



Regular Meeting of the Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters
City of University City
February 11, 2016

Members Present:

Garrie Burr, Fred Fehr, Brad Heinemann, Melcine Henderson, Felecia Hickman, Barbara Romero, Barbara Santoro, Bwayne Smotherson, Winnie Sullivan, Nicole Thomas, Wilmetta Toliver-Diallo, Myra Vandersall, Kay Watts

Excused: Stephanie Schlaifer, Bwayne Smotherson

Staff Liaison: Leslie Eutz

Council Liaison: Mayor Shelley Welsch

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 by president, Garrie Burr. Mr. Burr announced a new commissioner, Felecia Hickman.

Minutes from January 14, 2016: Ms. Watts moved approval, Ms. Sullivan seconded, approved with the following changes: Returning Artist reception will be held on 2/25/16, President Garrie Burr. Ms. Henderson abstained.

Citizen Comments: no citizen comments

Presentations: a) Linda Collins Shaw spoke on behalf of the U. City Community Foundation. It is hoped that funds will be available to offer small grants to U. Citians for the betterment of U. City. They would appreciate a grant from Arts & Letters of at least \$500. A tent is planned to offer programming for children during Fair U. City; volunteers would be appreciated in addition to a monetary donation. There will be a Volunteer Appreciation event on February 28, and all are invited.

b) Audrey Jones spoke of this year's 8th annual Mannequins in the Loop ("Uniquely U. City") which will be in place from May 21 through June 12, 2016. A donation will be made from entry fees to Brittany Woods Middle School. She requested the blessings of the Commission which were granted unanimously on a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. Fehr.

Treasurer's Report: Ms. Sullivan presented the summary report for January which was approved, subject to audit, on a motion by Ms. Henderson and Mr. Fehr.

At this time, Ms. Hickman arrived and was introduced to the Commission.

Staff Liaison Report: No report

Council Liaison Report: The draft budget will be presented in late February, a part time senior coordinator has been hired. The city has made a \$10,000 donation to U. City in Bloom for Olive beautification. The trolley is expected to be operable in late December.

Committee Reports

- Community Visuals – Mr. Burr reported that the students' models will be displayed in the library through 2/29, and students are planning to host a reception. There is expected to be a date in March for Commission visits to the studios. The Sam Fox School is preparing a postcard for the reception and tours on foot will be offered on reception day.
- Finance – Ms. Sullivan reported that the committee has met to consider implications of recent changes to RAC grant guidelines. Recommendation: to apply for a \$10,000 grant (which requires a match) for Starlight Concerts. Ms. Watts seconded. The suggestion was made to discuss with RAC contact other options for future funding. Recommendation approved unanimously.
- Literary – No report before the upcoming meeting of the consortium.
- Marketing – Ms. Vandersall reported that the committee intends to increase A&L social media presence. Please "like" and "share" commission's Facebook postings, and provide information about events for publication. They are working on a donation button for our website.
- Photo Show – no report
- Returning Artist – Ms. Watts reported that schedules are complete. Volunteers are needed to arrive 20 minutes early to help set up refreshment table. Commissioners may attend a class during the presentation; please let Ms. Watts know your intentions.
- Starlight Concerts – Ms. Henderson reported that the schedule has been completed. Youth Night will be June 4; regular concerts begin on June 18. In the future, we might consider a formal request of the City Manager for more funding.

Old Business: 1) Gail Snider will come at a future date to discuss modernizing the lower level of City Hall.

2) Emails relevant to Rain Man discussion are included in our packet. Mr. Burr has requested definitive responses of Gateway Foundation. City staff is also involved. We expect further answers by our next meeting. The question of whether neutral assessments of repair needs was raised, along with the suggestion that repairers be sought from the community as keeping the care and ownership of the statue in U. City is a priority. Unlike Rain Man, other Gateway Foundation art in U. City was never owned by the City.

New Business: 1) Ms. Sullivan requests that an ad hoc committee of “seasoned” members of the Commission be convened to create a policies and procedures (for each event) manual. 2) It was suggested that we investigate other arts & letters groups fundraising methods and events. 3) Ideas for making arts accessible to a broad and diverse cross-section of our community are requested. Send ideas or suggestions to Mr. Burr.

Other Business: 1) Former Commissioner Diane Davenport is to be honored by Metro Theater Company as a St. Louis Superhero for her work as an arts educator. 2) Lunar New Year Celebration will include dance performances by Ms. Thomas’ dancers. 3) Black Anthology will be presented at Edison Theater. 4) BOAAT Press is publishing a book of poetry by Commissioner Schlaifer.

A discussion was held on the U. City Community Foundation request for a monetary donation. Our funds are limited, limited information was available for the Foundation’s financial and other plans. More specific information might be given us next time as to what non-monetary service we could offer. No motions made and no votes taken.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.