

## **CARSON CITY CULTURAL COMMISSION**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of April 18, 2009**

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A special meeting of the Carson City Cultural Commission was held on Saturday, April 18, 2009, at 9:30 a.m., at the Nevada State Museum 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 600 North Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada.

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Peter Barton  
Vice Chairperson Karen Abowd  
Commissioner Jed Block  
Commissioner Stephen Lincoln  
Commissioner Pete Livermore  
Commissioner Jeffery Scott  
Commissioner James Shirk  
Commissioner Molly Walt

**STAFF:** Joe McCarthy, Director of the Office of Business Development  
Kathleen King, Recording Secretary\*

**NOTE:** A recording of these proceedings, the commission's agenda materials, and any written comments or documentation provided to the recording secretary during the meeting are public record, on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office. These materials are available for review during regular business hours.

- A. CALL TO ORDER:** (1-0011) - Chairperson Barton called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
- B. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:** (1-0013) - Roll was called and a quorum was present.
- C. ACTION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** (1-0022) Chairperson Barton advised that the minutes from the November 18, 2008 meeting had been deferred from the March 17, 2009 meeting. He noted one change to Item H-4, page 8, paragraph 2, the Arts Council Community Conversation was October 27, 2008, not November 27, 2008. He entertained a motion for acceptance. **Commissioner Block moved to approve the minutes from November 18, 2008 as corrected. Vice Chairperson Abowd seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0-1, with Commissioner Walt abstaining.**
- D. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENIZED ITEMS:** (1-0045) - None.
- E. DISCLOSURES:** (1-0048) - None.
- F. MODIFICATION TO THE AGENDA:** (1-0051) - None.
- G. NON ACTION ITEMS - DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION ONLY:**

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**G-A. PRESENTATION BY ROBIN HODGKIN, NEVADA ARTS COUNCIL, CONCERNING THE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS THAT THE ARTS COUNCIL HAS CONVENED THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, FOCUSING ON WHAT WAS VOICED AS IMPORTANT TO A CULTURALLY VIBRANT COMMUNITY FOR CARSON CITY RESIDENTS.** (1-0057) - Chairperson Barton introduced the item and Robin Hodgkin. The Nevada Arts Council has surveyed the community to determine the importance of supporting arts, individual professional practitioners and arts organizations.

Ms. Hodgkin gave a brief overview of Community Conversations throughout the State. In each community, their vision was heard, actions to be taken, and strategies for arts advocacy. Critical issues were identified as participating in downtown role development meetings, publicizing community building funds for downtown, and working on community cultural awareness campaigns. Carson City's critical issues were promoting value to arts, training for educators, and community arts organizations meeting to bridge community gaps.

In response to a question, Ms. Hodgkin explained that local arts agencies are organizations formed to have a unified approach to arts and culture in their community. The National Endowment of the Arts defines a local arts agency as an organization recognized by local government, seeks private and state funding and National Endowment of the Arts funding. The Sierra Arts Foundation in Reno works with local artists, and has amazing senior citizen and arts and education programs. They are also partners with the Reno Arts Commission to make it a richer community and there are 24 local arts agencies in the State of Nevada. In response to another question, she replied that the local arts agency movement in Nevada has been around since the 1800's.

Mr. McCarthy added that the National Endowment of the Arts established in the 1960's created the grassroots effort that swept the nation. The Carson City Arts Alliance came out of that effort and was the precursor to the Brewery Arts Center (BAC). It was established in 1976 and looked at various elements regarding the history of developing local arts agencies. They obtained the former Nevada Appeal building as a place for visual and performing artists. The BAC is designated as the arts and culture advisor to the Board of Supervisors (BOS), the Coalition created itself and the CC was created out of that momentum.

(1-0279) Ms. Hodgkin advised that her background is about bringing the arts to the community, but noted that there is amazing artistic expression in Carson City. A local arts agency is really meant to foster artistic expression by its citizens.

