



ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION (A&CA) MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, March 28, 2023

TIME: 3:30 PM

LOCATION: Multicultural Family Center, The Ruby Sutton Building, 1157 Central Ave., Dubuque, IA 52001

Commissioners Present: Nicholas HALDER (chair); Tom ROBBINS (vice-chair); Doug DONALD; Paula NEUHAUS.

Commissioners Excused: Noelle CHESNEY; Shirley DAVIS-ORWOLL; Sue RIEDEL.

Staff Present: Jill CONNORS (Economic Development Director); Mike WILLIAMS (intern).

Public Present:

HALDER called the meeting to order following staff assurance of Iowa Open Meeting compliance at 3:32 PM.

Review of Minutes

A motion to approve the 28 February 2023 minutes with corrections was made by DONALD, seconded by NEUHAUS. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. ***Motion carries.***

Staff Status Reports

Oral update provided by CONNORS on the hiring process for the Arts & Culture Manager position. Communications & Grants Administration Assistant, MERRICK, provided a written update on the various grant programs that are currently in process and timeline for topics to be addressed at upcoming meetings.

No motion necessary.

Master Plan Working Group Update

Oral update provided by CONNORS about the upcoming Creatives Café that will be held in during the week of the Julien Dubuque International Film Festival.

No motion necessary.

Old Business

1. **Strategic Plan Reporting:** NEUHAUS shared an update from the grant subcommittee and their work on the FY24 Operating Support and Special Projects grant programs. DONALD asked if more information could be made available to Commissioners prior to approving funding for the various grant programs. Discussion followed and Staff and the grant subcommittee will investigate options that follow best practices.

New Business

1. **2023-24 Art of the River Exhibition:** CONNERS provided an update that a news release went out, as well as a call for artist, and artists can submit materials via SlideRoom. The review panel will provide recommendations to the Commission for consideration at a proposed May 8, 2023, special meeting.
2. **FY24 Operating Support and Special Projects Grant Programs:** An initial discussion took place regarding the funding philosophy and approval process as it relates to both programs. The grant subcommittee is looking into ways to streamline the process from reviewers to Commission approval of recommendation on to final approval from the City Council. The grant subcommittee will continue to explore ways to execute this process more effectively and eventually bring back a recommendation to the full commission.
3. **Other:** A discussion took place about the process for onboarding new commission members. It was the consensus of those present that the Commission should investigate developing a process that reinforces what is already provided by the City Clerk's Office, while at the same time providing Commission specific information.

Public Comment/Correspondence

Halder provided an update on the Heritage Center's request that was previously submitted regarding the eligibility of the Operating Support Grant Program. He also entered into the record all written correspondence that has taken place regarding this matter, which are attached to these minutes.

Engagement & Events Reporting

No engagement and events reporting took place.

Adjournment motioned by ROBBINS, seconded by DONALD at 5:02 p.m. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. ***Motion carried.***

Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, 23 May 2023 at 3:30 PM, Multicultural Family Center

Respectfully submitted:

Jill Connors
Economic Development Director, City of Dubuque

These minutes were passed and approved on April 25, 2023.

Witnessed By: *Nick Halder* (signature)

Nick Halder (printed)

Chair (officer position)

ARTS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION

MEETING: Tuesday, March 28, 2023

GRANT UPDATES: Annual A&C Programs & NEA

Arts & Culture Annual Grants – Operating Support & Special Projects

- Both programs opened on Friday, March 10
- Operating Support will close on Friday, April 28, with Special Projects closing on Friday, May 12
- The Operating Support Information Webinar is scheduled for Friday, March 31 – Nick to host / Laura to run GoToMeeting
- The Support Projects Information Webinar is scheduled for Friday, April 7 – Paula to host / Laura to run GoToMeeting
- Notification of opportunity, deadlines, FY22 final reporting requirements, and informational webinars sent out to organizations (3/22) that have applied over the past two years
- Laura is leading up activities to secure and train volunteer reviewers for both programs

National Endowment for the Arts LAA ARPA

- Arts Operating Recovery awards are slated to be disbursed in early April
- Creative Empowerment Round 1 closed on Friday, March 24, with 14 submissions, and an additional 11 started
- Laura is in the process of conducting eligibility reviews
- Volunteer reviewers are confirmed and trained and will begin reviewing the Creative Empowerment Round 1 applications by Monday, April 3
- Laura drafting memo for proposed recommendation of reallocation of identified underutilized approved budget line items (\$12,000) in the NEA LAA ARPA grant to expand the total amount available to the Creative Empowerment Round 1 and Round 2 from \$15,000 to \$27,000
 - Assists in addressing the funding gap raised by 14 applicants requesting approximately \$27,134.00 in Round 1
 - Apply the same division of funds -- 2/3 (\$18,000) of the pot to Round 1 and 1/3 (\$9,000) to Round 2

Topics to be addressed at upcoming meetings

March 28, 2023

- Initial conversation on grants funding strategy

April 25, 2023

- Finalize conversation on grants funding strategy, if needed
- Review/approve NEA grant funding Round 1 recommendation

May 8, 2023**

- Review/approve AOTR recommended sculptures

May 23, 2023

- Brief update on status of grant applications

June 13, 2023**

- Operating support grants – approve final recommendation on awards

June 27, 2023

- Special project grants – approve final recommendation on awards

July 25, 2023

- Any last minute items related to AOTR?

