

Museum and Cultural Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular meeting and retreat at the Arizona Museum for Youth, 35 N. Robson, on September 8, 2004.

Members Present:

Kimberly Grace Toni Brucato
Elizabeth Good Peter Cook
Daniel J. Harper John Hohmann
Ramona Tecumseh Laurent Teichman

Members Absent:

Maureen Chaisson-Stewart
Jesus Hernandez

Staff Present:

Gerry Fathauer Jerry Dillehay
Rob Schultz Nancy Wolter
Carrie Brown Tom Wilson
Gerri Green Jean Kaminski
Barbara Meyerson

Guests Present:

Lennee Eller

Kimberly Grace, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Laurent Teichman made a motion, Peter Cook seconded, and the August 11 minutes were unanimously approved and posted to the Website.

Public Comments

Gerry Fathauer introduced Lennee Eller who is on the Council's September 9 agenda to be approved as the Board's 11th member. Ms. Eller has administered the Public Art program at Sky Harbor airport for the past 18 years.

Discuss and Take Action – Create an Ad Hoc Committee to Review Mesa Arts Center Fees/Policies – Gerry Fathauer

It was suggested by Peter Cook that an Ad Hoc committee be formed to review the Mesa Arts Center's new proposed fees and policies. The committee would meet with staff prior to bringing fees and policies to the Board for approval. This advantage would allow for more in-depth involvement on behalf of the Board and a streamlined review and approval of policies and fees. Peter Cook, Kimberly Grace, and John Hohmann have come forward to sit on the Ad Hoc committee. Some of the things coming before the Board for the new Mesa Arts Center are policies on ticket prices, rental policies and fees (space rental, equipment rental, etc.), fees for Mesa Contemporary Arts, licensing policies, Mesa Affiliate program, etc.

Daniel Harper made a motion, Elizabeth Good seconded, and the Board unanimously approved the forming of an Ad Hoc committee to review Mesa Arts Center policies.

Committee Reports

Diversity – Ramona Tecumseh: The committee invited Mary Berumen, City of Mesa Diversity Office Director, and Cliff Moon, of the Mesa Public Schools Diversity Office, to the meeting. Discussion included the Board vacancy and how the Diversity Committee factors into the FY04-05 Strategic Agenda. Mary Berumen distributed information on Mesa's changing demographics and the Diversity Office's FY04-05 Strategic Plan. The Diversity Office deals with education, inclusion, broad-based awareness, and respect and works to reflect long-lasting change within the community through training, work environment, and mediation. On Wednesday, September 22, from 7:30 until noon, the 4th annual City of Mesa Diversity Conference will be held at the Mesa Convention Center in the Palo Verde Room. Ms. Berumen stated that arts can make an impact in the community and entertainment opens a new arena for change. Cliff Moon spoke on how Mesa Public Schools work to promote diversity through workshops, teacher training, professional development, and different cultural groups.

Grants Committee – Kimberly Grace: Discussion included reviewing the current policies for Mini-Grants and Community Aid Grants; changing the two Mini-Grant deadlines to one deadline; and increasing the maximum amount an applicant can apply for from \$1,500 to \$2,000. Going to one deadline would help to streamline Mesa's part in administering the grants and also would mean less paperwork for the applicant. If adapted, the change to applying once a year would not begin until FY05-06. There was also discussion on the Community Aid Grant process. The committee is looking at other arts organizations and how they administer their granting process. Research has shown that a ranking system works well for groups such as the Arizona Commission on the Arts and other arts organizations. The process is to bring a peer group in to review the grants (people involved in the arts) using a ranking system, and the panel would not recommend the funding amount. Based on the ranking, the Board would apportion the grant funds and take action on the recommended funds to go forward for approval by City Council. The committee also looked at the issue of assigning liaisons to Mesa arts organizations. Rather than assign a Board member to a specific organization, it will be the

responsibility of each Board member to act as a liaison to all the Mesa arts organizations. The annual Arts and Cultural Showcase event will not continue.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Museum and Cultural Advisory Board Annual Retreat

Kimberly Grace, Chair, called the retreat to order at 4:00 p.m.

