



Live Performances Performing Arts Classes/Workshops Arts Education Community Outreach

June 13, 2023

Carson City Cultural Commission
VIA Email: parkspubliccomment@carson.org

Dear Carson City Cultural Commission:

I am writing on behalf of Wild Horse Productions (WHP) to address certain issues and statements made during the June 12, 2023, Carson City Cultural Commission meeting regarding our organization's funding for the RACC 2023-24 grant. This letter is not to dispute the funding results. We accept the outcome of the evaluation process, which has resulted in our placement in the lower tier and the subsequent decision not to receive funding for the upcoming period. We recognize that the commission has a responsibility to distribute funds equitably across the cultural landscape of Carson City. While we are disappointed with the commission's decision, we will continue to seek alternative avenues of support to sustain our project. With that being said, we would like to take this opportunity to provide some clarification on matters of concern that arose during the meeting.

Firstly, I would like to bring to your attention the lack of timely notification provided for the meeting, as well as the discrepancy in the opportunity for organizations to attend and defend their grant requests.

We received an email notification of the meeting at 2:33 p.m. on June 12th, a mere 3 hours before the meeting commenced. Such short notice severely limited our ability to adequately prepare and attend the meeting. As an organization committed to active engagement in the community, we highly value the opportunity to participate in discussions concerning our funding. For the past five years, WHP has attended Cultural Commission meetings regarding RACC funding requests and was able to present to the Commission regarding our grant request.

Furthermore, the notification email clearly stated that attendance at the meeting was not mandatory. With limited time from the email to the meeting, we viewed the meeting via the live webcast. However, in viewing the webcast, we saw that other organizations who did attend were called up, not just for specific questions as in previous meetings, but solely to defend their grant requests. All these organizations, except for the last organization who was eliminated earlier due to score, received funding. This inconsistency in the treatment of attending and non-attending organizations raises concerns about the fairness and transparency of the process.

Also, during the meeting, certain comments were made that we believe crossed the boundaries of professionalism and fairness. It is crucial that discussions regarding funding allocations be conducted

with respect and objectivity, ensuring that all organizations are treated with equal consideration. Although there were many statements made lacking objectivity for other organizations, the following statements were concerning to WHP:

During the discussion of our organization's grant proposal, one Commissioner referred to WHP as "Sierra's mom's company," alluding to my daughter Sierra Scott, who recently left her position with the Carson City Arts & Culture Department for personal and professional reasons.

It is important to clarify that WHP is a prominent, respected, and well-established theater group that has earned its reputation through the collective efforts of its' professional board of directors, artistic team, actors, production staff, volunteers, and many others who have poured their hearts and souls into their performances over the span of 15 years. Our organization has consistently showcased exceptional talent across all age groups, producing outstanding performances that have attracted thousands of patrons to our community. Moreover, we have greatly enriched the lives of countless children through our arts education programs in local schools. Categorizing our organization solely as belonging to any one individual, and stating such a notion in a formal meeting, is both incorrect and unfair. Any attempts to diminish our organization's accomplishments by attributing them solely to an individual do not reflect the truth and fail to acknowledge the collaborative spirit that defines us.

Additionally, another Commissioner made a remark that revealed their lack of understanding regarding the significance of youth theater in our community. This person criticized our grant request for our children's theater production of Finding Nemo, Jr., saying he gave it a low score, because it "lacks value because it does not directly relate to Carson City unless the fish were to venture to Lake Tahoe." This is a very narrow interpretation of theater's role within our community.

While it is true that Finding Nemo, Jr. is not set in Carson City, (and not a grant guideline), it offers valuable artistic experiences and educational opportunities for both the young participants involved and the audiences who attend. Theater possesses the remarkable ability to transport us to different worlds, cultures, and experiences, fostering empathy and expanding our understanding of the human condition. Wild Horse Children's Theater has always promoted diversity and self-esteem by offering representation, empowering young performers, fostering collaboration, building friendships, encouraging creative expression, and facilitating personal growth. WHCT has consistently upheld a steadfast "no child turned away policy," ensuring that every child is welcomed into our programs regardless of their cultural background, economic circumstances, or physical abilities. Through these valuable experiences, our young actors develop a positive self-image and acquire essential skills that contribute to their overall development and well-being which positively influences our community.

We respectfully request that the Carson City Cultural Commission takes note of these concerns and ensures that future discussions regarding funding allocations are conducted in a professional and unbiased manner.

We appreciate the commission's commitment to supporting the cultural development of our city, and we remain dedicated to our mission of enriching the cultural landscape of Carson City through theater.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol Scott".

Carol Scott
Executive Director
Wild Horse Productions