August 22, 2023

- Review/approve NEA grant funding Round 2 recommendation

** Special Meetings

To avoid two meetings in a month for two months in a row, here are suggestions:

- May: You could hold the special meeting on May 8th, which needs to happen in order to stay on track for getting the AOTR sculptures approved in time to get installed before this year's opening. Then you could remove the May 23rd meeting, since we don't have a particular decision to be made there.
- June : Although it was originally thought that a special meeting should be held on June 13th to keep the operating and special project grant approvals staggered, we believe it's better to push both decisions to June 27th. This gives reviewers a bit of additional time to score, and the operating grant discussion probably wouldn't take very long (since they're pretty standard from year to year), leaving most of the meeting for review of the special project grants. If we think the meeting will be fairly lengthy, we can provide dinner for the group.

From: Thomas Robbins TRobbins@dbq.edu 
Subject: FW: UD Heritage case statement documents
Date: February 1, 2023 at 2:35 PM
To: director@thegrandoperahouse.com

TR

Hello Nick:

Thanks for taking my call yesterday and talking through things with me. I very much appreciated that.

In case this might have gotten lost in the shuffle, the attached is exactly what I submitted to the commission in December 2020.

Tom

From: Thomas Robbins
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 3:44 PM
To: Jennifer Petersen-Brant <Jbrant@cityofdubuque.org>
Subject: UD Heritage case statement documents

Hello Jenni:

As promised (and thank you for your guidance last week), please find our final case statement proposal (w/2 supporting documents) and introductory letter attached. Should be 4 attachments here total.

My first and most pressing question is this: given the current city depressed COVID economic climate, is this a terrible time to introduce/propose this idea to the commission and the city?

I wondered if the end result might fare better if we wait or delay to a more promising economic outlook?

I lean on your advice/counsel as relates to this specific question. That said, I hate to miss a grant cycle if there is any hope/chance for Heritage Center on this issue.

Anyhow, can you once again please review the documents I have attached here and let me know BEFORE you share this information with anyone else?

My last question is should I plan to attend the meeting when this is being discussed?

Thank you.

Tom

Thomas J. Robbins

Special Assistant to the President & Executive Director, Heritage Center

University of Dubuque

2000 University Ave.

Dubuque, Iowa 52001-5099

Cell: 262.388.1045 or Home: 563.582.9660



December 15, 2020

Dear City of Dubuque Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission Members:

It is with great admiration that I submit this letter of request. As a native Dubuquer and current city resident, I have great pride in the depth and character of Dubuque's arts and culture landscape.

I salute each member's devotion and commitment to such a vital aspect of our community and heritage.

Please see the attached case statement and request for the City of Dubuque Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission to revisit eligibility for arts and culture annual operating grant support related to University of Dubuque Heritage Center. We now have a record of 8 successful years of serving City of Dubuque residents with arts and culture programming.

The attached document goes into much greater depth on our request. We appreciate your careful consideration of this proposal. Again, thank you for all you do towards the betterment of our community through arts and culture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Robbins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Tom" on the top line and "Robbins" on the bottom line.

Thomas J. Robbins

Special Assistant to the President and Executive Director, Heritage Center

University of Dubuque

Case Statement for Support from City of Dubuque Arts & Culture Funding Programs for University of Dubuque Live at Heritage Center Annual Programming

The current guidelines surrounding city arts and culture grant funding currently do not provide for a vehicle to support a thriving and dynamic annual series of arts and cultural events delivered in a university-based arts center environment. More specifically, a series of events which features touring, professional guest artist presentations and outreach, unrelated to the university's academic performing arts programs and offerings comprised primarily of student performances, concerts, and productions.

The intent of this document is to make the case that Live at Heritage Center annual programming should be worthy of the same level of annual support offered to other Dubuque area arts and culture organizations through the City of Dubuque operating support funding program. This document also endeavors to present a need for this funding.

The current grant program for operating support does not allow for the inclusion of educational institutions or organizations whose primary mission is not rooted in arts and culture. The potential oversight in these eligibility requirements is that they do not acknowledge the possibility of a uniquely branded arts and culture facility woven within the fabric of a college or university setting which offers public programming. Nor does the City's Arts and Culture Special Projects Grant allow for cyclic funding support of an annual series of events offered through a collegiate based performing arts center. Guidelines for both the operating support and special projects support pre-date the opening of Heritage Center in Spring 2013.

Through its annual programming efforts, Live at Heritage Center meets the Operating Grant guidelines to "primarily serves Dubuque residents through a demonstrated commitment to providing diverse, equitable, and inclusive year-round arts and culture engagement opportunities." Since its opening in Spring 2013, Heritage Center has also "demonstrated a record of programmatic, financial, and administrative stability," as stipulated by the purpose of the same grant program. Heritage Center, through its affiliation with University of Dubuque, by nature, is a non-profit entity.

The scope and breadth of programming offered through Live at Heritage Center as well as the size and scale of our physical performance facilities and amenities lend themselves to a strong affiliation with the Dubuque community. Heritage Center has firmly established itself as one of the University's primary public outreach resources. It would be an unfortunate disservice to the citizens of Dubuque for the University not to share a facility the size of Heritage Center and its various patron-friendly amenities with the community at large.

