothy Mann, Community Member (former Seattle Arts Commission), Co-Chair
Terri Hiroshima, Crosscut, Seattle Arts Commission, Co-Chair
Kate Becker, Seattle Theater Group
Donald Byrd, Spectrum Dance Theater
Elizabeth Holohan, Boeing, LHPAI Executive Community Member
Sandra Jackson-Dumont, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Arts Commission
Jourdan Keith, Artist, LHPAI Executive Community Member
Renee McCoy, Lifelong AIDS Alliance, LHPAI Executive Community Member
Ayan Musse, LHPAI Executive Community Member
Robert Nellams, Seattle Center
Sabrina Roach, Brown Paper Tickets
Jon Rosen, the Rosen Law Firm, Seattle Arts Commission
Greg Shiring, City of Seattle Budget Office
Frank Video, Legislative Aide for Seattle City Councilmember Nick Licata
Paul Tolliver, Consultant, LHPAI Executive Community Member
Christopher Williams, City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation
Sharon Williams, Central District Forum

Action Committee City Support Staff List

Randy Engstrom, Interim Director, OAC – *on the 'leadership team'*
Tim Lennon, Events and Cultural Space Coordinator, OAC
Royal Alley-Barnes, Executive Director, LHPAI – *on the 'leadership team'*
Sandra Boas-Dupree, Operations, LHPAI
Michele Scoleri, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Mayor – *on the 'leadership team'*

APPENDIX G: LHPAI ACTION COMMITTEE COMMON GOALS FROM RANDY'S PRESENTATION IN THE FIRST MEETING

<p>Common Goals: Accomplished In Process Requiring Action</p>	(1)
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<p>Accomplished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The facility will remain a performing arts center• Parks will retain responsibility for the physical facility and grounds• LHPAI has defined its mission & vision• LHPAI has created a statement of principles that clearly reflects the organizations values.	(2)
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<p>In Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of a Memorandum of Understanding on boundaries between LHPAI and OAC, OAC and Parks• Continued expansion of range of programmatic activities• Continued expansion of programmatic partnerships• Development of a comprehensive communications strategy and communications plan	(3)
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<p>Action: 501(c)(3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish an independent LHPAI entity, Friends of LHPAI, will full governance and financial responsibility• Develop a LHPAI fund or foundation to be managed by the Friends of LHPAI to enhance sustainable fundraising• Create framework for non-profit Organizational and Program Development	(4)
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<p>Action: Facility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore facility options:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Expanding use with reductions of funding under current operating model○ Lease or transfer to organization to carry forward LHPAI mission• Define the baseline level of ongoing funding from the City of Seattle	(5)
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