(1-0327) Mr. McCarthy stated that from the Arts Council perspective, Ms. Hodgkin has lots of experience in taking advantage of the local arts community. Ms. Hodgkin commented that arts culture is based on tradition, history, places, and voices. She uses the Nominal Group Technique as a way to color code thoughts, whether it's vision, action to take, or work to be done and is also a way to prioritize. In response to a question, she replied that the Carson Valley Arts Council is the local arts agency in Douglas County and they are raising funds for it. They want to unify community voices and

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pieces of the community. The Nevada Rural Development Association (NRDA) conducts community assessments and started in Wells after the 2008 earthquake. It devastated the community, but they were unable to obtain FEMA funding. NRDA did a successful community assessment to allow them their first grant of \$600,000 which they used to start their own landfill. Assessing the will of a community makes things happen and part of the assessment process is knowing what there is to work with, what is needed, and ways to build on it.

(1-0503) Ms. Hodgkin reiterated that Carson City's critical issues are promoting value to arts, training for educators, and a community arts organization that bridges the gaps. She distributed copies of Carson City's Community Conversation held October 27, 2008.

(1-0611) Chairperson Barton asked to discuss major strengths and assets supporting arts and culture, major problems and challenges, the role the CC should take, mechanisms to provide revenue, and how to increase public awareness of the CC. He then updated the CC with a current status of the Cultural Affairs budget. In response to a question, he replied that they are looking at education to shift program costs but until the economic reports are published, the outcome is unknown and it's likely to change again. In response to another question, he replied that Nevada is too dependent on sales and room tax and has to start looking at other revenue sources. In response to a comment, Mr. McCarthy replied that when legislators start looking at new revenue projections, they will have to consider essential services. In response to a question, Chairperson Barton replied that the museum captures 11 percent of its operating needs through admission fees and some of the railroad museums capture 40-50 percent. All museums require some level of foundation or other support and can't rely on gate fees.

(1-0915) Ms. Hodgkin stated that Carson City's motto is "proud of its past, confident in its future." Commissioner Scott commented that there needs to be something to attract families and professionals to the community and not just offer gaming as the City's centerpiece. Carson City's history is pretty amazing and it needs to build on that foundation and on opportunities to bring in professionals.

(1-0976) Ms. Hodkgin suggested visualizing a positive future in order to attain it and decide how to deal with the reality. The role question is pretty critical especially at this point in Carson City's history.

(1-0989) Commissioner Scott commented that, "if we do our homework now, hopefully by the time things change and money is better, we're in a position to make those changes that we've already worked on." An important component to their mission is to bring in the public. A public art program affords the opportunity to reach out to individual communities and enable them to define their culture within their pocket of the City. It's a good way to attain visibility and bring communities together because the process of choosing public art is community based.

(1-1102) Chairperson Barton inquired if the CC could apply to the Reynolds Foundation to create a community arts council. Mr. McCarthy replied that it is a public entity that can obtain seed money or

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align itself with a community foundation. Ms. Hodgkin added that as long as the Arts Council has money, the CC is grantable.

(1-1215) In response to a question, Chairperson Barton replied that the state museum has a general fund budget and a private fund budget. All store proceeds support the private fund which enables them to create exhibits and programs. The state funds personnel, utilities, and facility maintenance. It has to generate the revenue to do its own programming which is done through private funds. Donations go into private funds and can be specified for restricted projects.

(1-1344) Commissioner Livermore stated that he was reviewing Carson City's Master Plan and found no element that includes arts and culture. Chairperson Barton commented that arts organizations operate on approximately 45-50 percent earned income nationally and Carson City operates on 75 percent.

(1-1450) Commissioner Scott commented that in the district needs of the 2002 Creative Capital Study, 80 percent felt downtown merchants would benefit by arts and culture; 72 percent felt that more parks and open space was needed; 70 percent felt a cultural district was needed downtown; 76 percent felt there was a lack of public gathering places; and 53 percent felt the downtown lacked civic pride.

(1-1475) Commissioner Walt commented that she was approached by several people at the last BOS meeting stating there was a lack of sense of community. Nothing will happen unless it's discussed positively. The CC needs to present as a united, positive group and sell the community to the media. Vice Chairperson Abowd agreed and commented that the response to the greenhouse project has been overwhelming and positive. Commissioner Walt added that, "You can't sell a community unless you are united in your vision. Let's sell the positive publicly. Go to the source for questions, not the media. We need to sell the good."

