



ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, May 28, 2019

TIME: 3:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Five Flags Center, Orpheum Room – 405 Main St, Dubuque, IA

Regular Meeting

Commissioners Present: Mary Armstrong, Tyler Daugherty, Ali Levasseur, David Schmitz, Gina Siegert (3:35)

Commissioners Excused: Paula Neuhaus, Sue Riedel

Staff Present: Cori Burbach, Jill Connors, Eileen Ricchio

The meeting was called to order by Schmitz at 3:30 p.m. following staff assurance of compliance with Iowa Open Meeting Law.

1. Minutes of April 23, 2019

Minutes were reviewed. Motion by Levasseur, second by Armstrong, to approve. Motion carries unanimously.

2. Commissioner Attendance requirements/Ordinance Review

Commissioner attendance discussed. This topic came up a couple years ago. Missing 3 in a row seems to be a good rule for asking commissioners to resign from the board. Agreement that it's good to have that conversation with any affected individual to clarify whether they want to stay. Moving forward staff can review minutes to verify attendance and report to Commission Chair.

Siegert arrive 3:35 p.m.

3. 2019-2020 Grant Recipient Selection – Operating & Special Projects

Burbach presented the staff recommendation based on the results of the process implemented to award the grants. This process involved having staff initially review applications for technical compliance. The applications were then sent to a panel of 3 jurists who are outside of (but familiar with) the community. The jurists scored the applications.

Special Projects Grant

The application needed to show a 1:1 match of funds. Recommendation to fund all applications submitted at the requested level, except for Steeple Square which would only be funded at the level of the organization's match.

The jurists noted that some applications did not seem like new partnerships. Some Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) aspects were included in the proposed projects, but staff noted there is still some work to be done in that area. We may want to focus more on DEI moving forward. Recommend full funding for all, with exception of the Steeple Square which does not have enough match to max out.

Staff will get a copy of the jurists' comments to the organizations to review for next year.

Question about why we didn't max out the amount of funding available for the special project grant funds due to lack of applications. Is it marketing? Is it DEI? We will want to do a survey or use another tool to determine the reason. Might need to clarify the requirements of partnerships (don't necessarily need to be brand new). Each year there have been new requirements, so perhaps there's confusion or a belief that the organization would not have a competitive application. Do we want to investigate how best to disburse arts funding, do we keep the same operating and special projects grant programs?

We have \$5,875 left in the fund. Since we haven't spent all of the funds, we might be able to use remaining funds to market the information, for example. Would need the City Manager's permission to reallocate the funds.

Some community groups may not realize that they can apply. Need some outreach. We don't want to leave money on the table.

Next meeting(s) we should discuss how to get the word out, clarify who can apply. Do folks understand what it means to have a fiscal agent? Maybe this is the sticking point or barrier?

Listed scores are the combined score of all 3 jurors. Feedback will be provided to all applicants. Commissioners are thankful for this modification. Motion by Armstrong, second by Siegert, to accept the slate as recommended by Burbach. Motion carries unanimously.

Operating Grant

Process involved Burbach initially reviewing for technical compliance. Same 3 jurists scored these applications. During the process, one small question had arisen on whether the application should include current or prior year's operating budget. Burbach verified with several applicants, and all are based on the current year.

Commission was presented with a listing of the ranked scores, with the names of the organizations redacted. This was intentional in order to have more of an unbiased discussion of the funding scenarios.

When ranked by points, Burbach looked for a natural break in the scores and created 3 tiers and provided 3 possible funding scenarios

Option 1 shows all organizations receiving the maximum of 6% or \$30,000, whichever is lower, as listed as a possibility in the grant program. This would put the grant program over budget by almost \$100,000.

Option 2 would fund Tier 1 at 4% or max, Tier 2 at 3% or max, and not fund Tier 3. This option would come in just under the \$210,000 program budget.

Option 3 would fund Tier 1 at 3.75% or max; Tier 2 at 2.75% or max; and Tier 3 at 1.25% or max. Burbach recommends funding all the groups at least some amount. This option does not greatly affect the higher-scored organizations while providing some assistance to the lower-scored ones.

Motion by Daugherty, second by Armstrong, to approve Option 3 for the entire slate. Discussion: it seems like we're tasked with funding everyone. Option 1 just showed a "what if" everyone were funded at 6%, not really a recommendation. Commissioners are grateful that they are not scoring the applications. Motion carries unanimously.

After the vote, the names of organizations were displayed for the group.

This recommendation will be taken to City Council by staff. Once approved, contracts will be drafted and sent out for signature.

The Commission noted that the amount of funding is increasingly inadequate. We have a growing art community and a growing number of organizations interested. The Commission/working groups will investigate and will advise staff during the budget season on possible improvements moving forward.

4. Open Commission Seats – deadline for application

Schmitz and Armstrong do not intend to reapply for their seat. Applications are due May 30 at noon in order to meet this year’s deadline for being seated in July. Schmitz and Armstrong will stay on working groups but want to cede their commission seat to new applicants to have fresh voices on the Commission.

5. Current Events Reporting from Commissioners

DubuqueFest is complete - Schmitz commended Levasseur on her efforts on the successful event. People liked the new setup in Washington Park.

Rising Star Theater Company – will be performing Newsies in June; Godspell in July; and Beauty and the Beast in August.

Art on the River – question on whether there should there be a thank you note send to applicants who are not selected.

Meeting adjourned 4:23 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, June 11, 2019

Respectfully submitted:
Jill Connors
Economic Development Director

These minutes were passed and approved on _____, 2019.

Gina Siegert, Secretary