Heritage Center's primary mission revolves around youth stating: *To inspire a lifelong appreciation of live arts experiences and ignite a passion for participation in the arts among young people.*

This desire to stir a passion and appreciation for live arts experiences extends beyond our own students to young people and families in the City of Dubuque and beyond. Regular/ongoing components of Live at Heritage Center annual programming include:

SchoolBus Performance Series: This fieldtrip series is open to public school, private/parochial school, homeschool, and accredited pre-school and daycare organizations. Age requirement to attend is at least four (4) years of age. Most elementary and middle schools located in the City of Dubuque annually

attend events in this series. Even with a shortened 2019-20 SchoolBus Series, this series served a record 12,676 patrons. (see attached document for detailed stats through 2018-2019)

Family Series: A subset of our Performing Arts Series, this series is open to the public and is comprised primarily of professional theater companies performing literary titles appropriate for young audiences. We specifically target young families with school-aged children to attend these performances. (see attached document for detailed stats through 2018-2019)

Performing Arts Series educational outreach and residency activities: Guest artists featured on our CenterStage Series and BITE Size Theatre Series are often taken into Dubuque middle and high schools or local dance studios for lecture-demonstrations, workshops, performances, or masterclasses at no cost to the recipients. These efforts are intended to supplement and augment artist-in-residence programming offered by other Dubuque arts and culture organizations, but especially the Dubuque Arts Council which focuses primarily on elementary school grade levels. (see attached document for an example of specific outreach activities we engaged in as part of our 2018-2019 series)

Performing Arts Series niche programming grounded in educational value: Since the inception of Live at Heritage Center programming, we have attempted to establish niche programming not offered on a regular or frequent basis by other Dubuque based arts and culture organizations. Such niche programming has included: touring dance companies, professional theater for young audiences (children's theater performed by professional adult actors), nationally and internationally touring multicultural and folk arts programming (promoting equity and inclusion principles). We specifically seek out opportunities to present diverse touring artists and acts that appeal to young people which not only offer entertainment value, but educational value as well --- really, our brand of arts and culture could be called "edu-tainment." (see attached document for detailed stats through 2018-2019)

Corresponding annual art gallery exhibition series: The Bisignano Art Gallery offers visual arts exhibits open to the public year-round with a schedule of exhibitions corresponding with our Live at Heritage performing arts programming. Exhibits vary widely from a focus on regional, local, or university artists to historical/artifact type shows, to displays of works contained in UD's vast art collection, to student artists in our community through our annual high school show featuring Dubuque's 3 public schools. An example of a recent art show with far reaching community impact would be "Art During the Pandemic" which offered Dubuque-based and other local artists with an opportunity to express themselves personally with a display of their works created during and as a result of the global virus health crisis.

Since inception, Heritage Center has also been an active "community player" partnering and collaborating with various arts and culture organizations around town on a variety of projects including the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra, Dubuque City Youth & Heartland Ballet, Dubuque Arts Council, Dubuque Chorale, and the Dubuque Museum of Art, among others --- we have made genuine attempts to serve as a cultural asset to the greater Dubuque community, not to mention partnerships with other educational institutions such as Carnegie-Stout Public Library, Dubuque Community School District, Holy Family School System, Veterans Freedom Center, Dream Center and Multicultural Family Center, as well as pooling resources through cross promotional marketing efforts with Bell Tower Theater, the Grand Opera House, Fly-By-Night Productions, and Five Flags Center. Several partnerships described above have meant thousands of free or substantially discounted tickets to underprivileged populations in the Dubuque community.

I request that the City of Dubuque Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission revisit eligibility for arts and culture annual operating grant support related to University of Dubuque Heritage Center. We now have a successful record of 8 years of serving City of Dubuque residents with arts and culture programming. Dubuque citizens have been major benefactors in the delivery of these programs. University of Dubuque has provided a substantial investment in the start-up of this new arts venue/endeavor, but the future sustainability and growth of Live at Heritage Center programming depends, in part, on support from external sources. With a wide variety of constantly evolving institutional priorities and initiatives, it will be difficult if not impossible for the university to continue to sustain Live at Heritage programming at the current level of investment annually over the long-term.

In the research I have conducted regarding general annual operating support grant programs offered at a local or regional level, Dubuque offers one of relatively few programs nationwide. Although that is to our city's great credit, the challenge for Heritage Center is that the state of Iowa also prohibits college/university based performing arts center eligibility for general operating funding support. This is disconcerting considering many of Iowa's neighboring states DO grant annual operating support to collegiate entities including Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. With so few local/regional operating grant programs to compare with Dubuque's criteria excluding university-based performance centers, it is difficult to identify a precedent and even if there were one, Dubuque has always had a unique and progressive vision of its own which hopefully can grow to encompass Heritage Center.

