

MINUTES

Park, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 15, 2014

5:30-6:45 PM

Room 12, City Hall

Participants

Committee Members: Councilor Kurt Wright, Ward 4 (KW)
Councilor Vince Brennan, Ward 3 (VB)
Councilor Karen Paul, Ward 6 (KP)

Staff: Nate Wildfire, Assistant Director, CEDO (NW)
Kirsten Merriman Shapiro, Special Projects Manager, CEDO (KMS)
Rubi Simon, Library (BS)
Doreen Kraft (DK)

Others: Jim Lockridge, Big Heavy World
Mariah Riggs, Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center
April Werner, North End Studios in ONE
Ben Bergstein, North End Studios in ONE
Paul Schnabel, Off Center Black Box Theater in ONE
Steven Goldberg, Writer, producer of plays, jazz musician
Deb Flanders, Burlington's Choral Arts, Champlain Valley Folk Festival, Bella
Voce Women's Chorus, Choral Society
Brian Goblik, South End artist
Orly Yadin, VT International Film Foundation
Wendy Stine, Theatre Covenant Theater Company
Syndi Zook, Lyric Theater Company

1) Approval of agenda & draft minutes from 9/17

- Meeting came to order at 5:35 PM
- Motion to approve September minutes and accept October agenda as is (Paul/Brennan); approved

2) Public Forum

- Jim Lockridge (Big Heavy World)
 - Believes arts funding from City government has not been inclusive
 - Believes there is no committee structure that oversees how the City's arts investments are made in a fiduciary or programmatic way

- Big Request = Wants the City to establish an Arts Commission for the City of Burlington that helps guide city support for the arts, comprehensively
- Believes resources have been monopolized by a single visual arts organization, BCA
- Brought a letter from Adam Brooks of SEABA
- Mariah Riggs (Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center)
 - Offers support for Jim's proposal, especially the part about supporting other art-forms beyond visual, like performance arts
 - Would like the City to have a more participatory role in the music and performance community
- April Werner (North End Studios in ONE)
 - Looking for an organization that supports all kinds of arts
 - Would like to see a change in direction, is supporting what Jim has to say
- Ben Bergstein (North End Studios in ONE)
 - Hoping to get recognition and resources for the population that works mostly in the Old North End, as some of that population is less comfortable coming to downtown
 - Have made several requests of BCA for programming, sponsorship and general support, including marketing for the ONE
 - Thinks that there are divides between the people who support arts in the downtown
- Paul Schnabel (Off Center Black Box Theater in ONE)
 - Supports Jim's proposal
 - Would like to rethink how Burlington can step up to the plate to support all arts – time to reexamine the existing model
 - Application of resources has been uneven
- Steven Goldberg (Writer and producer of plays, jazz musician)
 - Used to play at jazz fest, but does not anymore – wishes more local acts were booked
 - Would like more local support for local theater and musicians
- Deb Flanders (Burlington's Choral Arts, Champlain Valley Folk Festival, Bella Voce Women's Chorus, Choral Society)
 - Last time one of her organizations got a grant was in the mid 1990's
 - Supports Jim's proposal
- Brian Goblik (South End artist)
 - Supports the proposal for a committee to oversee BCA's allocations of resources
 - Would like more opportunity for more participation in marketing, publicity through BCA channels
- Orly Yadin (VT International Film Foundation)
 - The City could become an arts center for all of northern New England with City support for all art forms
 - Never asked for support before this year; did ask, and received support
 - Other cities that support arts comprehensively have issued bonds to invest in the arts
 - Film and media should be a part of the conversation – it's an essential art form
- Wendy Stine (Theatre Covenant Theater Company)
 - Supportive of the creation of an arts commission
 - Really wants to find a way to provide tools and resources to support local art, as opposed to bringing art from outside to Burlington
- Syndi Zook (Lyric Theater Company)
 - Supportive of proposal to have an arts commission in Burlington
 - This is a really great time for arts in Burlington – need equity spread around to support this moment