(1-1673) Commissioner Block added that the BAC is slowly getting away from the negative and promoting the positive. Most letters to the editor are negative and the CC should start writing letters with a positive note. He regularly appears on Dave Morgan's TV show and is learning how to override him and accentuate the positive. He needs to be directed in a positive way and the CC needs to be the positive force. Commissioner Walt suggested he be part of the citizens committee without the camera. The media needs the people and the stories and the CC needs to come together to sell the community.

(1-1754) Mr. McCarthy commented that each person on the CC has contributed to the community and agreed that the conversation has to be shifted to the positive which is economically beneficial to the long term sustainability of Carson City.

(1-1817) Ms. Hodgkin commented that a big challenge for the CC is how to move citizens to action. She stated that the biggest challenge across the state is that communities don't draw from the whole community and they need to be invited in to become more of an active participant.

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#### *Strengths and assets:*

- 1) Enhance and develop community pride;
- 2) City motto, proud of it's past confident of its future;
- 3) Collect and use data/research to support return on investment for arts and culture;
- 4) Commission brings a community voice to the legislature;
- 5) Promote and educate the arts to make community desirable to live for families;
- 6) Encourage centralized ticketing agency, the BAC;
- 7) Be people of vision;
- 8) Bring all art organizations to the table and center of the web for all community organizations.

#### *Challenges:*

- 1) Generate community-wide support for putting cultural assets at the highest priority;
- 2) Keeping organization in tact during severe financial crisis;
- 3) Assess what the community wants;
- 4) Bringing all entities to the table to support the same project;
- 5) Activating individuals, youth, senior, ethnic populations;
- 6) Public awareness and engaging the public together;
- 7) Money and alternative services of revenue for the arts;
- 8) Recognition of government of the value of arts;
- 9) Constructive negativity/kill prosperity.

#### *Potential funding sources:*

- 1) IMLS;
- 2) NEA federal level;
- 3) Community and private foundations; including
  - private foundation grants;
  - painted ponies;
  - support and campaign for percent for arts program;
  - Western Nevada Community Foundation Fund;
  - more public dollars for support of cultural organizations from local government.

#### *Projects:*

- 1) Public art program combined with use vacant buildings and display local art;
- 2) Update 2002 Creative Capital Study;
- 3) Promote horticultural arts and greenhouses;
- 4) Define cultural district;
- 5) Carson City History Museum Performing Arts venue capacity 300-400 seats;
- 6) Public art program;
- 7) NRCC community assessment;
- 8) New downtown public library;
- 9) Arts education for the public;
- 10) Artist competition with regularity;

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- 11) Outreach to all ethnicities for events;
- 12) Community arts garden at BAC;
- 13) Painted ponies;
- 14) Poster show;
- 15) Community volunteer clearinghouse.

*Within 2 years:* educator/training program;

*Within 5 years:* Endowment funding stream in place; once a week lunchtime art festivals; develop sister city for art exchange; take survey; host community arts conference; fundraising awareness; arts in the park weekend events; community beautification projects;

*Public Awareness:* use of latest technology to advocate for arts and culture combined with calendar of events; public arts program; engage the neighborhood with awards; use media positively to promote events; regularly publish articles in newspaper; Commissioners serve as spokespeople; award and profile community artists; develop important community pride;

*Local events:* include some form of the arts; arts part of the planning commission level; write letter to the editor to bring everyone together to discuss community events; website newsletter; Cultural Commission icon; art contests.

**G-B. DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS TO DEVELOP PLANNING PROCESS AND WORK PROGRAM FOR THE CULTURAL COMMISSION, BY CHAIRMAN BARTON.** (1-3347) Chairperson Barton commented that he, Mr. McCarthy and Ms. Hodgkin will assemble this into a narrative document, formulate it in the actual plan, and bring it back at the June meeting for action.

**G-C. DISCUSSION REGARDING SCHEDULING AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING IN JUNE, 2009.** (1-3376) - Commissioner Scott will make a presentation for a public art program.

**G-D. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS.** (1-3396) - None.

**H. ADJOURNMENT.** (1-3405) - Chairperson Barton adjourned the meeting at 12:00.

The minutes of the meeting of the Carson City Cultural Commission of April 18, 2009 are so approved this 11<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2009.

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Peter Barton, Chair

\*Minutes transcribed by Jano Barnhurst