It has been said that Heritage Center may have been one result of Dubuque's Envision 2010 campaign which directly engaged residents in planning for Dubuque's future. After a nine-month process, 10 final "Big Ideas" were released in January 2006. A new performing arts center was on this top 10 list of items which could have a long-term, positive impact on the growth and quality of life of the greater Dubuque community. Heritage Center officially opened its doors in Spring 2013. The realization of this big idea for Dubuque would deem it appropriate for the City of Dubuque to come full circle in support of a facility and programming that has evolved as a result of this strategic visioning process.

Although the University of Dubuque's primary mission is not arts and culture, Heritage Center's is. The University of Dubuque is under no obligation to provide a community arts venue offering high profile artist presentations, but the overwhelming response to what Heritage Center has presented in its early years of operation begs our ability to continue to enhance the quality of life for Dubuque citizens through our facilities and programming. Through its arts and culture granting program, the City of Dubuque has the opportunity to help secure and fortify Heritage Center's position as a leading community arts and culture provider with a specific focus on serving young people and their families. It would be a minimal investment by the City considering the social, economic, and civic benefits reaped by our citizens. As needed, we would be happy to provide a comprehensive list of our program offerings to community dating back to our Spring 2013 debut through today.

As a unique entity beneath the umbrella of University of Dubuque, Heritage Center has its own dedicated staff and annual operating budget specific to Live at Heritage Center public programming. As of Fall 2020, Heritage Center has 6.0 FTE staff, plus we are supported by student employees and a large cadre of approximately 70 community volunteers who serve as front of house staff. Under Dubuque's current operating grant guidelines, were Live at Heritage Center to become eligible for funding, it appears the maximum threshold for funding would be \$30,000 given our annual operating budget.

Submitted by Thomas J. Robbins, Executive Director of Heritage Center, University of Dubuque

Report to the Board of Trustees April 16, 2019

Thomas J. Robbins, Special Assistant to the President & Executive Director, Heritage Center

This edition of Heritage Center's Board of Trustee Report focuses on Heritage Center's 2018-2019 efforts to reach future prospective students through youth outreach programming. This is accomplished either through bringing tri-state area children/students on campus for activities within Heritage Center or by taking guest artists directly into school settings. Below is an account of such activities, **by the numbers:**

12,000+: Pre-K through 8th grade students who attended the SchoolBus Performance Series, a field trip program featuring professional touring children's theater presentations with an overarching theme of S.T.E.A.M. – Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, & Math. All performances are held in John and Alice Butler Hall. Schools come from within about a 1-hour radius of Dubuque to attend these programs.

650: Washington Middle School (Dubuque) students who benefitted from Chicago Dance Crash performing in their auditorium. Program was "Hip Hop 101" focusing on the healthy, life-affirming aspects of hip-hop and street dance.

25: Student dancers at Studio 5678 (Dubuque) who participated in a hip-hop dance workshop with Chicago Dance Crash Artistic Director Jessica Deahr.

2000: In cooperation with Dubuque Arts Council, helped bring Manhu of China with their educational presentation to students in grades Pre-K to 8 including five Dubuque elementary schools and outlying schools in Bellevue, Cascade, and Dyersville.

250: Western Dubuque H.S. and Middle School music students who attended a lecture-demonstration with the Rodney Marsalis Philadelphia Big Brass at their high school auditorium. The Western Dubuque H.S. Band also served as special guests sharing the Butler Hall stage with Rodney Marsalis' group.

50: Area K-12 students who auditioned and performed in a production of "Snow White" produced by Missoula Children's Theater in Butler Hall.

550: Platteville (WI) High School and Middle School students (including 160 string players) who were present for an in-school performance and demonstration by the Femmes of Rock AKA Bella Electric Strings.

2000: In cooperation with Dubuque Arts Council, helped bring Norway's Unni Boksasp Ensemble with their educational presentation to students in grades Pre-K to 8 including five Dubuque elementary schools and outlying schools in Farley, Peosta, and Dyersville.

34: Student musicians participating in a masterclass with the Canadian Brass in Butler Hall including students from Dubuque Senior H.S., Bellevue H.S., Western Dubuque H.S., and Kirkwood Community College.

500: Dubuque Senior H.S. students in the audience for a presentation by Lyric Opera of Chicago apprentice singers including 2010 Dubuque Senior alum Eric Ferring. Presentation occurs in high school's auditorium.

18,000+: Total number of area pre-K to community college students touched by 18/19 Heritage outreach.

Arts Facilities, Programming, & Services

Impact Statistics

Grand Opening – 2018/2019



UNIVERSITY of DUBUQUE

Live at Heritage CenterStage Series plus Special Events

Public performances featuring the highest caliber of talent on the international performing arts touring circuit with a focus on theater, music, dance, and diversity.

Note: Added B.I.T.E. Size Series in 2017-2018 (due to intimate Babka Theatre seating capacity, each presentation counted as 1 performance even if 2 shows).

