

BAC Minutes December 14, 2016

Present: Alain Barker, Sally Gaskill, Jan Grant, Martina Celerin, Francesca Sobrer, Peter Jacobi, Abby Perfetti, Lynn Schwartzberg, Michael Wilkerson.  
Staff: Sean Starowitz, Katie Skayhan.

Meeting was called to order in a mysterious out of the way room somewhere in City Hall. Katie Skayhan, ace graduate assistant, was introduced and complimented by Sean on her performance. Her final in Wilkerson's class is due tomorrow. We hope she's done; if not, what a civic spirit to attend this meeting!

Lynn Schwartzberg brought holiday crackers that were festively pulled and were, sadly, filled with bad jokes, which the Commissioners, once prominent members of their disciplines, read aloud.

For EXAMPLE: How do you cook sausages in a jungle?  
Under a gorilla.

Fortunately Martina changed the subject, issuing a treasurer's report. There are two funds, which Sean explained. We are rich. We have 1,180 left in one fund but John Hamilton is going to take it back from us because we didn't spend it. Secretly we are actually supposed to give some of our money back at the end of the year but we have been overly generous - it's the holidays!

We had fun trying to figure out the money. It was a little like an IU budget meeting, which is why Santa says: Ask forgiveness later.

Where did last year's money go? We don't know. Commissioners asked for a monthly financial statement going forward. Staff will investigate. Probably the Enochs commission on the trail had something to do with it, but you know what they say about artists and money.

Staff report: Sean: Vectren mural dedication. Other businesses want murals. Asked for an increase in arts funding from BUEA, tentatively approved. \$10k for new murals and \$20K for a temporary public art program. Plus \$30 K in arts project grants. City can be more nimble in its art-doing with this type of funding. Year end projects: International Mural group London Police did a workshop for kids at Rhinos and for city officials. Getting on the map for some cool artists.

Economic Development Dept. putting in a "culture of risk-taking."  
Goal: "being an art capital in the Midwest." How to get there? How to measure?

For Sean, both university and city; think regionally. Work through networks to get better known. Wants to do more than just murals...a broader approach to the arts is looming around the corner. Alain Barker and Sean discussed conducting an "audit" of what our assets are - cultural assets we have but also people who have left but still have a strong connection to Bloomington.

There was substantial discussion about how to and whether to coordinate grant making with BUEA. Jan Grant mentioned that there used to be an overlapping member of BAC and BUEA, the latter of which might consider shifting its grant funding process to be administered by the BAC. The question was raised: Should an organization be allowed to get grants from both BAC and BUEA?

Abby pointed out that BUEA grants are required to produce economic development and affect the Zone, different requirements than for BAC. Sally suggested one deadline, one process, two categories: project grants for small and new organizations and larger grants for orgs in the BUEA zone. Perhaps, Sally suggests, BAC gives 8 \$2500 grants and BUEA grants can be larger. There are many possibilities for BAC to offer ideas to BUEA.

The BUEA 20K "creative placemaking" fund: It's not ready yet to be implemented: popup small art moments, or partnering with other projects already in the pipeline. Sean would like to take advantage of opportunities this year but maybe not an open call for grant proposals. What can city do for community engagement, to make an impact, to tell our story?

The discussion will be carried over to the next meeting.

Strategic Plan: what follows are notes made from a fast moving discussion.

Discussion of point 3. - Keeping visibility of the commission in the community. Sean urged commissioners to attend city events. Suggested changing "Improve" opportunities for public input to "create." Quarterly happy hours hosted by BAC? Quarterly events that are targeted to a subject? What kind of events should BAC host/create? Sean suggested maybe demonstrations/lectures instead of professional development workshops. Alain Barker called for "strategic advancement" of the arts in Bloomington. Martina: Educational component of our workshops could be geared toward what we want to happen in Bloomington, e.g. alternative spaces and skills needed to create and manage them, etc. Could bring in experts to talk about these things - successful examples. Also need to do more advocacy to the City Council, so that awareness grows of our work.

We could also do a grant writing workshop for the arts, geared around the BAC.

Lots of discussion about the section that covers education, and the city's role, scope of that role, etc.. What does the BAC "do" educationally? (It can be related to the grants we give, workshops we do, etc. Questions as to whether the plan should specifically call for K-12 educational programs. Is the Commission big enough to do that?

The plan does not say anything about adult, higher, or continuing education. Abby Perfetti suggested alternative language that would better match the actual scope and role of the BAC.

"Support advocacy activities that promote arts education."

Abby looks to the Commission and the city to help inspire advocacy and activism among young people. Sean: A renewed sense of awareness among artists.

Individual commissioners are charged to advocate for the arts on their own.

Alain: We can stand up for free expression by artists no matter what.

Regardless of the culture wars.

Sally agreed to rewrite the section. Suddenly it was 6:30, and the commissioners heroically escaped the conference room before the giant iron bars clanged down from above, potentially sealing them all in there until the next meeting, January 11, 2017.