

Bloomington Arts Commission

Wednesday, April 10th, 2019

5 to 6:30 pm - McCloskey Conference Room

Attendees: Rachel Glago, Nick Blandford Sally Gaskill, Quinton Stroud, Andy Findley, Lynn Schwartzberg, Sam Sveen

Absent: Elizabeth Licata, Joanna Woronkowitz, Michelle Walker

Public: Curtis Smith, Vicki Munn, Malik McCluskey, Ndinomholo Ndilula

## A G E N D A

### **Call to Order/Welcome**

Andy calls the meeting to order at 5:04 PM.

### **Approval of March minutes**

Rachel moves to approve meeting minutes. Sally seconds. All approve.

### **Welcome Public**

- Vicki representing the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Arts Festival and to connect with Commission.
- Curtis from Ivy Tech in attendance to represent the Ivy Tech John Waldron Arts Center. He announces that there will be a quarterly event in the gallery space.
- Ndinomholo asks if there could be an opportunity for the public to comment at the end of the meeting.
- Sean and Sally note that members of the public are welcome to speak, as appropriate, at any point during the meeting.

### **Financial Report**

- Andy: There are no updates. No money spent since the last meeting. This will change once the finalists are picked for the Trades district.
- Andy noted that Michelle is seriously ill and will miss some BAC events and functions while in recovery.

### **Final Reports – BSO**

- Andy presents the final report from Bloomington Symphony Orchestra. Once Sean gets these reports, he adds them to the google drive. Final reports are available in the google drive for commissioner review.

- Some commissioners noted that they lacked access to some of the google drive files, including the BAC 2019 Meetings. Sean is working to provide all BAC members with access..
- Sally notes the collaborative effort of the various arts disciplines and other community organizations in the development of the project. The number one budget item was to pay the musicians. This was one of the few projects funded at the full level of \$2,000.
- Lynn also commented on her experience with the project.

## **BAC Projects**

### **Grants Committee: Rachel Glago, Chair**

The agenda for the next Grants Committee meeting:

- Applications tally
  - Plans for assessing applicants
- Rachel notes that grant applications closed on the preceding Friday. There are 15 project support and 11 operating support applications. This is an increase in the number of applications from the previous grant cycle with several new applicants entering the pool. A total of \$80,000 was requested.
  - Sean: We received \$29,000 in requests via the project support grant pool. We capped operating requests at 5% of an organizational budget and have received \$50,000 in requests through the operating grants application. All except three organizations applying for operating support applied for the maximum award, which is capped at \$5,000. There was one applicant who applied for the wrong grant pool and that has been corrected.
  - Rachel: Project support is also about building capacity. There was an applicant with quite a small budget who would have only been able to apply for \$200. We had to clarify that they couldn't actually apply for the \$5,000 as this was more than their total operating budget.

There was a great feedback from the workshops we hosted last week. Understanding the definition of "in-kind" donations seemed to be people's biggest issue, i.e. the difference in cash v. in-kind support.

- Quinton: It may be useful to add a glossary to the application packet.
- Sean: There could be a partnership with the IAC or a consultant to come in and explain budget questions. I spent a lot of staff time on this.
- Lynn suggests posting a sample application for people to look at. We could annotate the important segments of the application for public review.

