

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON THE ARTS
City Council Chambers
City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue
Monday, November 6, 2017

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chair Steve Sullivan. Members present were Deanne Brill, Jon Foley, Jason Paull, and Tom Lockhart.

Public Forum

Stan Rabe, of ACTORS, announced that hearing assistance devices have been installed in the theater.

Approval of October 2, 2017 Minutes

Moved by Tom, seconded by Jon, to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2017 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Spring Special Project Grant

It was moved by Tom, seconded by Jon, to recommend approval of the Ames Chamber Artists Spring Special Project Grant in the amount of \$1,000. Motion carried unanimously.

Annual Grant Hearings

Steve Hoifeldt, of the Ames Choral Society, expressed appreciation for COTA support in the past. He outlined the organization's activities in the past year. He announced this was the 53rd season.

Mr. Hoifeldt continued as the representative for Good Company. He noted Good Company was finishing its 25th season.

Mike Jackson noted ACTORS was in its 62nd season. The group is putting on its second production of the season. It is a true community theater, utilizing community volunteers. Mr. Jackson noted COTA support has allowed for ticket prices to remain the same.

Matt Nelson and Tammy Koolbeck of AIOFA were present to express appreciation for COTA support. The purpose of AIOFA is to generate awareness and appreciation of classical music. The last concert entertained over 1,000 people. Mr. Nelson noted that the grant application mentions the Hamburg Symphony, but it has canceled its tour. AIOFA is pursuing the Boston Pops as an alternative. At the inquiry of Jason, Ms. Koolbeck informed the Commission that AIOFA has no paid staff members.

Don Withers, of the Central Iowa Symphony, noted the expenses COTA supports. He noted Central Iowa Symphony has one paid position, the director. The organization puts on a variety of performances each year. The organization is working to get parent involvement in the symphony through complimentary parent tickets. The ticket price is \$20, and youth/student tickets are complimentary. Jason noted in the application that 800 complimentary tickets are provided to members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute each year, and asked how many were utilized. Mr. Withers responded 150.

Francine White, of Ames Children's Choirs, noted she had been with the organization two and a half months. It was noted there were three age-based choirs. Testimonials from participants were provided.

Tom Jackson, of Ames Town and Gown, noted the organization is in its 68th season. Each year it puts on five chamber music events. Funding comes primarily from admissions and donations. COTA support helps offset the rising cost of talent. Free entry is provided for students.

Cynthia Martin and Mark Ostrander, of Ames Chamber Artists, noted the organization is a 40-member group. Tonight the group is singing with the Gilbert Middle School. Prices for the concerts have not increased in many years. The organization is now on iTunes, Spotify, and YouTube. The logo has been changed to better indicate it is a singing group.

Jennifer Brockpahler, representing the Ames Community Arts Council, outlined the ACAC's activities representing artists and non-profits in Ames. She described the arts promotion that takes place through the newsletter, press releases for member activities, and monthly gathering of artists. She noted the annual Ames Area Studio Tour that takes place and the professional development activities ACAC puts on in the spring. She noted an activity called the Back Alley Gallery, which is an initiative to put murals on the backs of businesses in downtown Ames. Jason asked about the budget page, where it appears \$20,000 per year was moving to cash reserves. Ms. Brockpahler noted that is not accurate. Ms. Brockpahler indicated she would check the budget submittal and send revised information to the Commission.

Tina Vandyk and Julie Siegel, representing Story Theater Company, offered an apology for not attending the start of the grant workshop. Ms. Vandyk appreciated being able to submit an application. She outlined the activities of the organization, including theatrical productions and workshops. The organization provides free tickets to Youth and Shelter Services and Food at First. Jason asked about the "Other Expenses" category being about 25% of the total expenses, and asked for further detail. Ms. Siegel noted those expenses were associated to running a show, such as the license and other production expenses.

Steve outlined how the Commission came to its decision regarding the attendance at the workshop and how it affected funding. He stated that he appreciated the discussion and the organization understanding how the Commission came to it.

