

Museum and Cultural Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular meeting at the Mesa Arts Center, 1 East Main Street, third floor, south Studios conference room, on December 14, 2005.

Members Present:

Kimberly Grace
Crista Cloutier
Peter Cook
Lennee Eller
Daniel J. Harper

John Hohmann
Toni Brucato-Kobet
Andrea Soto
Laurent Teichman
Ramona Tecumseh

Members Absent:

Douglas Brimhall

Staff Present:

Gerry Fathauer Rob Schultz
Tom Wilson Gerri Green
Nancy Wolter Jean Kaminski
Laura A. Madson Brown

Kimberly Grace, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:37 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Kimberly Grace, Chair, asked for any corrections/additions to the minutes. There being none, Peter Cook made a motion, Ramona Tecumseh seconded, and the November 9 minutes were unanimously approved by the members present and posted on the Web page.

Public Comments

Ramona Tecumseh reported that an article on December 9 appeared in *The Arizona Republic* announcing that Tucson's R. Carlos Nakai's quartet was nominated for a Grammy in the best New Age album category. Mr. Nakai performed at the Mesa Arts Center on November 20.

Discuss and Take Action – Consider Approval of Recommendations for Arts and Cultural Mini-Grant Requests – Laura A. Madson Brown

Laura Brown has recently taken over as the staff liaison for Mini-Grants. The Grants committee: Kimberly Grace, Doug Brimhall, and Ramona Tecumseh (who was absent, but sent her comments to the committee) met with Rob Schultz and Laura Brown on December 6 to review the nine Mini-Grant applications received. The maximum request per application is \$2,000. The Mini-Grant budget for FY 05-06 is \$10,068. Grant requests totaled \$17,300.

Mini-Grant funding is restricted in that funds are not available to: schools for the purchase of supplies needed for the established school curriculum; *pay transportation costs for field trips; pay for cash prizes or scholarships; or fund projects involving construction or renovation of facilities, capital expenditures, and reduction of debts.

Criteria for funding is as follows:

- **Project Quality:** qualifications, background and experience of the artist/consultants involved; and effective use of the artists'/consultants' skills in the project.
- **Planning:** strong planning for logistics of the project; clearly defined relationship of all project partners involved in the project; available resources and expertise to administer the project.
- **Ability to Serve a Need in the Community:** project is responsive to the cultural, artistic, and diversity needs of the community it is serving; and project impacts the community for which it is planned.
- **Budget:** appropriateness of the project costs to the service provided; support, both in-kind and financial, from the organization and/or community supporting the project; and a balanced and accurate budget.

The committee recommended the following:

Lehi Elementary: grant request was \$2,000 to feature a Japanese cultural unit with artist-in-residence Esther Vandecar who will teach students, staff, Head Start program, Special Ed. programs, and Family Tree program the Japanese Art of Taiko Drumming scheduled four days a week from January 17 through February 10; recommended award is \$1,584.

Sirriner Adult Day Health Services: grant request was \$2,000 to offer persons afflicted with Alzheimer's and other dementia the opportunity to get in touch with their musical backgrounds through a series of one-hour performances, to occur twice per month for six months; recommended award is \$1,600.

Montessori Education Centre: grant request was \$1,500 for a two – three week artist-in-residence project through which students and teachers will work together with local painter, printmaker, and muralist Damian Charette to learn basic drawing techniques and other aspects of painting. Students will work with the artist to create a mural that encompasses the multicultural family heritage and traditions of the children who attend the Centre; recommended award is \$1,500.

PREHAB's Eaton School: grant request was \$2,000 to incorporate the study of different cultures through literature, food, clothing, art, music, on-site instruction, field trips, and guest speakers. Project artists include: Keith Johnson, Zarco, Walt

Richardson, Yellow Bird, Solana Yuko Halada, and Esther Vandecar. The project will be run from February 8 through March 30; recommended award is \$2,000.