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- Rachel: We do have a budget template available with line items marked out. Total in-kind income should match in-kind expenses. It is income because it is a donation but it also an expense because you would have had to pay for the item had it not been for the donation. We might think about hosting a webinar to explain this better? Or record a commissioner actually filling out the form and explaining the process as they go along fill out the form.
- Andy suggests the possibility of posting the best-prepared grant applications for operating support and project support on our website for reference next year.
- Andy: Capacity building is part of our mission. We can explain how to fill out a grant budget, but there will still be applicants with questions. This is a reality we need to endure.
- Bottom line: next year, the grants committee should consider including a glossary of terms, sample applications, a webinar, and record our workshops for online reference.
- Nick met with Lotus and they were worried about the organizational transition they are going through and how to present that in their application. He told them the BAC wants to see organizations that are self-reflective and that explaining where they are in their process would be useful in evaluating their grant application.
- Rachel: By end of day Friday, Sean will have completed the first run through of the grants and will send them out to commissioners on the grant committee and to external reviewers. The in-person review meeting will take place on May 1 from 5-8. There are 2 score sheets and a rubric for evaluating both project and operating support grants. We will assign first and second readers. This meeting will not be open to the general public. We hope to notify all applicants by the end of May and host the public ceremony on June 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Nick notes that the IAC's grant reviewer portal is user friendly and can be looked to as a model.
- There is discussion among the group as to what software platform might be best in working through the grants process in the future.

**Public Art Planning Committee: Nick Blandford, Chair**

- Trades finalist update
  - Nick: Sean is in contact with the 5 finalists. We are expecting materials to be turned in by April 22<sup>nd</sup>. We are planning to make the materials available for

public viewing and comment for 2 weeks, April 29 – May 5 at various locations around town. There will be a google form for people to provide feedback. In addition to the group who did the initial review of applications, Faye Gleisser (Assistant Professor of Contemporary Art History at IU) will join for the final review. We will be doing Zoom interviews with the finalists soon by May 24 so we can finalize our decision by June 1 and announce at the Arts Night at City Hall on June 12.

- Lynn: Perhaps we should think about having a comment box outside of the city center, somewhere like College Mall in order to ensure we are opening up access.
- Commissioner suggestions include Ivy Tech, the public library, and YMCA, and Walmart
- Nick: We are trying to get public comments in a 2-week window. Will materials be able to be duplicated by then?
- Sean: We'll print them on foam core. We have a lot of flexibility with that. It depends on scheduling. I will need commissioners' assistance with placing these.
- Nick: Would it be better to find a place we can leave the comment box up for 2 weeks instead of placing them in a space where it would need to be taken up and down consistently?
- Sean: I think we need to really staff it. I think we need to be there to walk people through the activity in order to ensure we are engaging with people and ensuring they want to participate. I also thought about activating the schools, maybe Fairview.
- Lynn: If we could get a schedule posted detailing where we might put them we could schedule it on the city website.
- Sally: Does the feedback need to be in person or can it be online? The best way to get out of downtown is to make sure there is a digital component.
- Sean: We will do a press release and a BEAD announcement, but it will be important that the commission leverages personal connections to get this information out there. People could also list the information in their neighborhood listserv.
- Sally: For the questions we are being asked to submit, should they be for all applicants or specific to a particular proposal?
- Nick: We want questions that can be asked of all candidates, a way to create a similar foundation for the final interview.

- Switchyard update
  - Nick: We have about 40 applications. Sean reviewed and cut down to his top 15 recommendations. As with the Trades District, there is an opportunity to elevate applications which may not be high on the list. We are looking for reviews to be turned in by April 29<sup>th</sup> in order to schedule a meeting by the first week of May. The process will be similar to the way things were done with Switchyard. As reviewers are adding the comments, please add in high, medium, low to presort the comments and strategize the conversation. If we can quickly narrow the conversation to a group of a top 5 we can spend most of our time working on those.
  - Sean: There are a few new artists in the 15. We designed the call for new artists. I just want to make sure I have enough feedback to provide them. It's good to get new perspective on new approaches. When we did Trades, I did almost 20 phone calls with people who didn't make the cut. A lot of the no's were very sculptural, didn't pay attention to the call, or saw it as an opportunity for a mural which this call wasn't for.
  - The PAPC will attempt to choose 1 finalist, but may consider more depending on public feedback for the Trades finalists. Ultimately, this project is on a tighter deadline, so we may have a truncated period of public comment.
  - Nick: I would encourage reviewers to comment without looking at other people's comments.
  - Andy: Also, maybe randomize the way in which you review the proposal. We realized we were much harder on the first 5 than last 5.

