

Minutes – August 15, 2022 -- Portsmouth Arts and Nonprofits Committee

Russ called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM.

Members in attendance: Russ Grazier, Robin Albert, Larry Yerdon, Tina Sawtelle, Jason Goodrich, Genevieve Aichele, Nihco Gallo, Renee Giffroy, Ben Van Camp. Remotely: JerriAnne Boggis, Barbara Massar. Not present: Beth Falconer, Martha Fuller Clark, Councilor Kate Cook, Courtney Perkins

Non-members in attendance: Sean Clancy, Stephanie Seacord (recording secretary)

Minutes approved for July 18 2022.

AFTA Update:

- As of July 25, there were 91 surveys received.
- As of August 10, there were 171 surveys received.
- To be on a quarterly pace to reach 800 total, we should have had 200 surveys by the end of July and would need 229 more by October 31. However, most participating venues see much larger audiences in the summer, so the hope is to secure many more surveys now.

Most effective to have AFTA 'ambassadors' – i.e. Arts Committee members – at events to solicit surveys from audience members. Barbara will compile a list of upcoming events so that Committee members might volunteer to do surveys and curtain speeches explaining their purpose and encouraging participation.

Committee is still waiting for information from AFTA on the financial reporting that takes place in Jan. Continues to understand that the reporting will be less time-consuming for smaller organizations this time.

A press release was distributed with a quote from the Mayor, to encourage organizations and audience members to participate. The highlights of that release are repeated in the City Newlsetter.

GoOut Marketing Campaign

Update (Ben Van Camp & Jason Goodrich): Pilot campaign ended with the last social boost/Google AdWords spend in early Aug. Darci Creative submitted a report (accompanying the minutes) that will now also go to the Marketing Subcommittee for review and recommendations. Also looking for more interpretation from Darci Creative – e.g. reasons for the peaks and valleys in response? Channel? Message?

Top line:

- Shows genuine interest/good amount of time spent on sites. Response trending in a positive direction.
- 7.8 million impressions
- 1,447 completed the form
- 9.5% conversion
- Biggest traction from Google AdWords. 4.68 million impressions, Apr-Jul @ \$2.07 CPM
- #2 was direct (organic search).
- Social = 2.46 million impressions @ \$3.04 CPM. Facebook stronger than Instagram.
- Strongest demographics > age 65 – because of media outlets chosen?
- EffecTV = 228k impressions @ \$39.36 CPM – Travel Channel, CNN, History Channel were leaders here.

Questions from Committee:

- Geo-targeting information for EffecTV
- Geo-analytics of impressions?
- SMG demographics: geotargeting for comparison with venues' marketing initiatives

- Comparison of GoOut messaging impact on interest in venues/response to their campaigns
- Baseline for comparing time spent on venue sites, first-time ticket buyer traction
- Factor in impact of inflation/gas prices and reports that audiences are waiting later and later to purchase tickets. Subscriptions in decline.
- Lessons learned for implementation if/when budget to continue arts & nonprofits marketing campaign is approved.

Next steps re: use of ARPA funds for arts & nonprofits marketing:

Councilor Cook is advocating with City Council on behalf of the committee’s recommendations.

Proposed City Council Work Session on allocation of remaining ARPA funds.

New COVID Response Task Force is not the venue to lobby – that group is evaluating health and human services needs

The results of the AFTA survey next spring will certainly tie back into documenting the need for arts & nonprofits as they work toward recovery: “we need help with funding and collaboration to get back; it’s a long road ahead.”

Chamber will advocate for matching NH Tourism Joint Promotion Program funding – but the application and approval cycle takes several months – might be available for spring 2023.

The Music Hall will also be looking at the marketing analytics to determine TMH marketing allocations to generate the largest aggregated impact from ARPA spending.

Russ: Message is that we are able to leverage ARPA funding collectively in our organizations to produce a coordinated and strategic effort. The pilot GoOut data shows we can reach the audiences we need to reach.

Cultural Plan

Russ and Barbara met to strategize for an organizational subcommittee meeting in September. Reported that Councilor Cook inquired and a subcommittee of this Committee is ok, though Sean suggested there might be an advantage one way or the other in the semantic distinction between “subcommittee” and “task force” when it comes to whether the members must be recommended by the Mayor and approved by the Council. Using the existing Board/Committee application form still makes sense rather than inventing a new one.

Subcommittee membership: several Committee members have expressed interest. Next step is to identify a chair or co-chairs.

Expect that creating a new Cultural Plan will take 15-24 months, with some advantage in the fact that there is a model plan – not creating from scratch. The process may be faster once leaders are determined and the subcommittee members are identified including members of the community and artists who are not on the Committee.

City process for community engagement that seems to be working in other areas:

1. focus groups of interested parties (possibly convened by interest area),
2. community survey based on focus group recommendations,
3. subcommittee review of survey results
4. public meeting to discuss results
5. presentation of findings and recommendations to the City Council for implementation.

City Council agenda for Aug 22 includes informational item that Cultural Plan initiative is moving forward.

Larry suggested identifying subcommittee members by sector to create an intentional balance

Barbara suggested outreach to the Citywide Neighborhood Committee for them to share with their neighborhoods

Public Art

Discussion of whether Arts & Nonprofits Committee should take on the public art process (i.e. art in city-owned places). There is no public art ordinance for art in public places so decision eg Ruth Blay mural is often made under the guidance of signage ordinances.

The City does have a 1 percent for art ordinance relating to City construction projects but so far only the Foundry Place Garage has implemented the rule. (Funding must include maintenance.)

The outgrowth of the previous Cultural Plan was that ArtSpeak served that art evaluation and recommendation role and responsibility. Though ArtSpeak went away, that responsibility did not, even though public art considerations are not a daily occurrence. Review might rest with City staff who have the institutional knowledge. The Arts & Nonprofits Committee has no way to accept or disburse funding – eg fundraiser for painting rainbow crosswalks.

City Council has the option to nix proposed 1 percent for art projects if they are not unified on the need. Hence funding for art at the new Middle School was never allocated.

The 400 Trees for the 400th project and Sculpture Garden in Bohenko Park are two upcoming art projects that will need to be managed. Note: call for PNH400 sculptors artists RFP now posted at PortsmouthNH400.org

Meeting adjourned at 1 pm.