2014-2015 Season 2		2015-2016 Season 3		2016-2017 Season 4		2017-2018 Season 5		2018-2019 Season 6	
	12 performances		11 performances		13 performances		18 performances		22 performances
	%		%		%		%		%
UD Students	Totals	Audience	Totals	Audience	Totals	Audience	Totals	Audience	Totals
	1168	13.6%	1794	23.6%	2158	23.8%	2157	23.4%	3172
Other	7410	86.4%	5800	76.4%	6901	76.2%	7080	76.6%	8086
TOTALS	8578	100.0%	7594	100.0%	9059	100.0%	9237	100.0%	11258
Composite/History:									
86 performances	<i>No Major Student Concert</i>		<i>Without Daya</i>	<i>19.30% students</i>	<i>Without Posner</i>	<i>22.00% students</i>	<i>No Major Student Concert</i>		
52,899 served							<i>J. Davis</i>	<i>Without students</i>	<i>27.2%</i>

Heritage Student Employee Hours

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Technical/Production	2114	2172	2342	6628
Front of House/				
Box Office	1936	1825	3109	6870
Admin/Promotion	664	664	430	1758
TOTALS	4714	4661	5881	15256

Live at Heritage Family Series

Public performances featuring the highest caliber of professional talent on the international touring circuit with a focus on theater for young audiences.

2013-2014: 2 performances	1288
2014-2015: 3 performances	2228
2015-2016: 3 performances	1859
2016-2017: 5 performances	2543
2017-2018: 5 performances	2027
2018-2019: 6 performances	2966
Composite/History: 24 performances	
	GRAND TOTAL 12,911

Live at Heritage SchoolBus Performance Series

Professional guest artist performances open to all public, private, homeschool, and accredited pre-school, daycare groups with students ages 4 and above.

	Total Served
2014 Inaugural: 4 performances	2,807
2014-2015: 6 performances	5,239
2015-2016: 10 performances	8,407
2016-2017: 15 performances	12,468
2017-2018: 15 performances	11,030
2019-2019: 15 performances	12,019

**GRAND
TOTAL 51,970**

*NOTE Schools attend from a 1+ hour radius surrounding Dubuque from.....
as far away as Monroe (WI) to Freeport (IL) to Independence (IA)*

Historically, over 100 K-12 different schools and 25 independent daycares/preschools have attended

Live at Heritage History Composite: 175 performances / 117,780 served

Butler/Babka/Knapp Live Event Support

Type of Usage	Spring 2013 No. Events	2013-14 No. Events	2014-15 No. Events	2015-16 No. Events	2016-17 No. Events	2017-18 No. Events	2018-19 No. Events	Grand Total
Community	0	10	19	13	16	6	13	77
General Campus	4	22	26	18	18	18	38	144
Student Organizations	0	8	8	13	19	19	23	90
Live at Heritage	3	19	23	26	36	^ 49	^ 63	219
Fine & Performing Arts	5	21	26	22	21	19	23	137
TOTAL	12	80	102	92	110	111	160	667

[^] 2017-2018 is first year pre-show activities are factored into count.



ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, January 5, 2021

TIME: 3:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Via GoToMeeting

Special Meeting

Commissioners Present: Nicholas Halder (joined 3:36PM), Ryan Decker, Gina Siegert,

Tyler Daugherty, Paula Neuhaus (joined 3:35PM), Ali Levasseur, Susan Riedel

Staff Present: Jennifer Petersen-Brant, Arts & Cultural Affairs Coordinator

Public Present: Tom Robbins with University of Dubuque Heritage Center, Jean Tucker with Dubuque Symphony Orchestra

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Levasseur at 3:33 PM following staff assurance of compliance with Iowa Open Meeting Law.

Review of Minutes: Motioned to approve minutes of November 24, 2020 with corrections by Commissioner Decker, seconded by Commissioner Riedel. Commissioners Halder, Decker, Siegert, Daugherty, Neuhaus, Levasseur, Riedel voted to approve motion; Motion passed.

Reports from Master Plan Working Groups/Task Force:

No working group notes submitted by staff; verbal updates provided instead.

Representatives of Dubuque Renaissance Project held a hybrid (virtual and in-person options) meeting among Black creatives of Dubuque on Saturday, December 5 at Five Flags Event Center and via GoToMeeting. Attended by Nick Anderson, Peggy Jackson, Renee Dunn, and Lenore Thomas with Jason Neises, Ali Levasseur, Alanda Gregory, and Jenni Petersen-Brant of the steering committee. Follow up meeting set for Saturday, January 16 at 2pm with hybrid option from Creative Adventure Lab.

Commissioner Decker asked about next meeting of Public Art Working Group. Working groups typically meets 3rd Monday of the month which in January is MLK Day. Staff to follow up with call for meeting.

Status Updates from Staff

Art En Route Community Engagement: Staff reported that the Art En Route planning team consists of representatives of Green Dubuque, Green Iowa AmeriCorps, City's Sustainability Coordinator Gina Bell, Justin Harris-David of City Transit Department, and

Jay Foust of Gigantic Design. Staff to share coloring activity sheet and pre-implementation survey with Commissioners with request to share with their networks. Staff asked to share with organizations like the Multicultural Family Center; reported it has been shared with MFC directors but will follow up with program coordinators.

City Council Work Session: Reminder to Commission that Work Session aimed at providing an update on implementation of the City's Arts & Culture Master Plan is scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, 2021 from 5-6:30PM. Commissioners Levasseur, Neuhaus, Halder, and Daugherty offered to provide assistance with preparation of presentation. Staff will share outline and PowerPoint with them via Google Docs for their input. Staff noted that presentation will include guest speakers representing funding arts and culture organizations as programs align with specific strategies of the Plan.