Arizona Theatre Company (ATC): grant request was \$2,000 to support the Student Matinee Program and associated activities during the ATC's season at the Mesa Arts Center. Through providing affordable/free tickets, education materials, and post-performance discussions, ATC is providing valuable art experiences to youth; recommended award is \$1,584.

East Valley Children's Theatre (EVCT): grant request was \$1,800 to support additional, recorded performances with Mesa Symphony of "Peter and the Wolf" to local bookstores, Mesa Public Libraries, and several Mesa Elementary Schools in March and April 2006; recommended award is \$1,800.

The committee recommended not funding the following:

Metropolitan Youth Symphony: grant request was \$2,000. The purpose of the funding request is unclear; no award is recommended.

Mesa Encore Theatre: grant request was \$2,000. The funding request was based on bus transportation. *Restrictions clearly state that funding is not awarded for transportation; no award is recommended.

Arizona Scottish Highlands: grant request was \$2,000. The committee understood the funding request to support the Caledonian Society of Arizona's Arizona Scottish Gathering and Highland Games. It was unclear as to who was the applicant and the purpose of the request; no award is recommended.

Toni Brucato-Kobet made a motion, and Andrea Soto seconded. All members present unanimously voted to approve the recommended funding awards.

Review, Consider, and Take Action – FY05-06 Work Program – Nancy Wolter

As time ran short at last month's Board meeting, further review and discussion of the FY05-06 Work Program was postponed to today's meeting. The following additions/deletions were made to the draft:

Education Committee:

- **Change first bullet to read:** Disseminate fact sheets, provided by staff, to educate the public regarding Arts and Cultural funding issues.
- **Add fourth bullet:** Strategize ways to make the critical issues affecting the Arts and Cultural Division compelling and visible.

Financial Stability Committee:

- **Change first bullet to read:** Provide feedback to City staff on fee increases.
- **Add third bullet:** Serve as a liaison with nonprofit support organizations within the Division (depending on whether or not the organizations will welcome a liaison).

Grants Committee: Remains the same.

Board Tasks – Board Members:

- **Delete sixth bullet.**
- **Tasks were divided into two areas – Board Tasks and Board Members.** The original tasks are unchanged; however, the first three bullets fall under Board Tasks and the last three are now under Board Members.

Daniel Harper made a motion, and Toni Brucato-Kobet seconded. All members present unanimously voted to accept the FY05-06 Work Plan subject to the above changes.

Information and Discussion – Select Which Committee to Serve On as a Member – Kimberly Grace

Education Committee members will be: Peter Cook, Toni Brucato-Kobet, and Daniel Harper. Staff liaison TBD.

Financial Stability Committee members will be: Crista Cloutier, Laurent Teichman, John Hohmann, Daniel Harper, Lennee Eller, Andrea Soto – Peter Cook abstained from this committee because of his conflict of interest as President of the Southwest Museum Foundation Board. Staff liaison TBD.

Grants Committee members will be: Ramona Tecumseh, Kimberly Grace, and Doug Brimhall. Staff liaison TBD. Discussion ensued as to when the first meeting of the committees would take place. It was decided that all three committees would meet initially to be educated by staff on the needs, expectations, etc. of the Division.

It was further decided that a special meeting would be called for January 25, 4:00 p.m., at the Mesa Arts Center, third floor, south Studios conference room, to gather all Committee members. The Board will also meet at the regular meeting date and time (January 11, 3:30 p.m.).

Staff Reports

Arizona Museum for Youth – Rob Schultz for Sunnee Spencer

- Hosted 190 visitors on the December "2nd Sunday Free." Approximately 45 percent (%) were Mesa residents.
- Looking at admission fees and other ways of revenue generation, such as workshops, etc.
- Looking at possible ways to do some maintenance/restoration of the Public Art projects on site.