3) Fletcher Free Update (Simon)

- Update on strategic planning process
 - Consultant had site visit and initial meeting with staff; second visit on October 27 and in-service day; organizing time with other city staff via invitation from Mayor's office
 - Working with Marcy Krumbine from CEDO and Molly Loomis from ECHO on the strategic planning process
- Just sent out impact survey on technology services to all users
- Working with Martha Keenan from DPW/CIP – will be soon doing some painting and carpeting, and have applied for grants to do some re-pointing and installation of ice guards
- Monitoring and working with staff and police department to see the drop in number of incidents and the different efforts are starting to work together to get better results; seniors are feeling much safer in restrooms, etc.

4) WAN Update (Shapiro)

- Power lines have been removed from the waterfront! Check it out!
- Working on putting in underground conduits for utilities and telecoms
- Contaminated soils being dealt with
- No problems yet with water line crossings
- Skate park will be complete next summer; don't want people going to use the skate park in the middle of a construction zone for safety reasons
- Would be great to have the committee go down for a tour. Do we need to warn a get together on WAN? **Kurt will ask Eileen**
- Sending out weekly updates to anyone who has asked
- (VB) Upset that blue lights are not a part of this phase; is there enough capacity in the conduits to enable blue lights?
 - (KMS) Not sure what the blue light system requirements are, the project is not putting extra conduit in to provide for blue lights; a change order would potentially be necessary in order to put blue lights in; need direction from Parks and Rec about whether to add new conduit or not
- (VB) Wants to ensure that when the CSC or Moran construction begins, it does not prevent access to the skate park
 - (KMS) The skate park will not act as a staging area for any other construction project

5) PIAP Update (Wildfire)

- Will send drafts of MOU's (ECHO and marina) to PACC members for review in the event that they will go to Council in November
- CSC long-term lease might coming before council in December (a little later than expected)
- New Moran will have many, many things for Council review shortly after their November 15 submission
- Waterfront Park is under construction
- Nate will reach out to the committee to set up a tour of the PIAP projects

6) BCA Update (Kraft)

- Undertaking a listening campaign of all arts organizations, including many of the groups here tonight
 - One of the key things they're hearing is concern about space, and the cost of performing space, particularly Contois
 - Heard loud and clear in years past a need for visual arts, now we're really doing a good job with that; time to listen again and respond to the changes in the community

- One of the things we're looking at are upgrades to Contois for the 150th birthday of the City
- Another thing they can really do is make sure many arts groups are talking and collaborating
- Festival of Fools update
 - It was a smaller festival than usual (it didn't align with Canadian holidays); this scale might be the right actual size
 - Retailers were very enthused; it was the week before the sidewalk sale, which was good timing, will try to do that again
 - Will probably broaden the umbrella to beyond street theater; the kids' fest activities in the park are beloved, will try to keep those going in combination with the farmers markets, etc.
 - What other partners can we continue to work with? Would be nice to get a greater focus on fringe festival type elements, bringing together a group of people to think about how to do this, and how to fund these things; there's less money to go around than before, less groups giving \$ and it's spread more around
 - Also have a group working on making the process for festivals more efficient, etc. How can we be more proactive for what we want, rather than always being reactive?
- (VB) Is role of board more about fundraising than addressing needs of the arts committee? How does that board function?
 - (DK) Board manages the budget, helps with fundraising, analyzes the programs and who they serve and what the fee structures are compared to the rest of the region, who is attending and participating; we're not set up to do a random distribution of funding, the funding sources are tied to programs that have evolved over time
 - (DK) Presumes what people would like is a state arts council; that's not what we are, we've developed programs over time in response to the community
 - (DK) Out of what people have been saying, BCA has started to prioritize performing arts
- ***PACC would like to tour Generator at 4:30 on November 19, before the meeting***

7) Other items

- None

8) Confirmation of next meeting date

- November 19 at 5:30 pm

9) Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM