

## MINUTES

### ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION

#### REGULAR SESSION

Thursday, February 15, 2007, 4:00 p.m.  
Board Room, Carnegie Stout Public Library  
360 W. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Dubuque, Iowa

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**Meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. following staff assurance of compliance with the Iowa Open Meeting Law.**

Commissioners present: Sue Riedel, Ellen Henkels, Louise Kames, Amy Weber, Mark Wahlert. Excused absence: Paul Kohl, Geri Shafer  
Staff Present: Jerelyn O'Connor, Laura Gower

#### **Approval of Minutes of January 23, 2007**

Motion by Riedel to approve, seconded by Henkels, passed 4-0.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Report on Cultural and Entertainment District Research Dan Lobianco, Executive Director, Dubuque Main Street**

O'Connor advised that a report has not yet been submitted and this item is tabled until a later meeting. .

#### **FY 2008 Special Projects Grant Program**

##### **Review comments on proposed changes**

Commission reviewed comments received from Jeff Goldsmith, Dubuque Symphony Orchestra, regarding proposed changes limiting applicant eligibility for this program to two consecutive years of funding. Goldsmith suggested that the City is best served when projects are funded solely on the basis of quality and the ability of the organization to carry out the project in a quality manner. He also suggested that a limitation of applicant eligibility should not be retroactive.

Riedel commented that the board would not recommend funding a non-quality project and the history with the grant competition is that many quality projects were not funded due to limited funding. Commissioners noted that it's best for organizations to not plan on grant funding until awards have been made.

Commission agreed with suggestion to make changes effective with the FY 2008 Special Projects grant competition. Motion by Wahlert, Second by Weber to recommend that applicants be limited to two years of consecutive funding effective with the FY 2008 grant competition. Motion passed 4-0.

#### **FY 2008 Operating Support Grant Program-review guidelines**

Riedel asked for any comments. Weber commented that due to limited funds, just because you are a qualified applicant does not mean the funds will be available to an applicant at the maximum formula level. Riedel discussed the difficulty of ranking applicants who meet the eligibility criteria. The expectation is that due to an increasing number of organizations meeting the eligibility criteria and the increasing size of their budgets, there will be inadequate funding to fund the organizations at the existing formula amounts. The board discussed several possible scenarios that involved changing the cap of grant funds, and the percents available ranging from 4% to 6%, no formal decisions made. The consensus was to not recommend any changes to the maximum formulas at this time.

There was discussion about the board's recommendation last year regarding funding the Colts. The board partially funded the Colts last year because many of the programs happen outside the City of Dubuque and a large portion of the operating budget is for touring expenses. Greg Orwell disagreed with the Commission's recommendation stating that the Colts organization has a tremendous positive impact on their youth members.

O'Connor suggested that the commission could use the established selection criteria as a basis for the amount of the funding awarded. Wahlert questioned if we could tighten up the selection criteria by getting a very detailed review of the organization's operating budget. This may assist in focusing on the organizations that are the most viable candidates for operating support. Connor cautioned the board that all applicants need to be researched in the same manner.

Weber motioned to approve additional language in the application "It is likely that qualified organizations will not be funded at this level; actual awards will be based on the number of eligible applicants and the degree to which applicant meets selection criteria. Motion seconded by Wahlert, passed 4-0.

### **Discuss possible change of Commission meeting date**

The consensus was to not change the meeting date at this time but to move up meeting time to 4:00 p.m., and possible to 3:30 p.m. if grants are being reviewed..

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Strategic Plan**

Wahlert shared his research on arts funding by other communities with similar structure to Dubuque, those cities were Minneapolis MN, Austin TX, Madison WI and several others. His research found that there really aren't any communities that have a structure similar to Dubuque where a third party Arts Commission funds local organizations.

Weber commented that there are resources out there that may be beneficial to the City of Dubuque such as Midwest Arts, Arts Association of the Midwest and

the NEA. It would be beneficial for us to determine how these organizations operate, what other cities are involved, who qualifies and how do we get involved? Further we should begin playing the role of an advocate by meeting with community members to gather feedback and pull different groups together.

Riedel questioned if there is grant funding the Arts Commission could apply for to receive more funds for our programs, there are a lot of resources we can tap into and we should research what is available to us, such as possible organizations that would match our funding. Weber agreed more research needed to see what resources are available to us.

## **INFORMATION SHARING**

1. Weber stated that every year the Rotary Club donates \$6,000 to college students. Typically an additional \$2,000-\$3,000 is raised and she is looking for any recommendations on where those dollars could be donated. Wahlert recommended Art Start which is a program that offers lessons and equipment rental for disadvantaged children. Riedel stated that TAG teachers are always running out of funds, and dollars donated to the TAG Program would be very beneficial. Prescott was mentioned as a good school. Henkels suggested the Art Museum
2. O'Connor stated that the 2 open positions on Mediacom's Cultural Foundation Board which are City Council appointments and asked whether the Commission wanted to make any recommendations council on filling those positions. The commission suggested notifying prior Arts commission applicants of the opportunity. There was also discussion that there did not appear to be a need for a Commission representative on the Mediacom Foundation because Mediacom ran their own grant program.
3. Cultural Advocacy Days – February 26-27. Dubuque was invited to participate on a panel entitled "culture builds communities."
4. There's a fundraiser for Paul Kohl and his wife at Isabella' on 2/28/07. Motion to adjourn by Kames, passed 4-0. Adjourned 5:41

Respectfully Submitted,

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Laura Gower

These minutes passed, approved and adopted on March, 27 2007.

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Louise Kames, Secretary