Program Highlights of the Year Ahead: Arizona Museum for Youth, Mesa Southwest Museum, Mesa Arts Center, and Public Art

Arizona Museum for Youth – Barbara Meyerson: The goal for the coming year is to continue bringing quality in exhibits to the children. There is already talk of expanding ArtVille, which has proven to be a tremendous success. The major issue for the Museum is financial: not enough staff because of increased hours and attendance.

The next exhibit for the Museum is "Show of Color" opening on October 8 and running through January 28, 2005. The exhibit features eight artists working in different mediums: photography, painting, glasswork, textiles, ceramics, and neon. Many hands-on activities are planned in conjunction with the exhibit. Following "Show of Color" will be "Jeepers Creepers: Bugs in Art!" opening February 18, 2005, and running through May 27, 2005. This exhibit is nearly completely booked for school tours. ArtVille's "Performing Arts Center" is changing to a jungle theme and will feature the book "Chic-a-Chic-a-Boom Boom." Activities are planned to coincide with the theme featuring the Hawaiian alphabet, Hawaiian dress for the children to try on, and creating boom-whackers. In the "Living Room" at ArtVille, during the Jeepers Creepers" exhibit, the works of Eric Carle, author of children's books, will be featured.

Ms. Myerson is requesting that the Board advocate for financial support for additional staff and verbalize the importance of how vital maintaining the energy and momentum of the Arizona Museum for Youth, and all arts organizations, is to the soul of Mesa. Ms. Meyerson commented that Mesa's museums are attracting people from all over the Valley, not just Mesa and the East Valley, and noted that Mesa has these "jewels" and they need to be promoted.

Mesa Southwest Museum – Tom Wilson: Two major initiatives for the next year are in the areas of exhibitions and educational programming, with an underlying theme of building audience and increasing diversity in both areas. This year ended with strong revenue and attendance figures. One basis of that strength is in exhibitions. Opening on October 9 is the "Arab Americans in Arizona" exhibition that will explore the history, culture, and accomplishments of persons of Arab descent in Arizona. Also opening in October will be "Hatching the Past," which explores dinosaur reproductive behavior, "Tusks," which tells the story of mammoths and mastodons, and "Whales: The Inside Story," which examines the natural history of these leviathans. The anthropology section is looking to strengthen their programming this year with the opening of "The Pottery Detectives," a traveling exhibition from the Arizona State Museum that looks at how archaeologists learn from the study of ancient and modern ceramics, and "Navajo Saddle Blankets: Textiles to Ride in the American West," a traveling show from the Museum of New Mexico that looks at Navajo textiles. The exhibits section of the Museum has produced a 25-page document of upgrades needed for the Museum's long-term and permanent exhibitions. The Mesa Southwest Museum continues to promote diversity within its programs and exhibitions. The Museum also continues to work on its collaborations with Mesa Community College, Arizona State University, University of Arizona, Northern Arizona, and other institutions. Dr. Wilson prepared a document at Councilmember Rex Griswold's request listing the collaborations the Museum has had. Dr. Wilson will provide a copy for the Board members.

The Museum's education programs are one of the reasons why they have been so successful. Dr. Wilson stated that, "Having exhibitions without programs – you're going to miss a lot of your audience." Mesa Southwest Museum's public programs include: family workshop series, adult lecture series; film series, puppet shows, curiosity carts, and activity backpacks. School programs include: specialized tours and educator exhibition guides. Training programs provide in-depth learning for staff, docents, and educators.

Two special projects at the Museum are Mesa Grande and the Federal Building. Mesa Grande is the Hohokam platform mound site across from Banner Hospital. The vision for this site includes a visitor heritage center, interpretive trails around the site, and preservation of the site. The Federal Building is located across the street from the Mesa Southwest Museum and needs to be rehabbed for use. Staff is currently working with several City Departments and Saemisch DiBella Architects to create plans for uses which include space for: public research and meetings, collections processing, graphic design and exhibition preparation, archaeological laboratory, and storage. The price tag given for Mesa Grande is \$8M, and the City's earlier projection to rehab the Federal Building was \$2.1M.

