

**CULTURAL DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

February 12, 2015
Creativity Center Conference Room
107 E. Chestnut Street
Bloomington, Illinois

Attendance

Commission present: Carol Baker, Matt Giordano, Mike Kerber, Carol Ringer, Sherry Galbreath, Jamie Mathy

BCPA staff present: Tina Salamone, Erin Mangian, Bev Spencer, Eric Veal, Dave Young

Guest: Dianna Hauman

Meeting/discussion opened at 7:35 a.m. Not enough Commission members for a quorum.

January Meeting Minutes

Without a quorum, the January 2015 minutes could not be approved. Carol Ringer recommended the approval of the minutes by all in attendance.

January Meeting Minutes Discussion

Carol Baker wanted clarification on where to find the reappointment application for Commission members on the City Website. Mat Giordano said he would forward the address to Carol.

Staff Reports

Eric Veal provided the Monthly Cultural Commission Report handout to all and shared some of the highlights for the busy January month. Eric also reported that he had attended the Community Educator's Meeting on February 11, 2015. In spite of the common belief among educators that attendance at the Spotlight shows would be down for the year, our attendance is actually higher than the previous year. Eric also reported on the Joel Satore show, the live animals present at the show and the BCPA collaboration with the Zoo. Eric is busy working on a number of grants including post grant information for Feet Don't Fail Me Now. He commented on how well the Western Avenue Community Center after school program went for the Feet Don't Fail Me Now show. Tina Salamone commented on the fact that many of these kids would not get to see a show if we didn't offered this type of outreach program. Mike Kerber agreed and also pointed out the importance of using this type of outreach to bring in the parents of the children attending the show.

Dave Young reported he and the maintenance crew are working on cleaning and painting. He also commented on the continual disinfecting of the hand rails.

Bev Spencer reported that the City's purchasing procedures are changing, a new manual is being created by Procurement and training will begin soon.

Erin Mangian reported that she and Thom Rakestraw are working on marketing the February shows; getting more of a presence on the City Website and social media; and sending monthly e-blasts with BCPA show information. Carol Ringer asked why she was receiving e-mail

questionnaires to performances that she did not attend. Erin said she would look into the issue. Carol will let Erin know if it happens again.

Tina Salamone commented on the reasoning behind presenting a show like “Pirate School”. Tina stated that it was meant to be “ridiculous but affordable entertainment”. Many families came to the pre-show dressed in pirate costumes. Jamie Mathy had a friend, who had never attended a performance at the BCPA prior to this show, bring his family and “they had a great time”.

Tina stated that she had not heard any negative comments from people leaving the theatre for any of our shows. She explained the vast amount of talent that is available at the artist conferences like the Arts Midwest Conference and the importance of having patrons come to a performance for an artist they do not know. Dave Young commented that it had been the understanding when the BCPA first started that it would take about 10 years to generate the trust of the community to accept unknown artists and that the trust comes from providing only excellent performances.

Tina explained that the Weird Al performance had sold out of the regular tickets in 22 minutes. She is working with the promoters to add an additional 4:00pm show. She believes we can sell at least an additional 900 tickets to the second show based on a survey that was sent out to patrons. The survey had over 400 responses, and most preferred a 4:00pm performance to an 11:00pm performance. The BCPA is mentioned in most of the Weird Al promotions being run by his organization.

Tina announced that Jocelyn Whikehart will be retiring from the BCPA Box Office on March 27.

There was discussion on the fact that the Farnsworth Group is not responding to Tina’s request for information concerning the grant from the Bridgestone Firestone settlement. Farnsworth had agreed to help with the grant, but is not providing the necessary information. The BCPA will not be applying for the “Home Town” grant because another group in the community also applied for the grant.

Other:

Carol Baker asked if the BCPA was following the plan that Graham Cowger had put together while he was working for the BCPA. Tina responded that due to an overwhelming number of meetings, and the fact that there isn’t enough time or staff, we are not following the plan, but Graham’s plan has increased Arts Partner donations for the year.

Carol Baker also reported that 40 people had taken the tour of the building on First Friday, and the First Friday tours had generated additional interest. Tina commented that in the future, the BCPA will be charging a fee for the tours. Tina’s goal is to have the BCPA become a destination spot on the Rt. 66 bus tour routes. Additional research will be needed to determine the amount to charge for the tours and when to start charging. There was additional discussion on Route 66 and some surprise/concern that the City does not take advantage of the historical aspects of the route.

Matt Giordano asked about the budget, and staff explained that the budget was being met (expenses cut) by not replacing current staff that have left the City, including the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts Director, in a timely manner. Tina said the box office manager position would be refilled.

There was additional discussion on how and why the community needs to focus on the “quality of life” and not so much on potholes. Tina commented that while she understands the discontentment that everyone has with potholes, she believes improving the community through a better quality of life will decrease crime, vandalism, and the need for additional police thus cutting cost in places other than street repair. The community doesn’t understand that it is not necessarily a choice between street repair and the arts.

Dianna Hauman stated that property taxes in Bloomington had not been raised in 6 years.

Discussion adjourned at 8:45.