

2015 JAN 16 AM 9:21

Minutes:  
Belmont Cultural Council  
November 24, 2014  
Room 1, Belmont Town Hall

The meeting was called to order at 7:36.

Present: Ken Stalberg, (chair); John Baboian, Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas, Sarah Ellison, Lauralee Gianotti, Annette Goodro, Jirair Hovsepian, Anne Levy, Anne Quirk (treasurer), Rebecca Richards

After perusing the October 20<sup>th</sup> minutes, and correcting the order of the applications listed therein, the BCC accepted the October minutes.

Some members of the BCC will be unable to make the following meeting, scheduled for December 8<sup>th</sup>, including secretary Sarah Ellison, so Anne Quirk volunteered to be secretary for that meeting.

Mr. Stalberg reminded the committee that he, Ms. Quirk and Ms. Richards will be completing their terms at the end of the academic year, and the BCC will need a secretary, chair and treasurer.

The rest of the meeting was spent determining which applications would receive grant money. The amount of money will be decided at the next meeting. The applications were discussed somewhat out of order, depending on pressing needs.

The first application was #17, Belmont World Film, (Sarah Ellison), as their publicity was to go to print that day, and they wish to include the BCC name if they are receiving funding. The Family Film Festival reaches many people, and the request to have someone read subtitles for smaller children to understand the films was seen by the BCC as a wonderful request. BWF did not get direct MCC funding for this upcoming event, as it has in the past, so grant monies from the local councils are even more important. BWF was alerted to the fact that the BCC voted to award them grant money.

Next was application #12, Adrienne DerMarderosian's art exhibit at the Belmont Library (Rebecca Richards). While Ms. Richards had several questions, Ms. DerMarderosian did not get back to her in time for the meeting. There was some concern about her planned exhibition time of July 2015, as there is not much foot traffic in the library in July, and whether that would be the best use of funds. There was some discussion as well about her request being to frame artwork, as well as wondering if there would be anything more associated with the exhibit, such as an accompanying talk. Since there were many questions, the BCC voted to defer deciding on the application.

# 6. Wellington School's request to have author and naturalist Debra Miller give a workshop for all five classes of second graders—for a total of about 125 children (Rebecca Richards). The author, who resides in Alaska, will be in MA—and will discuss animals in their native habitats, complete with a writing workshop component. Miller has incredible credentials and the BCC voted to fund the project.

#1. The Powers Music School for their Belmont Open Sings projects (Ken Stalberg). Mr Stalberg noted that Powers always sends in fabulous grant applications. While one of the two events has already happened, Mr. Stalberg couldn't praise the project highly enough—as the events are wonderful, and reach many, many people. However, they are expensive to mount, and even though they have a lot of sponsorship, it is expensive to pay soloists, the orchestra and rental costs. The BCC voted to fund #1.

2. Jazz to Hip Hop (John Baboian) to be presented at the Council on Aging. This presentation would be by 8-10 youths playing instruments with dancing-- "Simple creative music". Mr. Baboian contacted the Council on Aging—references were fine, and there was enthusiasm for a multicultural event featuring children. Unfortunately, Mr. Baboian felt that the group was not so interesting musically, and, looking at a clip, the BCC agreed. The BCC felt that the presentation seems like a benefit for the kids, but not necessarily for the audience, particularly here in Belmont, where there is so much music in the schools. Request denied.

3. Davis Bates, storyteller, at the Senior Center (Anne Levy.) Ms. Levy was very enthusiastic about Mr. Bates, as was Dena Ressler at the Council on Aging. Not only is he a known quantity, but Mr. Bates will be presenting a Halloween Harvest program next fall that would attract an intergenerational audience. The only drawback was that he has been at the Senior Center recently. If we were not to fund him, the Council on Aging might. The BCC voted to defer funding Mr. Bates until the next meeting.

4. Steve Henderson's play "Mabel and Jerry" at the Senior Center (Anne Quirk). The Council on Aging is very enthusiastic about his coming, and he had a series of recommendation letters. This two-person play is about aging—and has been performed at many Senior Centers. While there was some questioning of the public benefit other than to the Council on Aging, both Nava Niv-Vogel and Dena Ressler at the Council on Aging would really like him to be funded. The BCC voted to fund "Mabel and Jerry".