Mesa Grande and the Federal Building were potential bond projects under consideration at the last election, but both were bumped. The Museum is hoping that both will be re-considered as bond projects in FY05-06.

Dr. Wilson requested the Board's support in networking because, just like the Arizona Museum for Youth, it is critical for success that we inform and educate politicians, media, and the public on the importance of the arts in the community, the economic benefits of the Museums, and advocacy in support of getting Mesa Grande and the Federal building on the ballot as bond projects.

Mesa Arts Center – Gerry Fathauer: "Sub-areas" of the Mesa Arts Center currently are: Visual and Performing Arts Classes, Mesa Contemporary Arts, Mesa Youtheatre, and the Theaters. These areas are being looked at as part of the new branding and marketing strategy. Staff will present the new marketing materials to the Board at the October meeting. AudienceView, approved by City Council as the new ticketing program, will provide complete databases for marketing, development, and memberships.

The Business Plan for the Mesa Arts Center FY05-06 will be completed in the first few months of 2005. The Education Plan is a work in progress and a necessary component in applying for funding. The Annual Development Plan, created by Nancy Wolter for FY04-05, will transition into the FY05-06 Annual Development Plan. This is the first Annual Development Plan that includes membership, an annual campaign, sponsorship, and special events. The Mesa Arts Center is moving from a local arts center to a regional arts center.

Construction continues to be on target. The south Studios are air-conditioned and the flooring is in, in the Dance Studio. Air-conditioning will go in next week followed by the laying of the bamboo flooring. The goal is to move into the west side of the campus in spring 2005 with a dedication celebration. Moving into the Theaters will be sometime in late spring with a gala opening in the fall of 2005. Once the campus is opened, free concerts are planned in the exterior plaza and courtyard areas. The free concerts at Dobson Ranch Library will continue, and an evening concert is being considered.

The Board will be asked to review Mesa "Affiliate" program applications. Affiliates will receive the lowest fee rate. Staff has been working with approximately 10 arts organizations in developing fees that will include box office costs, front-of-house fees, and labor and equipment fees.

Mesa Youtheatre will open their first full year (FY05-06) with an original story about the Fraido family from Mexico titled "In My Mother's Kitchen." Mesa Contemporary Arts will open (FY05-06) with an invitational exhibit from a nationally renowned artist. Individuals can sign up on the Website www.mesaartscenter.com for a first chance to purchase subscription tickets when they go on sale in March 2005. Types of programming at the four Theaters will be: jazz and blues, dance, comedy, family programming, world music, cabaret, plus performances from the Mesa Affiliate organizations and other arts organizations from neighboring cities. The celebration/dedication for the performing and visual arts programs is slated for April 2005.

Historically Mesa Arts Center has collaborated with Mesa Community College (MCC), Mesa Public Schools (MPS), and Arizona State University (ASU) along with our museums and Affiliate organizations. Our partnering with MCC will be taken to a new level as they look at a presence in the Mesa downtown district. Details on the collaboration will come later.

Mesa Arts Center is in the process of hiring staff, mostly for the Theaters operation. The Box Office Supervisor has been hired, next month a Marketing Specialist will be hired, and the Front-of-House Supervisor, Lead Engineer, Custodians, Security, etc. will be hired in 2005. An orientation manual has been developed, and the Customer Experience Standards and Training manual will be completed by February 2005. Volunteer recruitment is well underway with more than 400 volunteers on-board at this time and over 400 more on a waiting list.

Request for Proposals (RFP) will be going out soon for concessions and catering (looking for an outside vendor to provide) and the Mesa Arts Center Store. Staff will dictate the merchandise, but an outside person will run the store.

