

Minutes
COMMISSION ON THE ARTS
Council Chambers
City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue
Monday, October 7, 2019

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chair Steve Sullivan. Members present were Tom Lockhart, Troy Rutter, Natalie Robinson, and Deanne Brill. Staff member Tasheik Kerr was also present.

Public Forum

No one was present for Public Forum

Approval of September 9, 2019 Minutes

Moved by Tom, seconded by Natalie, to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2019 meeting.

Spring 2020 Special Project Grant Hearings

Ames Town and Gown: Master Classes by Anthony and Demarre McGill

Bruce Calhoun, President of the Ames Town and Gown Chamber Music Association, announced that the organization is applying for funding to support the presentation of master classes by the McGill Brothers. Master class participants would be chosen from ISU's Music Department and high school students. Steve inquired on whether both brothers play the flute. Bruce responded no; Anthony McGill plays the clarinet. Bruce noted that both performers are teachers. Bruce added that the class will provide exposure for kids who don't get this type of opportunity.

Tom inquired about the audience participation. Bruce noted that the venue is large and more individuals in the community might attend. He added that the organization hopes for 50 participants but is open to more.

Steve inquired about the number of master classes that will be offered. Bruce responded there will be two classes. Steve also inquired about the participant selection. Bruce noted that the students will be selected by the faculty at Ames High School.

Central Iowa Touring Ensemble: Junie B. Jones the Musical

Ben Siegel, of Central Iowa Touring Ensemble, reviewed the history of the organization. Ben noted that the organization was founded by high school students. The students create productions that teach young audiences about empathy. The organization wants to produce Junie B. Jones the Musical this spring. The organization plans to tour the show to schools and libraries. Their goal is to reach underserved kids. The organization is requesting funds to help with licensing, space rental, advertising, sets, and costumes. Students will be involved in all areas of production. Steve inquired whether the organization had done a similar production last year. Ben replied that they had, and that the organization is hoping to expand the size of its audience. Steve inquired about the rental space, since the production will be held in schools and libraries. Ben replied that the organization does a public performance in Story Theater's space and is inquiring about using the space of other arts

organizations.

Ames Children's Choir Association: 25th Anniversary Celebration (Benefit Concert)

Shon Stephenson, Operations Manager; Francine White, Bookkeeper; and Paul Hertz, Treasurer, were present. Shon announced that it is the organization's 25th anniversary. The organization plans to invite alumni to participate in various special sessions as part of its Spring Concert. The organization also plans to host an alumni benefit concert. In place of charging admission, the audience will be asked to provide donations to the food pantry. The organization is requesting funds to publicize the event. Troy noted the organization was at the 25% mark that is required by COTA.

ACTORS: Leading Ladies

Stan Rabe, of ACTORS, announced that the organization plans to perform Leading Ladies, a play by Ken Ludwig, this winter. Stan noted that this play has several production challenges, including the need for a set of Shakespearian costumes, sets, and wigs. The budget for this play is \$2,200. COTA funds will make up the difference in the production budget. Steve questioned why this play was not included in ACTOR's normal schedule. Stan explained that the COTA grant application is due before the ACTOR's season is developed.

India Cultural Association of Central Iowa: Indian Theater

Anand Balasubramanian, of the India Cultural Association (ICA), noted that ICA usually holds classical performances to educate the public about Indian culture. Anand noted that with classical performances, it is hard to bring a younger audience to the theater. This year, ICA plans to put on an Indian play in English in hopes of attracting a younger audience. This is the first time the organization will put on a play. The organization also plans to invite a troupe from California to take part in the play. ICA also reached out to Story Theater Company to host the play. Steve inquired about when the play will be held. Anand noted the play will be held in spring 2020.

The Octagon Center for the Arts: Business of Art Seminar

Heather Johnson, Executive Director of the Octagon Center for the Arts, announced that the Octagon will be teaming up with the Ames Community Arts Council to host the Business of Art Seminar on March 6 and 7. The seminar is open to artists and creatives. The organizations will host professional artists who will present on various special topics. COTA funds will be used for the honoraria. Eighty-five people are estimated to attend the seminar. Steve inquired about whether the organization had hosted this event before. Heather responded that the organization hosted this event in 2019 and that the organization submitted its operational support to COTA before considering to host the event again. Tom inquired about how the organization planned to get the word out to artists. Heather responded that the organization will utilize its social media groups and e-blasts.

Story Theater Company: Performance of Frozen, Jr

Amy Devine, Board Member and Sue Ann Peters, Treasurer, were present. Amy noted that the organization is asking for funds to provide American Sign Language interpretation at one of its show. The organization received a request at one of its spring shows to provide an ASL interpretation. The organization realized that they were not reaching the hearing impaired audience. Tom asked if the organization has someone in mind to provide ASL service. Amy noted the organization will bring in someone from Des Moines that has ASL interpreter experience.

Discuss Next Steps on How to Gather Concerns from COTA Agencies

Steve noted he had asked a Council member about an arts workshop. He noted the Council member

indicated she was unaware of an arts and culture workshop that had been mentioned at the last meeting by Craig Kaufman. Steve noted that the Commission is interested in gathering information from arts organization about their concerns, needs, and ideas. Steve proposed the idea to develop a survey to solicit the organizations' feedback. Steve also proposed the idea of looking at what other peer communities are doing.

Heather Johnson noted that the Octagon has information they have collected from other organizations around the state regarding their funding source.

Craig Kaufman, Auditorium, Bandshell and Community Center Manager, recommended the Commission contact Jennifer Drinkwater, Assistant Professor in the Department of Art and Visual Culture, at Iowa State University. Craig added that Jennifer might have examples from other communities, as well as how they fund art organizations.

Tom and Troy volunteered to reach out to Jennifer Drinkwater. Steve noted that he will develop the survey form.

Deanne inquired about the needs of the organizations. Steve noted that the Commission is looking to see what the organizations view as challenges and opportunities. Steve noted that he will have a draft survey form at the next Commission meeting.

Upcoming Important Dates

Steve reviewed the upcoming dates.

Paul Hertz suggested the Commission talk to the Iowa Arts Council. Craig added that the Community Liaison position in the Iowa Arts Council is vacant.

Adjournment

Tom moved the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 5:42 pm.