### **Advocacy Committee: Andy Findley**

- Andy: A volunteer committee (Staff, Rachel, Sally, Nick, Bryony, and Andy) met on Monday for the steering committee where we discussed whether advocacy should be addressed through the creation of a new committee. We talked about the strategic plan which is set to close at the end of the year. There is a need to review the plan and possibly refigure it now that the grants and public arts committee are standing on their own. We also need more coordination of events and activities related to BAC mission and interests.

The committee concluded that a limited task force could investigate the issues and bring a proposal to the full commission by the next meeting or early June. An ambitious goal would be to suggest new directions which could be presented during Arts Night as a way to announce future vision for the BAC.

All commissioners should read through the strategic plan and familiarize yourself even if not interested in being a part of the task force. We want the task force to review the strategic plan with a focus on advocacy to do a pulse check on effectiveness and successes of the overall plan.

A few other things worth considering include the need for fundraising. There were divergent feelings. If we start fundraising as a city commission, are we cannibalizing other nonprofits? On the other hand, it could create coffers to support upcoming artists in the city.

We have created a BAC Community Calendar. This will be a commissioner- driven list of events that we might attend that could be of interest to the other commissioners. There is a possibility that we might be able to make portions of the calendar, public. We are volunteer public officials. In terms of engaging the community it isn't a bad idea to allow people to know that there will be commissioners available at certain events.

- We also thought about changing our meeting start times in order to provide opportunities for people to attend who don't get off right at 5.

### **Staff Report: Sean Starowitz**

- Sean: We have started a partnership with Revolution Biking for a public mural on their building.
- Press release for the Black y Brown Festival will go out soon. There is a jot form available now and the announcement is pinned to the top of the Facebook page. We've expanded the festival this year. We are partnered with the Waldron. Will do pop up block party on May 14<sup>th</sup>. There will be Friday night event at the Waldron and a Saturday event at the Banneker center with opportunities for artists to sell their work. The mayor is very excited. We will need help selecting the artists.
- We will have BEAD swag stickers and the banners will continue going up.
- We are also working on some alley beautification projects around the city. There will be some public art opportunities and some user engagement work.
- There will be a new public art opportunity with the construction of the 4<sup>th</sup> street garage. We will decommission the current piece.

### **Old Business**

- Sally asks if anyone was able to connect with Jeff Cannon regarding the future programming of the Bloomington Community Song. Sean and Nick both separately spoke with Jeff who is rolling forward with the song and will keep Sean in the loop. He

can't come to our the June 12<sup>th</sup> event but will be at the activation for the BEAD launch on June 20.

- Sean notes that he hasn't spoken with Maggie about the CDs purchased with the grant funds but it is on his to do list.

### **Commissioner Announcements**

- Lynn: Bloomington Chamber Singers has a concert this Saturday with new music at 7:30 at St. Marks United Methodist Church.

Andy: There is an opening vacancy on the commission, a mayoral appointment. Please encourage those who would be qualified and active commissioners to apply ASAP.

- Nick: Secretly Group was nominated for 15 awards through our professional organization.
- Sally: The Voces Novae *Vonnegut: Requiem* takes place May 11 and 12 as part of the IU Granfalloon. .
- Sally: It would be useful to add all our funded events on the Calendar.
- Rachel: Record Store Day takes place this weekend from 11-8. Proceeds will go to Midway Music.
- Sam: There is shearing day at Marble Hill Farms.
- Nick: SOAAD got a new name, named after the Eskanazi family.

### **Comments from the Public:**

Malik McCluskey: How wide will the focus of the advocacy committee be?

Andy: A lot of this came out of focusing on local issues and having some of the membership speak to the state legislature on behalf of the arts. There could also be some opportunities for national advocacy. In terms of a guiding principle, what I would like is to take the strategic plan as it exists and think about possibilities for realigning it.

### **Call to Adjourn**

The meeting ended at 6:30.