



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 operating 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:  (signature)

Ali Levasseur (printed)

Chair (officer position)