Joe Lynch and Ursula Rudenburg of KHOI, noted an appreciation of the second chance as well, since KHOI did not have a representative at the workshop. She noted that the last time the organization came before the Commission, there was some difficulty understanding how a radio station related to the arts. Ms. Rudenburg clarified that KHOI is working to establish an audio lab, to create soundscapes. The term for this is audio ecology. This year, the organization is developing a curriculum for a series of classes on audio ecology, to train people how to collect sounds and create soundscapes. This year will involve developing the foundation for training, then the following year will build on this to develop full-scale productions involving the soundscapes, culminating in a performance at the end of the year. Ms. Rudenburg noted significant fundraising had taken place for the facilities at KHOI to conduct this project. Steve asked what had happened in the last year since the Commission provided initial funding. Ms. Rudenburg responded that the studio space had been developed, and the curriculum for the program was prepared. Tom recalled that last year the app was being discussed. Ms. Rudenburg noted that with the funding provided, the app was not feasible. Tom stated that sounded like a good decision.

Heather Johnson, of the Octagon Center for the Arts, apologized for not being in attendance at the workshop. She appreciated being able to continue participating in the process. Ms. Johnson explained the classes and gallery spaces provided by the Octagon. She identified the partnerships the Octagon has with other local organizations to provide space. The organization celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2015. The Art Festival was downtown in September. Ms. Johnson noted the Octagon would like to do more outreach and programming in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club and Mary Greeley Medical Center. She pointed out that because of the fiscal year ending in June, many expenses showed up that month, with funding through grants and donations not arriving until fall. Jason asked whether the depreciation indicated on the balance sheet was accurate, since it was \$500,000 per year. Ms. Johnson noted it was based on the recommendation of their CPA. Although it seems like a high number, it is based on the professional recommendation.

Lisa Bannitt, of Dancenter Dance Company Foundation, explained the mission of the organization.

She expressed appreciation for grant funds in the past year. Ms. Bannitt noted that the annual Dance Showcase gives the dancers a chance to showcase the dances they learned in the past year. It is held at the Ames High Auditorium, and grant funds allow the performance to be free. There are 27 dancers this year, ranging in age from 5-17. Jason asked what the organization's name registered with the Iowa Secretary of State was. He noted he could not locate the organization in a search of the state database. He asked that the registered name be sent to Brian.

Valerie Williams, representing Kids Co'Motion, expressed thanks for being able to submit an application. She provided an overview of the organization and how creative dance works. The kids learn dance technique, composition, and theory. They learn how to be stronger, more flexible, better controlled, and how to work with music. The organization is in talks with Ames Children's Choirs about collaborating. Jason noted he was not able to locate Kids Co'Motion under the Iowa Secretary of State database. Ms. Williams noted she would look into that and that the organization also pays its taxes. Steve reminded the Commission there was a question on the previous year's final report regarding office staffing. Ms. Williams explained it should have said temporary office staff. It is not a permanent salaried position. People are hired on a per-job basis for office help. Jason asked if the grant process differentiated between salaried staff and temporary staff. Brian responded the criteria are specific to personnel employed on an ongoing basis. Ms. Williams noted that the manner in which the organization budgets is more detailed than what the grant application requests. So even though the budget page is simpler, it takes more time to condense the budget into the categories requested. Jason noted the new form uses the IRS Form 990 as a basis for the budget.

Steve asked that Jennifer Brockpahler, of ACAC, respond to a similar question regarding the ACAC final report. Ms. Brockpahler noted that ACAC has undergone a significant change in personnel. When she went to do her first final report, she copied what had been done in the past regarding salaries. Ms. Brockpahler noted her position was hourly, not salaried. The hours change depending on the work activities. She noted she has not yet requested any funding from COTA this year. She can take the director pay out of the reimbursement request. Jason noted he thought the Commission should review the exclusion language in the grant.

Upcoming Important Dates

Next Meeting: January 8, 2018.

Adjournment

Tom moved the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.