Discussion on sunset of MediaCom Foundation Arts & Culture funding program: MediaCom arts and culture grant program has been utilized by many of our funded partners. Commissioners expressed need and desire for similar program to exist and discussion followed on role of Arts Commission in identifying new business entity(s) to initiate a replacement. MediaCom program has existed for 15 years but is shifting its community giving to other undefined areas of investment as noted in the letter submitted to City Council. Commissioner Riedel suggested to continue engaging MediaCom in funding the arts, perhaps as sponsor for Art Means Business activities and continue to engage MediaCom in possible seed funding for upstart creative businesses. No suggestions for businesses that may be interested in spearheading a new arts and culture funding program but Commissioner Levasseur and Commissioner Neuhaus open to contacting Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque for discussion. Suggested to focus on established businesses that are known for supporting the arts or on new businesses coming to Dubuque that may want to increase their public profile by funding the arts. Motion to request a meeting with Community Foundation leadership to discuss leads and foundation's role in hosting grant program by Commissioner Neuhaus, seconded by Commissioner Decker. Commissioners Halder, Decker, Siegert, Daugherty, Neuhaus, Levasseur, Riedel voted to approve motion; Motion passed.

Discussion on UD Heritage Center request for review of Operating Support Program eligibility:

Staff provided letter and support materials submitted by Tom Robbins of UD's Heritage Center requested that the Commission revisit eligibility guidelines of the City's Arts and Culture Operating Support grant program. The request is for the Commission to consider expanding eligibility allowing arts and cultural programs associated with but that operate independently of an education institution to apply for funding. The Operating Support program does not currently allow entities that operate in this way to be eligible for funding. Discussion followed with impact on current budget allocation, other entities this eligibility change would affect, and timeline and process of when changes could be applied. Staff noted that if the Commission wanted to move forward with this change, realistically, it could not be implemented until the FY23 funding cycle as this change should be approved by City Leadership and City Council. Staff suggested that the best process would be for Grants Subcommittee to research and provide recommendation to Commission followed by recommendation to City Manager and then consent by City Council. Noted that Special Projects grant program is currently open to educational institutions.

Motion for Grants Subcommittee to revisit eligibility guidelines of Operating Support grant program by Commissioner Halder, seconded by Commissioner Siegert. Commissioners Halder, Decker, Siegert, Daugherty, Neuhaus, Levasseur, Riedel voted to approve motion; Motion passed.

Current Events Reporting from Commissioners:

- Commissioner Levasseur returning to work at Five Flags for every other week. Five Flags has also added in-person comedy shows to line up in coming months.
- DSO to kick off their four Classic concerts the end of February.
- Train Wreck's "Drinks and Dialogue" continuing monthly
- Bell Tower Theater presenting virtual play January 14 and 16. Live with The Dangers of VD (Valentine's Day) on February 14.
- River Museum has virtual "Museum at Home" series tonight with raptors animal program tonight at 7 PM, log on at Rivermuseum.com.
- River Museum also presenting Ice Fest January 16 - 17
- Winter Arts Snow Sculpting Festival, February 8 for volunteers with sculpting from Feb 10-13. Online voting and other virtual activities in lieu of Saturday community event.
- Heritage Center will be announcing virtual programming and hopes to include live events after spring break.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Decker, seconded by Commissioner Halder. Commissioners Levasseur, Halder, Decker, Siegert, Daugherty, Neuhaus, Riedel voted to approve motion; Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:41PM.

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 23, 2020 at 3:30PM via GoToMeeting

Respectfully submitted:

Jenni Petersen-Brant
Arts & Cultural Affairs Coordinator, City of Dubuque

These minutes were passed and approved on Jan. 26, 2021.

Witnessed By: Jenni (signature)
Ali Levasseur (printed)
Chair (officer position)

From: Nick Halder director@thegrandoperahouse.com 
Subject: Re: UD Heritage case statement documents
Date: February 28, 2023 at 1:30 PM
To: Thomas Robbins TRobbins@dbq.edu
Cc: Paula Neuhaus pneuhaus@rivermuseum.com
Bcc: Sue Riedel riedelsj@aol.com

NH

Tom,

Thanks for sending along this information. It is valuable information as we continue to evaluate the City of Dubuque's grant programs. I passed along this information to my fellow grant subcommittee members and we discussed this matter at our recent meeting. Please find attached the subcommittee's response to your inquiry and our next steps as it relates to conducting a robust review of the City of Dubuque's grant programs as identified in the Commission's strategic plan. Please let me know if you have any issues accessing the attachment or have any additional questions or concerns at this time.