Mesa Southwest Museum – Tom Wilson

- The "Crocs" exhibit will be extended through April. The exhibit has proved popular, and the additional \$10,000 to the Science Museum of MN for the three-month extension is a bargain.
- The Museum had intended to solely exhibit Adriel Heisey, Arizona artist, photographer who flies ultra light aircraft at low altitudes taking pictures of archeological sites. The show will now be split with the Pueblo Grande Museum this summer giving the artist and the community better exposure to his work. Running "Crocs" an additional three months will allow the Museum the opportunity to combine programming/lectures with the Heisey exhibit. The Museum will partner with the Center for Desert Archeology in Tucson in the program/lecture planning.
- The Museum is working on a "History of Mesa" exhibit. The Mesa Historical Museum received a \$50,000 grant from the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community to do a "History of Mesa" show. The two Museums are now collaborating on creating the exhibit and will share full territorial partnership to do the exhibit. It will occur first at the Mesa Southwest Museum, and then the Museum will assist in installing the exhibit at the Mesa Historical Museum, where it will become a permanent exhibition.
- The burial agreement consultation was Thursday, December 8. Representatives from the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, and the Arizona State Museum were present. Changes to the document were minor and did not change the nature of the document. When the Museum receives the final document it will go to the City Manager (who has already been given permission by City Council to sign) for signature and then to the Native American tribal councils for their signatures. Because of the way Mesa has gone about creating this document, the process will be used as a model for all subsequent burial agreements.
- The Museum's Collections Policy, which includes a section on how to treat the live animals at the Museum (adopted from the national zoo policy), is nearly completed and will be brought before the Board at the January Board meeting.
- The Sistine House hosted "A Victorian Christmas" Friday, December 9.
- Dr. Wilson announced that Elvis is alive and living at the Mesa Southwest Museum. Elvis is a 24-inch alligator from Arizona Game and Fish and is on display in the lobby of the Museum.

Mesa Arts Center Programming/Education/Mesa Contemporary Arts – Rob Schultz; Theaters and Operations – Gerry Fathauer for Randy Vogel

- A panel attached to the facade of the balcony in the Ikeda Theater was kicked, fell, and injured a patron. He was given immediate medical attention and was not seriously injured. Another fell the next night (there were no injuries). The City took immediate action by applying strapping to each panel holding them securely in place and making patrons safe.
- Council voted this spring to raise adult visual and performing arts class fees and add a non-resident fee to be applied for the fall session. After hearing a presentation on the low numbers for revenue and registrations following the fall session, Council voted to return adult visual and performing arts classes back to where they were in summer 2005. A comparison of the first week of registration for the fall session to the first week of registration for the new spring session showed that revenue was up by 23% and registrations up by 21%.
- Spring catalogues were late going to print partly due to the change in class fees. The online copy was posted in time for the first day of registration; however, hard copy was not available until later in the week. Toni Brucato-Kobet suggested that the catalogue be available at the Box Office. Laurent Teichman suggested that selling advertising might help to offset the cost of printing the catalogue. There were 8,000 catalogues printed for spring session. Staff continues to discuss possible ways to offset the printing costs.
- Gerry Fathauer and Rob Schultz met with senior staff of Mesa Community College (MCC) to discuss collaborative efforts in blending programming, rental opportunities, MCC offering classes at the Mesa Arts Center, and how we can link with MCC in reaching a higher cost recovery without raising class fees. We are also receiving interest from ASU's Herberger College Community School for the Arts for the use of our facility.
- Mesa Contemporary Arts recently opened two new exhibits: Michael Stevenson in the Ruth Tan Lim Project Room will be shown through March 5, and Rudy Turk in the North Gallery will be shown through February 5.
- Sales for Performing Live are going well and are better than November sales.
- "Around the World in a Bad Mood" has been extended three weeks into January.
- Mesa Symphony Orchestra will perform Handel's Messiah on Saturday, December 17.
- The Dave Koz "Smooth Jazz Christmas" will be December 20.
- The "Brian Setzer Orchestra Christmas Extravaganza, December 13, is sold out.

