



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

DATE: Tuesday, October 25, 2022

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, Noelle CHESNEY, Sue RIEDEL.

Commissioners Excused: Shirley DAVIS-ORWOLL (recorder); Paula NEUHAUS.

Staff Present: Jenni PETERSEN-BRANT (coordinator); Laura MERRICK (grants asst).

Public Present: Ali LEVASSEUR (DCFAS / JDIFF rep, former commissioner); Kara MURPHY (DSO).

HALDER called the meeting to order following staff assurance of Iowa Open Meeting compliance at 3:32 PM. DONALD volunteered to fill in for DAVIS-ORWOLL as recorder of meeting minutes.

Roll Call & Review of Minutes

Minor edits to grammar and spelling for 27 September 2022 minutes. Approval of minutes with proposed changes motioned by ROBBINS, seconded by RIEDEL. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. **Motion carries.**

Staff Status Reports

Verbal updates provided by PETERSEN-BRANT. Highlights referenced include:

- The awards for the GARE mini-grant program are in the process of being posted.
- Survey collection for the Arts & Economic Prosperity Study is ongoing and moving forward.
- Art on the River planning committee debrief meeting still needs to be scheduled and held.
- 6 Art En Route bus shelter sidewalk murals completed thus far. Bike tour of 4 held in conjunction with Sustainable Communities Conference; limited participation in bike tour due to weather but enthusiastic response from those that did. Additional proposals are moving forward to complete implementation in Spring of 2023.
- Activities for National Arts and Humanities Month awareness are on going as we approach the end of the month. Mike WILLIAMS (intern) is developing ideas and activities for 2023 and will present an impact report of 2022 social media engagement at a future Commission meeting.
- A Creative Café was held, in conjunction with efforts to gather input for refresh of the Historic Millwork District plan facilitated by Bolton + Menk, on 12 October, 2022 was considered a success with ~25 attendees.
- On Monday, 31 October, 2022, Amy Henson will begin her position as the AmeriCorps Teen Creative Engagement Specialist.
- Review of the Economic Development Department Operating Budget, which includes the budget recommendation for the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, between the City Manager, the City Finance Department, and Econ Dev staff has been rescheduled to 21 November, 2022. Following that, PETERSEN-BRANT will inform us concerning any issues that directing affect the

commission.
No motion necessary.

Master Plan Working Group Update

Verbal updates provided by PETERSEN-BRANT. Highlights referenced include:

- It is planned that the next Creatives Café will be held in late January or early February 2023.
- The Branding & Communications Working Group is moving forward concerning items addressed at the last commission meeting.

No motion necessary.

The Commission decided to adapt the agenda and move ahead to New Business, Item 1 on the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) regranting program due to MERRICK's availability in relation to NEA-focused schedule.

New Business

1. **NEA Operating Recovery Application:** In 2021, City of Dubuque was a recipient of a \$500,000 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Local Arts Agency (LAA) subgranting award funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This funding is supporting the creation of the proposed Arts Operating Recovery subgrant program, a one-time limited funding opportunity. This program will subgrant \$435,000 in those federally awarded funds to support day-to-day operating costs of arts, arts education, arts activities and/or artistic experiences facilitated by eligible nonprofit organizations operating within Dubuque city limits. The remaining \$15,000 of the NEA LAA award will be allocated to individual artists with application materials to be outlined and approved at a later date.

MERRICK presented the Commission with 3 documents outlining guidelines and application processes to address regranting of \$435,000 to qualifying organizations. The documents included 1) Notice of Funding Opportunity and Requirements, 2) the NEA Arts Operating Recovery Subgrant Application, and 3) the Scoring Criteria and Matrix. These documents were informed by the NEA LAA grantee cohort, City staff research, and input from the Commission's Sub-grant Committee. Minor edits were suggested concerning spelling. DONALD suggested and conversation was had regarding access to informational webinar; Staff noted that scheduled office hours for direct contact will be offered in addition to the recording of the webinar be posted publicly for review.

