

Belmont Cultural Council

November 16, 2006 Meeting Minutes

Members attending: Viva Fisher, Rebecca Richards, Juliet Jenkins, Susan Smart, Patty Mihelich
Absent: Sarah Freiberg-Ellison

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm.

The meeting minutes of November 2, 2006 were approved and will be posted on the town's website by Juliet Jenkins

The first order of business was to vote on Applications to not fund. Several of the applications did not have any local partner which was a stated requirement for consideration. These will not be considered for funding from our FY 2007 applications, # 1 (Maichak: Art of Pastels workshop), 2 (Cope: reading is magic program), 4 (Jackson: flute and guitar program), 5 (Delvena Theater Company), 8 (DeCordova Museum), and 9 (Thomas: "When Animals Danced"). There was discussion of these programs which are blindly sent to any number of cultural councils who may not have local programs of their own to fund. Belmont's applicant pool, although not extremely large, has enough artists and organizations with a local partner to allow us to dismiss these blind applications. These dismissals will receive a formal letter and a reminder to find a local partner in the future.

The program #8 is a wonderful, well-established cultural program by an organization in a neighboring town, the DeCordova Art in the Park summer program in Lincoln. It was discussed that if they wanted in the future to consider giving some admission waiver for Belmont residents or if they chose a Belmont artist for us to support, we would be eager to be a part of this wonderful program. Funding however is denied for this year.

Application #14 was denied as it requested funding for a project that occurred prior to the current grant period.

Viva made the motion to deny funding for the above-mentioned programs and Patty seconded it. All voted in favor and no one opposed the motion.

Application #10, the Ruth Harcovitz program submitted by the Council on Aging, was declined in compliance with the MCC non-dependency requirement, as Ms. Harcovitz has received funding three times in the past nine years.

There was a vote to decline the Ruth Harcovitz application, Rebecca made the motion, Patty seconded it and all voted in favor, none opposed.

Susan Smart presented a synopsis of application #3, (Witt: big band). There is no chance for the program to succeed if partially funded. It has the local partner of Payson Park which is an important cultural institution for the Cultural Council to support, with its wide-ranging audience composition. The program costs \$1,000. The council has supported other programs at the Payson Park summer concert series before. It was discussed that the series is a labor of love and there are no financial resources available from them. It was recommended that the application stay open for consideration of funding

The next program discussed, #6(Burbank School: Ben Franklin) is a solo show historical performance for both elementary students and the general community in the evening at the library. The proposal has already received other support and is a joint application of the Burbank PTO and the Human Rights Commission. Concern was expressed about the marketing and

administration parts of the budget. It was recommended that the application stay open for consideration of funding.

Program #7 is a musical story hour for pre-schoolers submitted by a new local partner, the Powers Music School. We would be asked to help fund the 2nd and 3rd in the series of 3 presentations lasting each 1 hour. The first has already occurred. The director of the school plays a major role in the story hours and the musicians, culled from the teaching staff at the school, have already been scheduled. The school is making a significant financial contribution and has a performance location arranged with the All Saints' Episcopal church. The application is highly appealing to the council and will stay open for consideration. About 25 children attended the first ever program this fall.

Discussion moved on to the third application submitted by the Council on Aging (# 12), a series of painting workshops for area seniors. Juliet Jenkins spoke with the director of the Council, Nava Niv Vogel. She was impressed with the leg-work which has already been undertaken for this new initiative. Cultural council members expressed interest and support of such a departure by the Council on Aging with this request, bringing in the visual arts. The group has already had an initial consultation with the selected teacher, on a no-fee basis, and the small core group of painters gave their approval of the choice in teacher. Nava initially tried to get a volunteer to lead this group but found no takers, after contacting both the Belmont Gallery of Art and local area art colleges.. Concern was expressed by cultural council committee members about the small numbers of community members to be served by this program. Currently there is a core group of three seniors that meet as an art group. The council on aging is working hard to reinvigorate this group and gain new members. The hope is that these workshops will do just that. Publicity efforts by the Council on Aging were discussed with the cultural council. More people would benefit from this program if they made sure to send out press releases and invite a reporter from the local newspaper to attend the workshop and perhaps write a story. It was also discussed how it would be great if the Senior Center could initiate a funding proposal for the future years that might be inter-generational in nature. It was decided to keep this application open for consideration.

Rebecca presented the next application (#11) from another new group, the Friends of the Benton Library. There were questions regarding the status of the applicant, budgetary details, and served community which Rebecca will clarify for the next meeting. It was clear that the program will proceed with partial funding. . The application will remain open until the next meeting.

The next application(#13) is from another new applicant, the Habitat, which is a well-established institution in town. The program is for a 3-part program with the Chenery extended day program. 20 children took part in a similar program last year. It will take place in the Chenery courtyard in March and April of 2007. The grant will cover the costs of presenter fees and administration. Partial funding will allow the program to run. The application will remain open for consideration.

Belmont Against Racism submitted an application (#15) for a program developed in collaboration with the High School PTO. The funds will be used to purchase a book about Cedric Jennings, " Hope in the Unseen," for all Belmont High School juniors. The program will take place with partial funding and already has the support of the Belmont Foundation for Education. There is also an evening public component after the daytime presentation for the high schoolers. It is hoped to inspire a town-wide reading group. The applicants have also received funding from the High School PTO, the Library and the Belmont Against Racism group. The application will remain open.

Rebecca presented the application (#16) by Adrienne Der Marderosian for a visual art exhibit of collages at the public library in the Flett room in October of 2007. It was noted that the Belmont Library website now has an artist of the month that could provide even more cultural opportunities

for local artists. A few points of clarification were needed on this grant as well. The artist is planning to display archival prints of her artwork rather than the original artwork. There was concern expressed about not exhibiting the actual work and the need to make the prints of the artwork. Discussion also ensued about the lack of LCC applicants on this year's Belmont Gallery exhibit schedule and the need to inform the artists selected to show at the BGA about the potential resources from the Cultural Council.. The application will remain open for consideration.

Lastly, the Wellington PTO submitted an application (#18) for a Balls and Ramps program for the 1st graders. The program is described as both cultural and theatrical by the writer of the grant, Elyse Shuster. The funding can be either full or partial. The application will remain open.

Patty began the financial calculations of how we could fund the remaining applications but it was deemed too late for the discussion as no easy suggestions were approved by all attending members. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, November 28. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40.

Respectfully submitted by Juliet Jenkins