Crista Cloutier asked if there were intent to look at admission fees to the galleries. Mr. Schultz replied, "yes," staff continues to discuss the issue.

Another question asked was how many patrons have gone through Mesa Contemporary Arts. Mr. Schultz replied that since the opening in September, for this fiscal year, approximately 4,200 visitors have gone through.

Note: Mr. Schultz later e-mailed more accurate information to the recorder of the minutes. As of October 31, Mesa Contemporary Arts has had approximately 7,000 visitors. If you figure 14 weeks open to the public (some days the Museum was closed for changing out exhibits), this fiscal year would calculate to approximately 500 visitors per week.

Laurent Teichman suggested that a docent be available to give information to patrons as they stroll through the galleries, making the experience better for patrons who have no knowledge of art and/or artists. Mr. Schultz replied that the docent program is close to being implemented very soon.

Director's Report – Gerry Fathauer

The Southwest Arts Conference will be held on Friday, January 27, from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Glendale Civic Arena and is presented by the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

The Arts Congress (Mesa Arts Center is a sponsor) will take place on February 6. Board members can attend the Arts Congress as an individual, but are not allowed to advocate on behalf of the Board or the City of Mesa. Ramona Tecumseh, Toni Brucato-Kobet, and Daniel Harper, who offered to have lunch with a legislator, expressed interest in attending.

The Governor's Arts Awards dinner will be coming up in March/April 2006, but the exact date has not been set at this time.

Rob Schultz prepared bullet points keying in on highlights from Council's Study Session of December 12. Ms. Fathauer will forward the bullet points to the Board. Council's Study Session for Thursday, December 15, has discussion regarding property tax, sales tax, and budget issues on the agenda. At this time, it does not appear on the City Council's Regular Meeting Agenda for Monday, December 19. A link to the agenda will be forwarded to the Board to see an updated agenda for Monday's Council meeting. Ms. Fathauer will keep the Board posted as best she can on breaking information.

The Arts and Cultural Community Aid Grants to our Affiliate groups are of immediate concern. Potential loss of rental revenue from the Affiliates would total \$133,000. Many of the Affiliates use the grant money to pay rental for our theaters; so in fact, the money comes back to the City. If the Affiliates cannot afford to perform in our theaters (some do repeat shows up to three weeks), it will create a lot of dark days. This would be an even greater loss of revenue, not just in the theaters, but it would affect the Store as well as Mesa Contemporary Arts and the downtown merchants. Mesa Arts Center does not have the budget to replace the Affiliates performances. A question was asked if there exists numbers stating what revenue the Affiliate groups generate at the Mesa Arts Center from their performances. The only information available at this time would be the amount of money that came directly to the Mesa Arts Center. Ms. Fathauer stated that not all performances have been settled and their season completed to date; producing a report at this time would be based solely on partial information received.

Arizona Citizens for the Arts is looking for a liaison to participate in a monthly conference call (second Wednesday of each month at 11:00 a.m.) to be up-to-date on legislative issues and become part of a phone tree to get the word out; this would go beyond the duties of the Museum and Cultural Advisory Board. If interested, the Board was asked to let Ms. Fathauer know as soon as possible.

Division-wide revenues and attendance are up compared to this time last year. The City's Merry Main Street event was a huge success. People poured into the Mesa Arts Center campus where there were free shows in the theaters, free concerts in the courtyards and gardens, and Mesa Contemporary Arts was open to the public.

Upcoming Events – Board Members

Peter Cook commented that the Board received the Voter Survey presented to Council in their packets for December; however, it was not an item on the agenda. Mr. Cook requested that discussion of the survey, as it pertains to arts and culture, be on the January agenda.

Note: Due to Council action following the Board meeting, Peter Cook withdrew his request to place discussion of the Voter Survey on the January Board agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerry Fathauer, Director
Arts and Cultural Division