7. Belmont Women's Club's presentation on Winslow Homer's Women (Laurie Gianotti). This exhibit would run from May-September, with images mostly taken from illustrations owned by the club—and hopefully bringing in original artwork, as well as a Homer scholar. There are plans to sponsor "teas"—the Women's Club really wants to broaden the scope of the exhibit. There are many plans for promote the event. Ms. Gianotti was so impressed that she has enlisted her real estate



company to become a corporate sponsor. Her enthusiasm helped the BCC to vote to fund the exhibit.

8. All About Reeds—Clarinetist Marguerite Levin wants to bring a “reed” trio to the Senior Center (Sarah Freiberg). Ms. Levin gave a free concert at the Senior Center in honor of her playing for 40 years, and brought a lot of her students. The Senior Center loved her and the caliber of her playing, and would love to have her back-- Dena Ressler put her request in her top three, and added that they don't get enough classical music. Ms. Levin and her oboist and bassoonist do many school concerts and are “very chatty”, which audiences love. The BCC voted to fund “All About Reeds.”

9. Salvatore Arno Concert (Jerair Hovsepan) 20<sup>th</sup> century composer Salvatore Arno's grand-niece Lavinia Coco put together a concert of his music this fall using the Senior Center space of a weekend. Arno, an Italian, had spent a number of his later years in Belmont, and, after his death, a number of his compositions were found in boxes in the Belmont family house. The concert was very well attended—and very well received. The publicity was great. Coco is trying to become an archivist of his music—she had a musicologist transcribe unpublished works, and had a soprano, pianist and two violinists perform the works. BCC voted to fund the concert.

10. Arsenal Center—Free Family Fun Finale (Annette Goodro)—This event is aiming for 700 guests—and is totally free. The audience is kids and families who are mostly from Watertown. Last year, only 11% came from Belmont. The project total is \$2500—and the Arsenal Center is asking the BCC for \$1000—and asking the Watertown Cultural Council for less. The Arsenal Center receives MCC funding for their education programs, but had never applied to the BCC. Ms. Goodro would suggest we fund the program, but not anywhere near the requested amount. There was a suggestion to give the Arsenal Center the names of the PTO presidents so that the event could be publicized in Belmont. The BCC voted to fund the event.

11. Richard Clark's projected performance “Two to Tango” at the Senior Center (Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas). While Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas tried to speak with Clark, she was only able to talk with his wife. The one hour program to be given by two actors of contrasting scenes from two famous plays about life/love/marriage and loss sounded really interesting. While Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas wondered about serving only 25-40 people, as Mr. Clark doesn't advertise. Mr. Clark got very high recommendations from the Council on Aging. The BCC can make advertising suggestions, and voted to fund Mr. Clark.

14. True Story Theater—the Belmont High School improvisational club (Anne Levy) -- personal stories then made into theater—bringing stories to life. While Ms. Levy thought that “What's age got to do with this” could bring a lot to high school kids, the proposal was not very clear, and seemed to be more about the process than a

clear result. The BCC voted not to fund the True Story Theater.

13. The Burbank Multicultural Fair (Jirair Hovsepien) has already taken place. Mr. Hovsepien could not speak highly enough of this event—it had great publicity, served about 150 children, and was just wonderful—educational and participatory. The BCC voted to fund the Fair.

15. Habitat and the Chenery Middle School printmaking project (Annette Goodro). Artist/naturalist Susanne LeFevre brings printmaking to an 8th grade, with a slide show of the results to show on both websites—the date has yet to be determined. The event is heavily dependent on BCC—the salary-stipend amount in their application of \$380.00 is the total of the hourly rate Habitat charges for off-site programs (\$120) based on 3 hours—and Ms. Goodro worried that they had no other funding. The BCC voted to fund the printmaking project.

16. John Root's talk on Crop Circles at the Senior Center (Anne Quirk). Given that there are so many requests for BCC funding that would take place at the Senior Center, and that Mr. Root has not drawn large crowds in the past, the BCC voted to deny funding for this project.

18. Choral concert at the Payson Park Church "Sharing a New Song" (Laurie Gianotti) The "SANS" chorus goes around the world, and is planning a performance on June 13, 2015, having just returned from Cuba. This is a Belmont based group, and quite multicultural—and will be bringing in a South African chorus in December. Ms. Gianotti felt the group was very professional, well organized, and has good publicity. There seems to be room for adjusting the amount of their request. The BCC voted to fund their request.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas pointed out that there were many interesting grants, and very good presentations. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Freiberg Ellison