

August 23, 2021 – Minutes BRC for Arts and Nonprofits

Members in attendance: Russ Grazier, Barbara Massar (remote), Tina Sawtelle, Robin Albert, Larry Yerdon, Courtney Perkins, Jason Goodrich, Renee Giffroy, Beth Falconer, Kathy Somssich.

Also in attendance: Nancy Carmer, Ben VanCamp, Stephanie Seacord.

Russ called the meeting to order at 12pm.

Jason made the motion and Larry seconded to approve the last meeting's minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Jason summarized a proposal to develop and launch a tourism marketing campaign in partnership with the Greater Portsmouth Chamber Collaborative. The proposal is for a 4-month pilot program (September through December) using the \$51,700 that remains in the Art-Speak account designated for Arts and Culture expenditures. In addition to this amount, The Chamber Collaborative will make up to \$20,000 in Google advertising available from their Google AdWords Grant.

Ben VanCamp assured the committee of the project's adaptability to changes in messaging regarding the impact of COVID on venues.

A discussion followed about the possibility of moving the project to a minimum 3-year marketing campaign. Such a proposal, including a request for funding, would have to be submitted before January 2022.

Nancy Carmer remarked that such funds are not in this year's city budget, but federal monies may be available. Mayor Becksted is creating a committee to allocate available federal monies and the BRC on Arts and Nonprofits should seek representation on this committee, as these funds are especially earmarked for hard-hit industries such as arts organizations.

Robin reminded the committee that 1% of parking fees are to go to Arts and Culture and that could possibly be an additional funding source.

Beth emphasized that the marketing be directed locally as well as for destination marketing.

Russ requested a report at every meeting from the Marketing Subcommittee.

The discussion included questions regarding measuring the success of an ad campaign and how the data is to be evaluated. The importance of keeping up with marketing technology to measure and track success was stressed. Data from our organizations will be needed before meeting with DARCI Creative. Other arts organizations should be included in the data gathering process.

The motion was made by Russ: The BRC on Arts and Nonprofits proposes to the City Council a multi-year strategic process for a marketing campaign starting with a pilot program in conjunction with the Chamber Collaborative. We request that up to \$51,700 which is currently being held be released to us and future funding be secured to use in destination and local marketing of Arts and Culture in Portsmouth. We suggest that after the initial pilot program with DARCI Creative, the marketing program is put out to bid, if needed.

Larry made the motion to approve, Renee seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

Jason, Beth and Russ will coordinate the proposal.

Robin has volunteered to be one of the co-chairs of the upcoming AFTA Arts and Economic Prosperity Survey 2022 and is seeking another co-chair. She proposed the hiring of a project manager by December for outreach and training. A budget of \$15,000 was proposed, not including the \$6,000 already allocated by the City of Portsmouth for our participation. The audience surveys will start in January 2022.

Barbara stressed the importance of institutional memory and suggested that Robin have 2 co-chairs in order to establish a secure knowledge base for the future. The members of the BRC should ID at least one person as a potential co-chair and submit suggestions by September 1 to Russ, Barbara or Robin.

The AFTA survey is a critical piece of our charge. It provides important information regarding the financial impact of the arts on the fiscal health of the community. The information it provides is critical when arts organizations apply for grants and fundraise. Portsmouth City Council wants to know how it can help and this is a big part of that answer.

The next agenda item covered COVID protocols for the Fall in light of the Delta variant. More and more organizations are requiring masks and proof of vaccination for indoor events. Vaccination mandates will be more prevalent now that the FDA has fully-approved the Pfizer vaccine.

A discussion followed which established that the main concern of our organizations is the safety of staff and patrons, closely followed by the financial viability of each organization and the industry in general. It was emphasized that the decision regarding masks and vaccinations is not in any way political, but clearly just to ensure safety. Patrons are used to checking the venues' website for individual guidelines due to the rapid changes.

There was a brief discussion about a possible statement from the BRC on Arts and Nonprofits to City Council regarding their support of individual arts organizations' decisions about mask and vaccination mandates.

Nancy reported that Health Officer Kim McNamara is watching the data closely and meets daily with city staff.

Barbara mentioned that the Vaccine Van will be at Market Square Day on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

Tina requested an update on Portsmouth400 by Valerie Rochon.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Submitted by Kathleen Somssich

