



ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

TIME: 3:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Via GoToMeeting

Regular Meeting

Commissioners Present: Nicholas Halder, Ryan Decker, Gina Siegert, Tyler Daugherty, Paula Neuhaus, Ali Levasseur, Susan Riedel

Staff Present: Jennifer Petersen-Brant, Arts & Cultural Affairs Coordinator; Annie Flanagan, Arts & Culture Intern

Public Present: Tom Robbins (Heritage Center/University of Dubuque), Barb Barton (Dubuque Museum of Art)

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Neuhaus at 3:33 PM following staff assurance of compliance with Iowa Open Meeting Law. Commissioner introductions followed for public benefit.

Review of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of February 23, 2021 by Commissioner Daugherty, seconded by Commissioner Siegert. Commissioners Halder, Decker, Siegert, Daugherty, Neuhaus, Levasseur, Riedel voted to approve motion; Motion passed.

Review of Reports from Working Groups: Staff shared written notes from recent meetings of active Master Plan working groups in advance of the meeting. Additional verbal reporting on efforts of expanded, short-term committee supporting Branding & Communications working group in effort to create project brief for development of a broader, over-arching branding / communications campaign in support of Arts & Culture sector. Inaugural meeting of committee on March 18, 2021, set the stage for the effort and opened up stakeholder discussion.

Commissioner Riedel inquired about Public Art Policy / Public Art working group and timeline. Staff reported that the Working Group met previous month to discuss draft policy and made recommendations regarding funding mechanisms, role of Art on the River, and governing structure; next steps require Staff to adjust draft policy options and language for review by Department Manager, Assistant City Manager, and City Manager. After that review, draft policy will come back to Commission and Task Force for review and then onto City Council for recommendation and adoption.

Motion to accept reports from Master Plan working groups by Commissioner Riedel, seconded by Commissioner Decker. Commissioners Halder, Decker, Siegert, Daugherty, Neuhaus, Levasseur, Riedel voted to approve motion; Motion passed.

Status Updates from Staff

FY22 Arts & Culture Grants application release and update: Staff reported that updates to FY22 application materials Operating Support and Special Projects grant programs were finalized by the Grants committee and application process was opened and announced to public. Virtual informational webinars scheduled, March 26 for Operating Support and April 9 for Special Projects.

Art on the River planning update: Planning committee met this month to review proposed theme and description, tentative timeline, and anticipated expenses. Public event planned for Friday, August 6 to continue coordination with Taste of Dubuque and Lighted Boat Parade; new this year is that DubuqueFest will be held in conjunction with these other events. Staff anticipates release of call for artists on or before April 15. Planning committee has requested that instead single juror to review and recommend top selections that a 3-person jury, 2 from community and one outside professional, will draft recommendation for Commission. Full funding of \$37,500 for Art on the River recommended in City's FY22 budget; staff to follow up with Commission after City Council vote on budget.

Next steps on unspent FY21 Arts & Culture grant program funds: Discussion on FY21 unspent grant funds. Grants committee will meet on this issue to provide framework for potential Resiliency Grants based on structure of Iowa Arts Council's current Resiliency Grant program. Recommendation will be brought to Commission for review and recommendation which will be forwarded to City Manager for approval.

Revenue decline recap (2020 vs 2019): At the direction of the City Manager, Staff compiled information on 2019 versus 2020 revenues for current Arts and Culture grantees. 14 of 19 organizations reported in; across these 14 organizations, revenues for 2020 were down \$3.9 million with only \$1.5 million recovered through COVID-19 relief funding leaving a gap of \$2.4 million. Earned revenue was down 50.1%, contributed income was down 31.2%. Organizations report an expected \$1.8 million in lost revenue in 2021 compared what they brought in 2019. This information has been reported to the City Manager in connection to the American Rescue Plan. Commissioner Levasseur commented that this provides a strong argument for using unspent FY21 grant funds for a new resiliency fund.

Old Business

Research and development related to former MediaCom arts and culture grant program: Initial reach out to Kathy McMullen made but follow up needed. Commissioner Neuhaus, Commissioner Levasseur and Staff to information on history and structure of former MediaCom arts and culture grant program to then draft proposal for potential funder that has been identified. Update will be provided at April meeting.

Commission structure, openings update: Staff, Commissioner Levasseur, and Commissioner Neuhaus have meeting scheduled with City Clerk's office to address process questions on adding additional seats, filling upcoming openings, and diversifying representation. Update will be provided at April meeting.

Other: Improvement Package to support Commission strategic planning was recommended as part of FY22 budget. Commission will discuss schedule and next steps at April meeting.

Public Comment: Tom Robbins of UD Heritage Center introduced himself and thanked Commission for their work. Barb Barton of Dubuque Museum of Art introduced herself, noted that she joined to stay informed of Commission's efforts, and thanked them for their work.

Current Events Reporting from Commissioners:

- DubuqueFest to be held in August 2021 instead of May due to COVID-19 concerns. Press release to go out next week. The 2021 festival will be scaled down and not have evening music, maintain focus on the art fair instead. Application deadline is in June.
- Bell Tower Theater - Complete works of William Shakespeare will begin auditions this week. "The Numbers Game" as live event to be held April 26 – May 2nd.
- River Museum offering tours behind the scenes collections, caring for the animals, etc for a fee. New offering has been well-received.
- JDIFF will be an 8-day event at end of April; 10th year Anniversary.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Riedel, seconded by Commissioner Daugherty. Meeting adjourned at 4:20PM.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 3:30PM via GoToMeeting

Respectfully submitted:

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

These minutes were passed and approved on April 27, 2021.

Witnessed By: *Paula Neuhaus* (signature)
Paula Neuhaus (Oct 29, 2021 10:19 CDT)

Paula Neuhaus (printed)
Vice-Chair (officer position)






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Final Audit Report

2021-10-29

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