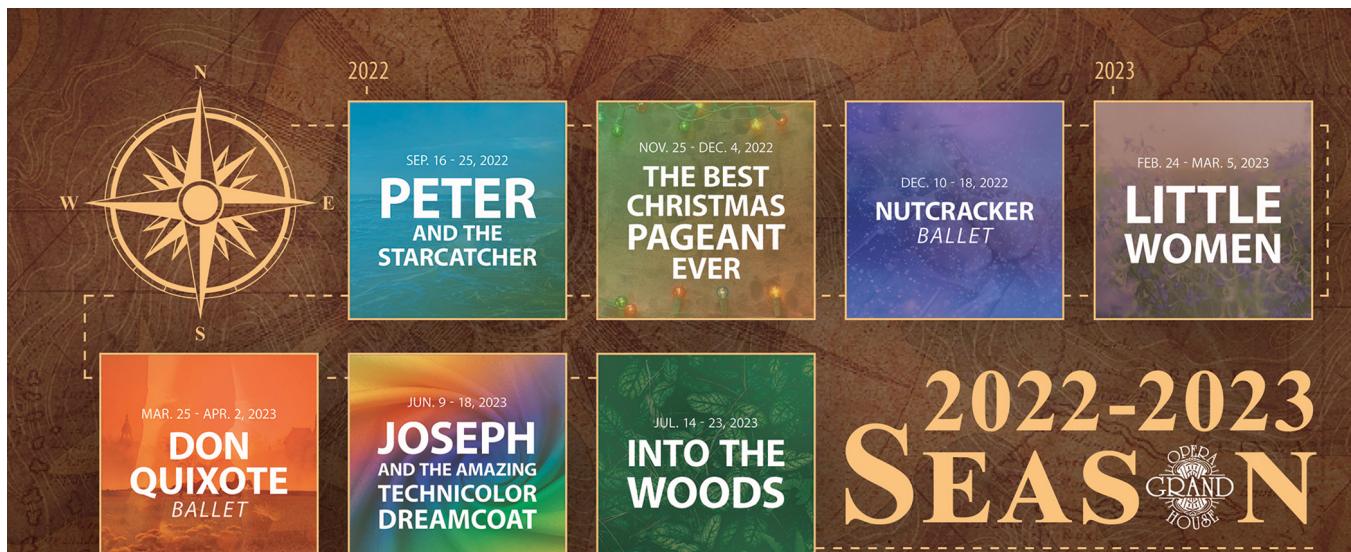
Thanks so much,
Nick

Nick Halder
Executive & Artistic Director



135 W 8th Street
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
www.thegrandoperahouse.com
563.588.4356

director@thegrandoperahouse.com



Nick Halder, Chair
City of Dubuque Arts & Cultural Affairs Advisory Commission
director@thegrandoperahouse.com

Paula Neuhaus, Commission's Grants Committee Chair
pneuhaus@rivermuseum.com

February 27, 2023

Tom Robbins, Executive Director
Heritage Center at University of Dubuque
trobins@dbq.edu

Dear Tom,

Thank you for your recent inquiry requesting an update on the status of the City of Dubuque Arts & Cultural Affairs Advisory Commission's Operational Support Grant Program's review of eligible/ineligible applicants. Our Grants Subcommittee manages, evaluates, and revises all grant programs on an annual basis and makes recommendations to the broader Commission who vote for consensus to put forth a recommendation for City Council approval. Each revision is informed by data, aligned with the strategic plan, and rely upon the City of Dubuque's Arts & Cultural Affairs Department's approved annual budget.

The Commission's strategic plan outlines 4 Key Strategic Priorities with individual objectives that focus the work. *Priority 3* includes a review and evaluation of all grant programs and applications. Review and evaluation informs all revision recommendations including, but not limited to, eligibility. The plan outlines a proposed *working* deadline of summer 2023 for the completion of a new and robust evaluation of all grant programs (including 3 new subaward opportunities offered in 2022-23). Scaffolded steps within the plan will provide feedback and data to inform program revisions which will affect the FY25 funding cycle.

The Grants Committee did not recommend an eligibility revision in FY22 nor FY23. Revision recommendations were determined by the Grants Committee at their February meeting for the forthcoming FY24 cycle. These recommendations will seek approval by Commission at the February 28 meeting. As you serve on the Commission as Vice Chair, we can tell you here, the Grants Committee will not be making an eligibility revision recommendation for the forthcoming FY24 cycle.

While the Commission recognizes the significant cultural programs and outreach that Heritage Center provides in our community, without a significant increase in the grants budget, the Grants Committee and Staff agree that we cannot responsibly make a recommendation for eligibility revision without the funding in place to support it. In effort to increase arts funding, City Staff and Commission secured federal and private funding to provide 3 new subaward opportunities in 2022-23. This strategy will be recommended to continue for FY24 and beyond until we are able to secure the much-needed and significant budget increase for the Operating Support and Special Projects funding programs.

Sincerely,
Nick Halder, Commission Chair

Paula Neuhaus, Grants Committee Chair

From: Thomas Robbins TRobbins@dbq.edu 
Subject: RE: UD Heritage case statement documents
Date: March 1, 2023 at 10:06 AM
To: Nick Halder director@thegrandoperahouse.com
Cc: Paula Neuhaus pneuhaus@rivermuseum.com, Jenni Petersen-Brant Jbrant@cityofdubuque.org, Laura Merrick Lmerrick@cityofdubuque.org

TR

Thank you for this update, Nick (and Paula). I appreciate the grant sub-committee's work on this and all things grant-related. Heritage Center is appreciative for the various forms of grant support awarded through the City this year and last.

FY22 was the first year Heritage Center received any kind of city grant support even though we have been serving the public with programming since 2013.

Although I am admittedly disappointed, I understand the outcome for FY24 as stated in the attached letter, but remain hopeful that something can be worked out for Heritage Center to become eligible for operating grant funding effective with the FY25 budget/grant cycle.

