

Cultural Council Meeting Minutes

August 20, 2009

Present: Leah Kliger, Kathy Feek, G.G. Getz, Gwen Zierdt, Bhaj Townsend, Amy Whittenburg, Margit Moore, Jeff Parks, Cathy Heffron

Absent: Tom Gant (on leave of absence until December), Becca Singer, Bob Larson

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES, MEMBER TERMS

Approval of meeting minutes postponed for further time to review. Bhaj will be the meeting summarizer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council reviewed information brought to by members that attended the ArtsEdWashington presentation *Arts in Crisis*. The presentation will come out on YouTube. One idea is to have an event at KPC to view it. They also learned that the Kennedy Center is offering free assistance to arts groups. This could be great information for the community collaboration event. There was a study from Americans for the Arts found that 70% of tourists come for cultural tourism.

CITY BUDGET UPDATE

The Cultural Council could lose .15 staffing that they have in Julie's position, as well as the \$5,000 professional services funding that we have gotten every year if the utility tax does not pass in November. Staff will ensure that CC is informed of upcoming budget meetings. One way to address these potential funding cuts has arisen through a grant opportunity (NEA Stimulus Funding) through 4Culture. After consulting with the City Manager, the Kirkland Arts Center and the Performance Center, the City decided to apply for this grant. The grant originates from stimulus money that is intended to save arts jobs. The grant limit is \$15,000. A discussion ensued regarding potential budget cuts and the roll the Cultural Council could play in advocating for arts funding. One idea is to write a letter to the editor explaining what will be lost for the arts if the utility tax ballot measure does not pass. Previously the Council has not gotten involved in political issues; however individual citizens may advocate for political causes.

4Culture leftover funds

The Cultural Council has \$1375 left in 4Culture grant funds that have not been spent this year. Staff offered up 4 ideas for ways to utilize these funds:

- Hire an intern to develop an electronic portfolio of local artists
- Hire an intern to assist the Cultural Council in researching creation of a Foundation for the arts in Kirkland
- Offer as an honorarium to a poet laureate (Redmond has done this)
- Assist local arts agencies and artists with marketing

Another idea discussed at a previous meeting was utilizing the funds for performance art at the community collaboration meeting.

A decision on what to do with these funds was postponed until later in the meeting.

VISION 20/20 STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIZATION

VISION STATEMENT

Kathy and Margit crafted a vision statement starting with Jerry Allen's description. They were looking at it as a description or vision for the future. The intention is for this to be the first paragraph of the vision statement in the strategic plan, not to replace what is already there. Council reviewed the two statements and determined that the one labeled Kirkland 2020 Vision Statement can be the vision statement for the Council, and the Vision Statement that includes the objectives can be the objectives and goals. Council would not like to wordsmith the statements. However, concern was expressed over the word "values" in the first sentence (leads one to think of value statement rather than vision statement) and in the second sentence the words "economic culture" together may not be ideal. Economic climate is another possibility. Council members should give feedback by end of this weekend, and Kathy and Margit will get vision statement to Julie by end of next week to send to Jerry. Council members should also review the vision statement in the strategic plan to see if any changes are proposed to that. Council members would also like the powerpoint presentation developed by Jerry and Associates to look artistic.

Strategic Plan Prioritization of Action Items

Council reviewed list of 29 action items and placed 15 dots to indicate their priorities, ending up with 13 prioritized recommendations. They then rated them as short, medium and long term.

Short-term Priorities

- The Cultural Council should meet with the Mayor, City Manager, City Council, and Budget Director to discuss current efforts and strategize future efforts to implement the arts master plan. (Recommendation 29)
- The Cultural Council should increase networking, technical assistance, and leadership opportunities for artists and arts organizations, including creating an annual awards event that recognizes leadership in the arts. (Recommendation 23).
- The Cultural Council should explore, with the owners of underutilized commercial properties, use of empty spaces by artists and arts, culture and heritage organizations. (Recommendation 15)
- The City should extend the scope of the public art program by applying the public art requirement to the entire CIP budget. (Recommendation 5)
- The City should provide resources for full-time staff support for the Cultural Council and the proposed foundation. (Recommendation 28)
- The Cultural Council should continue developing visibility for arts organizations and artists, for example through profiles on Currently Kirkland. (Recommendation 10 & 18 combined)
- The Cultural Council should create a Foundation to support the arts, culture and heritage in Kirkland. (Recommendation 26)
- The City should develop a strategy for retention of existing art galleries and attraction of new art galleries, perhaps as part of the negotiations over major new private developments. (Recommendation 8)

Mid-term Priorities

- The Cultural Council should create a task force to explore strategies for funding a signature arts festival or event. (Recommendations 21 & 22 combined)
- The Cultural Council should collaborate with the Kirkland Downtown Association, the Chamber of Commerce and downtown businesses to create a program of downtown activation and fund activities that stimulate tourism, including concerts and performances. (Recommendation 6)

Long-term Priorities

- The City should enter into discussions with regional cultural institutions to assess their interest in establishing satellite facilities in Kirkland and what they would need to make that happen. (Recommendation 7)
- The City should explore the potential of developing an artist studio and live-work project in the downtown, working with a private or non-profit developer. (Recommendation 9)
- The City should enhance the cultural infrastructure by exploring development of a black box theatre, a downtown electronic event kiosk and a municipal art gallery. (Recommendations 13, 14 & 20 combined)

Artist Brochure

Ellen Millier-Wolfe reported that the City received \$7000 in tourism money for a tourism brochure that the City will match. The brochure will be a profile of local artists and what they like about Kirkland and living in Kirkland. KAC and KPC are helping with this. Staff will be sending out an RFP to the artist community .

ADDITION TO AGENDA: BUSKING

Margit and Amy would like to propose to the City Council a process for busking downtown. This is a no-cost idea to bring activation and arts to the downtown. Margit spoke several City departments about this idea. Ellen agreed to research this further with City staff. Margit and Ellen will discuss further.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Julie Huffman