A 360-degree Power Point presentation on construction, purchases coming before Council in the next year, Quality of Life monies, and program highlights on the new Mesa Arts Center will be presented to City Council, Thursday, September 9 at 7:30 a.m. It will be broadcasted live and air again Friday on channel 11. Mesa Arts Center will go before Council, on September 20, with the first purchasing package, which includes modular workstations and other custom furnishings, theatrical lighting, and Scene Shop equipment. Staff will go before Council again regarding purchasing on October 18 and on December 1. All meetings are on Mondays and begin at 5:45 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Memberships are part of the Development Plan and will be called "Members Circle." With the new plan, contribution levels will be higher and benefits will be more significant. The plan will go to Council as part of the fees package and will

come before the Board soon. Offers for renewals will go first to current members in November, and then be rolled out to the public in January 2005.

Mesa Arts Center, Responsibility Center (R.C.) 247, will be the only R.C. in the City completely funded by Quality of Life funds. Quality of Life funds are tracked separately from other City funds. Arizona Commission on the Arts has given Mesa Arts Center, in the past few years, a grant in the amount of \$35,000 - \$37,000 to assist with general operations expenses. Due to the increased budget in the new Center and the type of organization we are becoming, the expected grant amount is more in the \$70,000 - \$80,000 range.

The 501(c)(3) partners for Mesa Arts Center (Friends of Mesa Arts Center and Mesa Arts and Entertainment Alliance) that helped to raise \$4.8M for the Capital Campaign have discussed merging. A decision was made to park the Mesa Arts and Entertainment Alliance for now. Some of the Board members from the Mesa Arts and Entertainment Alliance were elected to form a new larger Friends of Mesa Arts Center (FoMAC) Board. The expanded FoMAC Board will enter into negotiations with the City this fall to create a Memorandum of Understanding.

Coming to the Board regarding Mesa Arts Center will be: all facility fees, facility rental fees and policies, Mesa Affiliate Program, membership fees and policies (Members Circle), and sales tax issues. The Board will assume responsibility to approve annually who will, or will not, receive Affiliate status.

The Board will be taken on a tour of the new site and a Public Art tour with the Mayor and City Council later this fall.

Public Art Program – Carrie Brown: Priority one – create a Public Art brochure detailing what Public Art is, how it works, and how can it can benefit the City of Mesa. In addition, create postcards and note cards of public art objects, with information on the back as to where the piece is located and can be viewed by the public.

The passenger shelters have been a successful project for the Public Art Program in Mesa. Ms. Brown has developed a relationship with the Transit Department and made them aware of our *Moving Art Master Plan*. Transit has approached Ms. Brown to discuss an artist designed passenger shelter at the Banner Baywood Medical Center and is keeping Mesa Public Art in mind as projects begin. Transit has also come to Ms. Brown with some ideas to “retrofit” some of the older passenger shelters in Mesa.

Another priority is to re-visit the existing Public Art Master Plans. Two ideas that have surfaced while looking at these plans are: 1) a mural in the downtown area, and 2) a canal project. She is also looking at a plaque project, which would identify key locations where Public Art commissions should be properly labeled and is in the process of developing a strategic plan for Public Art maintenance.

Ms. Brown is requesting support from the Board in the following areas: Attend dedication ceremonies of Public Art projects; re-visit the Master Plans; educate the public on the importance of Public Art; assist in the planning of a dedication ceremony for Public Art at the new Mesa Arts Center; and advocate for future funding for the Public Art Program.

Nancy Wolter, facilitator, reviewed the presentations and will incorporate the Board’s discussion into a draft FY04-05 Work Plan to be adopted by the Board at the October 13 meeting. Daniel Harper requested that staff create a “Talking Points Bulletin” for the Board to use as a tool when speaking with the public and advocating for the Arts and Cultural Division.

There being no further business, the retreat adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Note: “Show-UP” is now on-line. To find information on arts organizations go to www.showup.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerry Fathauer, Director
Arts and Cultural Division