Jenni said she hadn't seen a copy of your letter, so I am attaching it again here and also including Laura for sake of transitioning.

I have just a few questions.

1. Since our initial request/proposal was part of the public record and was addressed to the full commission, can the grant sub-committee's response be reported upon at our next commission meeting and can your response also be entered into the public record along with the minutes of the next meeting?
2. I think it is important, especially for the newer commission members (those who have come on since the initial Heritage Center inquiry/proposal was sent to the commission in December 2020) to be brought up to speed on Heritage Center's request for eligibility for operating grant funding so they understand the history and developments related to the original proposal as well as the fact that our request is still on the "table" for consideration for FY25 or beyond. I would request that those newer commission members be provided with a copy of Heritage Center's original request along with your recent response.
3. One other thing I did want to ask if there is any additional city ARPA funding remaining that could expand the possible pool of funding for FY24 operating and/or special project grants, in which case perhaps our eligibility for FY24 could be reconsidered? I realize maybe that extra ARPA funding may have been exhausted with the subgrant funding that was recently awarded, but thought it couldn't hurt to ask.

Thank you again for your attention to this matter and please let me know of any further concerns or questions.

Respectfully,

Tom

From: Nick Halder director@thegrandoperahouse.com 

Subject: Re: UD Heritage case statement documents

Date: March 27, 2023 at 3:59 PM

To: Thomas Robbins TRobbins@dbq.edu

Cc: Paula Neuhaus pneuhaus@rivermuseum.com, Jill Connors Jilconno@cityofdubuque.org, Laura Merrick Lmerrick@cityofdubuque.org



Good Afternoon Tom,

I wanted to follow-up on your previous email since there was no response during this time of staff transition. I consulted with my fellow grants subcommittee members and City staff members to address your questions.

1. The grants subcommittee intended to include an update, including our response, during the public correspondence section of the February 28, 2023 meeting. I think that everyone got caught up in it being Jenni's last meeting and we forgot to include this as part of the meeting. It was an oversight on our part and for that I apologize. I plan to include all of this information as part of the public correspondence at tomorrow's meeting and enter it into the record. I will also include the case statement that you originally submitted with your request. All commissioners will receive a packet of this same information as well.
2. As part of our robust review of the City of Dubuque's grants programs, the grants subcommittee will look holistically at all aspects, including but not limited to eligibility for all organizations, of each grant program and make a recommendation to the full commission per the timeline set out by the commission's strategic plan.
3. The City ARPA funds are very specific to 'recover from COVID-19' and it would be hard to make the case to pair those funds with existing and recurring operating support and/or special projects programs to fill funding gaps or meet extra requests for new funding. The reason we could make the case for the additional ARPA funds for the NEA ARPA Arts Operating Recovery Subgrant was because that program was also about 'recovery.'

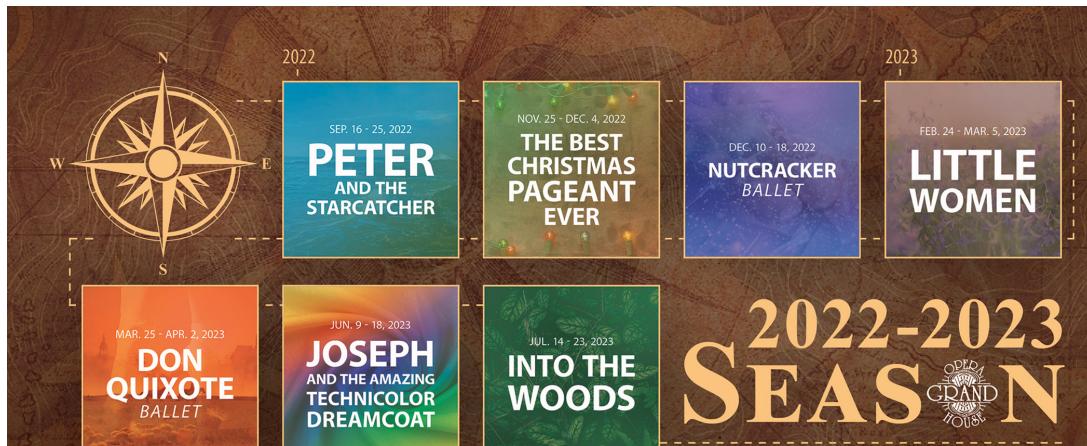
I hope my response answers your questions from the previous email. Do not hesitate to contact me or City staff with any additional questions or concerns.

Thank you,
Nick Halder
Executive & Artistic Director



135 W 8th Street
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
www.thegrandoperahouse.com
563.588.4356

director@thegrandoperahouse.com



From: Thomas Robbins TRobbins@dbq.edu 
Subject: RE: UD Heritage case statement documents
Date: March 27, 2023 at 4:15 PM
To: Nick Halder director@thegrandoperahouse.com
Cc: Paula Neuhaus pneuhaus@rivermuseum.com, Jill Connors Jilconno@cityofdubuque.org, Laura Merrick Lmerrick@cityofdubuque.org

TR

Yes, this does help. Thank you for the reply and explanation, Nick. See everyone tomorrow!

Tom
