

**CULTURAL DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

October 9, 2015
Creativity Center Conference Room
107 E. Chestnut Street
Bloomington, Illinois 61701

Attendance

Commission present: Mike Kerber, Carole Ringer, Matt Giordano, Jessielee Hinshaw, Neeraj Joshi, Ryan Huetter, Karen Schmidt, Tricia Stiller, Vicki Tilton, Kiasha Henry

Staff present: Steve Rasumussen, Jay Tezloff, Tina Salamone, Eric Veal, Brandy Maloney, Nick Niemberg, Erin Shannon, David Young

Meeting called to order by Chair, Vicki Tilton at 7:30 a.m. and roll call taken. No public comments.

Item to be Presented

With a motion by Ringer and a second by Giordano, the September 10, 2015 Cultural District Commission meeting minutes were approved.

Staff Reports

Performing Arts Director Report

Salamone provided a copy of the Monthly Director's Report, containing a snap shot of recent activities.

She also reported the following regarding shows:

- Wild Bill Hickok
 - Great performance by former All My Children star and 25+ year comedian, Walt Willey.
 - Willey is from Ottawa, IL, is dedicated to arts administration and children in the arts; he started his own company theatre there and would like to help us with the Creativity Center.
- The Melodores
 - Attendance was good; there was great community support for this show and William Woodard, previous Miller Park Summer Theatre Music Director.
 - Expenses for this show were low. Additionally, The Melodores do not receive payment for their performance; the money goes to Vanderbilt's endowment.
- Grease Sing A Long
 - The event brought different types of patrons to the show, which is good.
- Northern Exposure
 - The music was great but attendance very disappointing.
- Bloomington Beer Fest
 - The event (exclusive of alcohol) was paid for by the gate fees.
 - Beer ticket sales generated enough to pay for the alcohol and an additional \$10,600 to be divided amongst the charities who participated as pourers.
 - This event will be earlier next year.

Salamone further noted:

- There will be an operational audit of the BCPA next week.
- Budget for next fiscal year has started.
- The new BCPA Production Manager will start next week.
- Ticket Office Manager, Pam Starks, will be having surgery next week, and will be out for awhile recovering. She has been training Ticket Office staff to be sure everything is covered in her absence.
- She would like to be able to talk more about activities happening in the Creativity Center. For example, the Walk-In, Bike-Out group is here and the gentleman who recently painted the mural for downtown used space here. She will get clarity from the City as to what we can say is going on at the Creativity Center.

Giordano asked for additional information regarding the operational audit. Salamone stated audits are a good thing. Schmidt added that the Bronner Group was hired by the City to conduct the audit, that they will be auditing all departments, not just the BCPA within the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department; the BCPA audit was not linked to the Budget Task Force, it was already planned to happen.

Marketing Report

Shannon reported:

- We have five shows in October that are being marketed and trying to educate the public about what these shows will be like.
- She and Thom have been doing an audit of the BCPA Website.
- A mid-season mailing piece will go out the week before Thanksgiving.
- We will be having a Black Friday sale again; it was very successful last year.
- Using yard signs - a previous suggestion – will cost a couple hundred dollars for about twenty or so. If Commissioners are still interested in having marketing pursuing this, please let her know.
- Thom is creating Facebook events.
- We currently have 5,000+ likes on Facebook.

Stiller inquired as to what kinds of outreach is done to solicit ticket buying. Shannon responded last year we had monthly emails and that we send emails before shows. She added we don't want to overkill with it, resulting in people disregarding emails because they receive too many. Salamone asked all to like and share our events and posts; the more people that see the message, the better.

Henry asked how many mailers we are sending out. Shannon replied we have one big season brochure and a mid-season mailer. Additionally, direct mail has been amped up. Henry asked what the success rate is on the mailers. Shannon noted that she wishes we could track this more specifically; patrons are currently asked when they buy tickets how they heard about the show but our questioning needs to be refined.

Huette asked about the possibility of using the back wall of the BCPA for marketing purposes. Salamone responded that it has already been discussed; she would like something dynamic and not static; we need to think of creative ways to use the space.

Community Engagement Report

Veal provided a Community Engagement handout to all with highlights of the month's activities.

He also reported:

- The AESOP show, previously booked for the Student Spotlight Series, has been cancelled, as it is no longer going out by the company.
- Due to low reservation numbers, The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe will now perform one show for the Spotlight Series, rather than two. Veal noted the lack of a state budget is the reason for the low numbers.
- We are working on the Final Report for a program grant, and the Final Report for the Walt Willey show.
- The position of Community Engagement Manager is being revised. The work title for this position will be Assistant Director of the BCPA.
- There was a meeting with Finance where policies of the Procurement process were reviewed. In attendance was from the BCPA: Tina Salamone, Brandy Maloney, Debbie Bohannon and himself; from Finance: Patty-Lynn Silva, Jon Johnston; from Legal: Jeff Jurgens (via phone).

Volunteer / FOH Report

Niemerg reported:

- He has been in the position for two months, learning how things have worked in the past and working on making improvements.
- The Volunteer Appreciation Banquet will be on Tuesday, October 27 from 6 to 8 pm in the Ballroom; Commission is invited, please RSVP to him. This year will be catered rather than the usual potluck items brought in by the volunteers and staff.
- He has visited different community groups to recruit new volunteers.

Facilities Reort

Young reported:

- Building maintenance checkups are going on through late summer and early fall.
- We have many rentals booked.

Commission Task Forces

Tilton noted Mathy was going to ask for a copy of the Farnsworth contract. With Mathy's absence from the Commission meeting, there is no update regarding the Farnsworth Interface.

Giordano asked if everyone on the commission is on a BCPA Taskforce. Salamone responded that her hope is that everyone will be, but that is not the case. She added she has different groups created and will send them to any of the Commissioners who are interested.

Friends of the BCPA 501c-3 Fundraising Report

Tilton and Giordano reported:

- The official status letter was received September 16, 2015.
- The Capital Campaign will soon begin.
- They received the Memo of Understanding used by the Zoological Society. Once the Friends of the BCPA has completed theirs, it will be submitted to Legal for review.

With a motion by Giordano and second by Henry, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30am.