CULTURAL DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 14, 2015
Creativity Center Conference Room
107 E. Chestnut Street
Bloomington, Illinois

Attendance

Commission present: Vicki Tilton, Alex Cardona, Roger Elliott, Sherry Galbreath, Matt Giordano, David Hauman, Ryan Huette, Mike Kerber, Jamie Mathy, Karen Schmidt, Carol Ringer

BCPA staff present: Tina Salamone, Brandy Maloney, Erin Mangian, Thom Rakestraw, Eric Veal, Dave Young

Guests: Alderwoman Diana Hauman and Faisal Rashid

Meeting called to order by Chair, Vicki Tilton at 7:35 a.m. and roll call taken.

New Commission member, Ryan Huette was introduced and all present introduced themselves.

Public Comment

Tilton stated she is happy and excited about the news of Green Top Grocery finding its permanent Bloomington home. Others agreed.

Item to be Presented

With a motion by Ringer and second by Mathy, the April meeting minutes were approved.

Staff Reports

Marketing – Erin Mangian and Thom Rakestraw:

- The season announce piece has been finalized. Last year's brochure was mailed to 15,000 homes/businesses; this year's will be delivered to 27,000. It will be available at the season announce launch parties.
- Radio Bloomington won the bid for radio sponsorship of the 2015-16 season. We will also continue to work with WGLT.
- They tried to get an interview scheduled with Weird Al to promote the show, but the scheduling didn't work out. Mangian isn't too worried about it impacting attendance; ticket sales are going very well. Salamone added there are about ten tickets remaining for the 7:30 pm show and around a hundred for the 4 pm show.

Community Engagement – Eric Veal:

- The season's Student Spotlight Series has been announced. Teachers have received an email, followed by a postcard. The brochure will be sent in the fall.
- Veal provided the Monthly Cultural Commission Report handout to all and commented on some of the highlights.

- Veal also provided to all the latest Arts Partners *Ovations!* Newsletter and noted that membership has increased.

- For the second year in a row, the BCPA has been awarded a $3,000 grant for the Student Spotlight Series from the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation via the Mirza Arts and Culture Fund. We have also applied for a $2,200 grant for shows for the news season.

- Cardona asked about the possibility of having Arts Partners join/renew memberships online. He noted it would be quite convenient for patrons and would be more efficient for staff. Others agreed it would be good to make this happen, if it is possible for the BCPA's ticketing system and the City's IS Dept to do so.

- Schmidt asked what happens when classes cannot afford to attend Spotlight shows. Veal responded it has not really been an issue; despite the prediction that this year would be a tough one for schools, we had higher reservations than expected. He also noted it is possible for schools to receive grants, such as the grants Target offers. Maloney noted in the past, some Arts Partners designated their contribution be used specifically to cover the cost for classes that could not afford to attend, and those monies were used as such. She added that this type of specific Arts Partner donation has not been made in recent years. Salamone added that she feels the Student Spotlight Series is the most important program we have.

Salamone provided the Director's Highlight handout to all. She also noted:

- The AART social will be on stage on 5-15-15, starting at 5:15 pm.

- The Diversity Project is having their performances of Laramie Project next week.

- She is getting calls for summer theater auditions, which will be held June 1 and 2.

Other Business

Cardona congratulated the BCPA staff for a job well done at the FUNdamentals Open House; others agreed it was a great event. Salamone noted while this was held at the BCPA, all of the divisions within the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department participated and provided information about their respective areas and also had fun activities. Cardona suggested some of the elements from that evening's event could be used for First Fridays.

Mathy asked for information about the BCPA's Beer Fest.

Salamone explained the date for Bruegala on our calendar was pulled forward from last year's and the previous years' August weekends of Bruegala. As such, the August 21-22 was reserved for Bruegala. Well after a wedding was scheduled for August 28-29, we learned that this was the weekend the Jaycees wanted. By that point, we had also already secured the opening bands.

Salamone reported that last month we had a final meeting with the Jaycees regarding Bruegala. At that time, the Jaycees did not know whether or not they would have Bruegla here, that the Jaycees thought the Corn Crib would give them a better split. Salamone added that she was then instructed by Assistant City Manager Steve Rassmusen to come up with a more equitable and profitable deal.

Salamone gave an overview to the Commissioners of last year's financial splits the BCPA had with the Jaycees:

- For the first 3,250 full-paid $15 general admission tickets sold, $10 went to the BCPA and $5 to the Jaycees.
- After that, the split for tickets 3,251-4,000 was BCPA $8.50/Jaycees $6.50.
- Any full-paid $15 general admission tickets sold after 4,000 was be split $7.50/$7.50.

She added there were additional splits for VIP tickets, two-day tickets and group discounts.

Salamone reported that all of the space and all that comes with it, was provided to the Jaycees for free; all of the vendors (food, art, etc.) were charged a fee, which went solely to the Jaycees; the money from the sponsors of the beer tasting tables went solely to the Jaycees; all of the money from the beer/wine sales went soley to the Jaycees - the BCPA received no money from any beer sales, even that of which was sold at the trucks outside on the lawn and not part of the tasting. Young added the overhead cost to the BCPA was about $50,000.00 Salamone stated she felt it was not fair that the Jaycees were allowed to receive free space and other nonprofits do not receive the same free space for their fundraisers. Veal added that in previous years the BCPA was not able to control certain aspects about the Bruegala event, aspects that can now be improved upon with our Beer Fest event.

Salamone stated there is more than enough room in Bloomington-Normal for more than one beer festival. She noted yesterday staff took part in a webinar to learn more about attracting millennials to festivals, which confirmed that notion and also provided some other helpful information.

Cardona suggested a Polka Fest be considered as an Oktoberfest event at the BCPA, pointing out that it could be a good outreach to the Polish, German and Hispanic communities, as well as a cross-over event to the community as a whole. Salamone agreed and noted Northern Exposure is in October this year, since we had already had Bruegala on the books for August 21 & 22. Next year, Northern Exposure can be in August and something like a Polka Fest would then fit nicely in October.

Friends of the BCPA Update and Fundraising

Giordano reported:

- Friends of the BCPA now has $1,500 in donations.
- Thank yous have gone out.
- They are accepting additional donations!

Cardona stated that State Farm Bank had a big impact with Green Top, and perhaps they could help with the Friends of the BCPA. He said Lonnie Smith of State Farm Bank, who helps to support local initiatives, has said he would be willing to meet with the 501c-3. Salamone responded she did meet with Lonnie last year.

With a motion by Elliott and second by Mathy, meeting adjourned.