Motion to accept the application materials and process, with minor edits as suggested, and to forward those materials and process to City Council for final approval motioned by RIEDEL, seconded by CHESNEY. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. ***Motion carries.***

Here the commission returned to the original agenda order.

Old Business

1. **Strategic Plan Reporting:** All subcommittees are examining how to effectively move forward and reengage with the Commission's adopted 2002-2026 strategic plan.
 - a. Priority 1/Objective A subcommittee met and recommends that the Commission compose a letter of support in relationship to 4 requests made by the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs in the FY24 budget process; with further action to be discussed at November Commission meeting.
 - b. Priority 1/Objective B subcommittee met and is examining current commission structure and exploring possible changes.
 - c. Priority 1/Objective C subcommittee met and feels there is no need to discuss in this objective until we are informed of decisions made by the city concerning the FY24 budget.
 - d. Priority 2 subcommittee met and at this time is focusing on objective A; the Master Plan and Community Enactment Strategy.
 - e. Priority 3 subcommittee is essentially the Grants subcommittee of the Commission, focused on implementation and effectiveness of the various grant programs offered by the

City.

- f. Priority 4 subcommittee met, focused on objective A. Items discussed included how to further develop resources to support the Arts within the city, how to more effectively lead and coordinate for Arts and Humanities Month (October), develop a strategy for obtaining and publicizing local, state and national achievements involving city art organizations and individuals, and whether it would be advantageous to develop a community based “umbrella” group to assist organizations and individuals.

No motion necessary. Subcommittees to continue meeting as needed, understand that schedule will be impacted by approaching holidays.

New Business

1. Letter from Commission to City Manager regarding Support for FY24 Improvement

Packages: Based on Strategic Plan Priority 1 discussion was held on drafting and submitting a letter of support, addressed to the City Manager, for 4 specific requests supported as part of the FY24 budget.

- a. The current NEA-funded, part-time, limited-term Grants / Communication Assistant position be established as a recurring, full-time position.
- b. Request for education support to invest in Commissioner skills and professional development through participation in Staff-authorized in-person or virtual trainings and conferences.
- c. Establish recurring resources for the Creatives Cafes quarterly event series beyond the current funding source of Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE). GARE funding will be exhausted end of FY23.
- d. Request recurring funding to utilize the cloud-based, project-management platform BaseCamp enhance coordination and accountability for implementation of the Commission’s 2022-26 strategic plan. The number of BaseCamp licenses requested will also facilitate more effective public / private coordination related to the City’s Arts & Culture Master Plan.

Motion for to support Staff drafted and submitted improvement packages as described and a letter of support be drafted and presented to the Commission at November meeting by RIEDEL, seconded by DONALD. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. **Motion carries.** HALDER to draft letter.

Public Comment/Correspondence

MURPHY (DSO) commented in relationship to Priority 4 of the Strategic Plan related to the concept of nurturing a community umbrella organization for the Arts and if such a group might currently exist within the city currently. Discussion followed on potential established partners, how to best evaluate, and considerations for next steps.

Engagement & Events Reporting

RIEDEL reported that the Bell Tower Theater is currently performing The Wild Women of Winedale. For their next production, Sorry Wrong Chimney, one of the playwrights, Leo W. Sears, will be visiting Dubuque. Production dates are December 2nd through the 8th.

DONALD stated that Fly-By-Night Productions has begun rehearsals for A Christmas Carol which will be performed at the historic Ham House in conjunction with the Dubuque County Historical Society. Production dates are December 10th and 11th. A video of the performance will also be made available online.

Adjournment motioned by ROBBINS, seconded by CHESNEY at 5:02 PM. Vote: Unanimously affirmed. **Motion carried.**

Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, 22 November 2022 at 3:30 PM, Multicultural Family Center

Respectfully submitted:

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

These minutes were passed and approved on Tues, Nov 22, 2022.

Nick Halder
Witnessed By: Nick Halder (Nov 29, 2022 10:33 CST) (signature)

Nick Halder (printed)

Chairperson (officer position)






Minutes Arts Commission Regular Meeting 10.25.2022_approved

Final Audit Report

2022-11-29

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