

MINUTES

ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Tuesday, January 27, 2009
Board Room, Carnegie Stout Public Library
360 W. 11th Street, Dubuque, Iowa

Meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. following staff assurance of compliance with the Iowa Open Meeting Law.

Commissioners present: Ellen Henkels, Louise Kames, Paul Hemmer, Sue Riedel and Geri Shafer (Paul Kohl is out of the country until May.)

Staff Present: Jerelyn O'Connor, Jan Stoffel

Approval of Minutes of November 25, 2008

Motion by Hemmer, second by Henkels to approve minutes. Motion passed 5-0.

Introductions: O'Connor introduced Jan Stoffel as the new Arts and Cultural Affairs Coordinator.

New Business: Discussion with Julie Kronlage, Director of Sales for the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Julie reported that 1.6 million visitors to Dubuque in 2008 had an economic impact of \$256 million. There are 1600 hotel rooms in Dubuque right now, not counting the coming addition of the Holiday Inn Express on the Northwest Arterial. Tourism is Iowa's third largest "cash crop!" Julie expressed an interest in working more closely with the commission.

Riedel asked what the CVB did to promote the arts, what can the Commission do to assist the CVB in its efforts, and what creative marketing or packaging for the arts could be created? Julie explained her focus is on group travel and how many groups ask for cultural events and entertainment venues when they book their trips. She encouraged art groups to submit their activities to the CVB calendar, The CVB does not have the staff to solicit contributions, so groups need to be vigilant in make contributions to the calendar so that Bureau staff can recommend events for packages. (Calendar accessible at www.traveldubuque.com.) Commissioners expressed the long-time need for a central calendar of events and activities, not only for tourism purposes, but also for scheduling information for groups and for use by people in Dubuque. Julie felt that with the CVB, and possibly 365.com, those scheduling needs could be met. Groups can enter events themselves. On the site, there are listings for galleries, theatres, etc., Kames and Shafer had reviewed these prior to the meeting and found them incomplete. Kames suggested adding "Arts and" to the Entertainment tab on the site for clarity. The Commission could help by encouraging groups to post their events and list their group. Julie will compile a short description of what is available to the arts community for the Commission to use in promotion, Stoffel will be responsible for getting that info.

Some communities plan a signature arts weekend event that can be marketed, such as the First Friday Art Walk in Fairfield, Iowa, (<http://www.travelfairfieldiowa.com/groups/>) and an arts event in Angel Fire, New Mexico, (<http://www.afgov.org/index.asp?nid=26>) that attracts 100,000 visitors. Keith Rahe, the Director of the CVB, would like to see Dubuque develop a signature arts event of its own.

Shafer suggested using the art walk idea as a signature event, perhaps on the first weekend in October. Henkels suggested having an opportunity for artists to set up a booth or demonstration on the River Walk. Perhaps a kiosk with print or electronic information about Art on the River pieces could be installed at the art sites.

Riedel asked if groups could post to the calendar even if they were not Chamber members. Julie explained that they can, but there might be other benefits to joining the Chamber. The Bureau has eBlast and postcard packages to advertise events that Chamber members can buy into that would go out to a large database for a minimum investment of about \$400.

Review of 2010 Operating Support and Special projects grant guidelines.

Shafer wondered why we were reviewing the guidelines again. O'Connor noted that the number of applications for the Special Project Grants has been declining perhaps due in part to the availability of Mediacom's Cultural Grants Program. Also, the guideline which limits an organization to two consecutive years of funding may impact the number of applications for the FY10 funding. O'Connor wondered if we should broaden the eligibility requirements for the Special Project Grants. Stoffel reviewed the eligibility requirements from the DRA and Mediacom. Shafer wondered if, instead of changing the applications again this year, we might compile written guidelines for the commission reviewers so that we would all be on the same page when we reviewed them. Commissioners agreed. Riedel commented that she had difficulty reading through all of the budgets. Could staff review them instead of all of the commissioners? It was suggested for repeating applicants, that two years' of financials was redundant. After continued discussion, it was decided that Shafer, O'Connor and Stoffel would meet before next meeting to compile a draft of reviewing protocol. Kames stated that she wanted to award quality projects, so perhaps a minimum point threshold should be established. Stoffel will check with the Iowa Arts Council and the City of Columbia, Missouri, to see how they measure quality and to see if they have reviewing protocols. Stoffel suggested surveying the applicants themselves about the grant process. Kames commented that she had already compiled a survey to do that very thing awhile back. Stoffel will use that survey to contact applicants for feedback by next meeting. Commissioners also asked if applicants were up to date on their final reports and what exactly was the trend in applications? Commissioners would like to see the final reports. O'Connor and Stoffel will prepare a report on past grant funding and final reports for next meeting.

Old Business:

Mae Hingtgen, Executive Director of Every Child/Every Promise will speak to the Commission at the February meeting

Discussion of Strategic Plan Next Steps. Shafer suggested that the tracking chart used before be reinstated to better see if the strategic plan is being implemented.

INFORMATION SHARING:

Shafer noted that the information on the Cultural Advocacy Days regarding the entertainment opportunities has gone out late in Dubuque and at this point there would be no one representing Dubuque.

Shafer will attend the City Budget hearing on February 9 at 6:30.

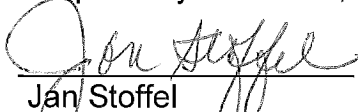
O'Connor suggested that since there is a new commissioner, we might want to check to see if the original meeting time of 4:30 might work better for her schedule. Commission members were agreeable.

Meetings could be scheduled earlier when grants are reviewed.

Stoffel recently attended a literary festival where she met Alan Cheuse, author and National Public Radio's "voice of books" book reviewer. His recent *To Catch the Lightning* is a historical novel on the life and work of Edward Curtis. He was very interested to hear of Dubuque's Curtis collection and the efforts to keep it in the city. He offered to come to Dubuque for an event relating to the collection.

Motion by Hemmer and second by Shafer to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m.
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted;


Jan Stoffel

These minutes were passed and approved on


Ellen Henkels, Secretary