

2015 NOV 23 AM 9:33

Minutes

Belmont Cultural Council
October 22, 2015
Belmont Town Hall

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm.

Present: Laurie Gianotti (chair), Annette Goodro (treasurer), John Baboian, Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas, Sarah Freiberg Ellison, Juliet Jenkins, Nancy Linde, Rebecca Richards

Absent: Jirair Hovsepian, Arlyn Roffman

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Annette Goodro reported that the balance in the BCC town account currently stands at \$3136.79, but noted that \$2000 of that amount is encumbered—earmarked for grants from last year which are outstanding. Introductory e-mails were sent to the Belmont Cultural Council members assigned to the grants that were outstanding, but Ms. Goodro has yet to hear back from all of them. Not including the encumbered funds, there is a balance of \$1136.79 that the BCC can add some if not all to our grant money for the coming year. The BCC can carry the interest that has been earned on the account.

Ms. Goodro noted that the assistant town accountant has retired, and that makes things a bit more challenging, as he had served through many BCC treasurers' terms.

It was noted that the BCC can hold back 5% (or \$250.00) from the grant allocation of \$5000.00 for administrative expenses, and the motion to do so, made by Juliet Jenkins, was passed.

Ms. Jenkins wondered if the unencumbered funds could be used to open up the Belmont Gallery during the Belmont's annual tree-lighting evening, but Ms. Goodro and Ms. Gianotti pointed out that the unencumbered money must go to the grants. She noted that we could do something like make a BCC brochure. Rebecca Richards noted that in the past, the BCC has held receptions for grantees in the gallery, which celebrates those who have been awarded funding as well as makes the gallery more visible.

There ensued a discussion of how much funding that the BCC should retain in its coffers, and how much should be added to the grant monies for the upcoming grant cycle. The BCC had received a donation of \$400.00 in 2013, which we don't have to give away. It was suggested to hold back \$200.00 from the interest earned on the account, to use as the BCC sees fit for arts in the community, but add \$900.00 to the grant allocation. This motion was unanimously passed.

Update on community survey: The survey will continue to be available until December 15, 2015, but Juliet Jenkins has compiled statistics on the completed surveys thus far. She noted that in the future, having more numbered questions, rather than open-ended ones would be more useful.

The grants: Laurie Gianotti reminded the group of the grant guidelines, including the fact that an applicant must either be local or have a local partner. Any application without a local partner will be declined. She also pointed out that grants could be declined for a lack of benefit to the community. Ms. Gianotti noted that there were 21 applications, and that she had the application envelopes for the BCC members to divide up and take home for review. The group then discussed all the grants, deciding to send declination letters to those applicants that have no local partner.

The grants, in order of postmark:

1. The Powers Music School, for 6 performances for toddlers of musical storytelling (\$400.00) While the Powers School requests funding each year, it changes what the requested funding is for each year. This is a highly visible set of programs held at the Belmont Public Library. Ms. Gianotti voted to consider it, and John Baboian agreed to take the application home for review.

2. Arto Asadoorian at Belmont High School—a request for funding for the Belmont Community Summer Band, ages 16-80, which hopes to perform at the Payson Park summer festival. Funding (\$675.00) requested for custodial fees as well as a truck for supplies and percussion. Ms. Jenkins has played with the group, and it was noted this is a new applicant. Mr. Baboian agreed to take this application.

3. Alla Bucciarelli for the Wellington PTO requests \$500.00 for a 90-minute historical theater performance entitled The Lowell Mill Girl, serving the 125 fourth graders at Wellington. Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas took the application.

4. The Delevinia Theater bringing a show entitled All The Presidents' Women (stories, not just history) to the Council on Aging. There was some discussion of how many applications come from the COA (six out of the twenty one this time), but that the shows only serve 12-20 people. Ms. Gianotti pointed out that the BCC will have to pick and choose which performances to fund, and also that there is a new programming person at the Council on Aging. Ms. Jenkins agreed to take this application.

5. John Root: an interpretive science presentation entitled Songbirds of the Northeast, which is a 60-minute Power point including images and sounds. Sponsored by the Council on Aging, it would also be co-marketed to Belmont Garden Club. Nancy Linde agreed to take the application.

6. Belmont Woman's Club for an educational film on Winslow Homer's Belmont-- asking \$1000. Ms. Linde is involved in project, and Rebecca Richards agreed to take the application. (Rebecca)--

7. Mike Block, \$500.00 for a cello performance at the Belmont Public Library. Block is unusual in that he has created a harness so that he can stand to play the cello. As Arlyn Roffman has been working with the library, she was assigned the application. She will need to contact the library for an endorsement.

8. Steve Henderson—\$450.00 for an original play entitled Haverston Mills performed by a troupe of senior actors, sponsored by the Council on Aging. Ms. Linde agreed to take the application.

9. Ed Wirt--\$1400.00 for a nine-piece swing band, but has no local partner. He will receive a declination letter.

10. MA Audubon's Habitat: \$1500.00 for a Caterpillar Lab, which would be a four-hour drop-in presentation. Ms. Goodro agreed to take the application.

11. Belmont Food Collaborative: \$500.00 for a photo contest and exhibit at the Chenery Middle School--kids taking pictures of food which will be framed and displayed at Chenery, the Beech Street Center and possibly the Library. Digital frames. This is a science and art project that is very different from other ones. Ms. Ellison agreed to take this application.

12. Belmont Parents of Belmont Performing Arts Students: \$475.00 for The Laramie Project Workshop and Community Event—a theater project having to do with gay teens. Ms. Linde will take this application.

13. Richard Clark: \$350.00 for "And Now Mark Twain" at the Beech Street Center. It was noted that he has yet to do his 2014-15 performance, and also that he had performed the Mark Twain show at the same venue in 2012. The members of the BCC agreed to an initial declination of this program.

14. Northern Skies Children's Camp: \$3000.00 for a camp having to do with African Culture, Dance, Food and Music. There is no local partner. Declined.

15. Belmont Art Association--\$800.00 for business training workshops and webinars--3-5 workshops to teach artists to be more visible and successful. People will pay up to \$30.00 to attend the workshops, which take place at the Belmont Gallery of Art. The first workshop was held October 21, 2015, which was very well attended. Discussion ensued about what population is served by this, Laurie Gianotti asked which population is served by these workshops—promote the artists or the arts in Belmont. While Rebecca Richards pointed out that not many visual artists apply to the BCC, it was noted that the Belmont Art Association also was applying

for another grant (see # 16 below), which would potentially serve more of the Belmont population. Nancy Linde mentioned that she had taken a similar class at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education, and wondered if the BAA could partner up with Belmont Adult Education instead of the BCC. Laurie Gianotti suggested that we decline this request, suggesting that the courses be part of community education, but consider #16. All agreed.

16. Belmont Art Association: \$1,000.00 for Public Art Exhibits and events such as Pop Up and Live Studio events. Bringing the art to the public would be great—it was noted that there was a very successful pop-up exhibit this year in Belmont Center, and such things are to be encouraged. The wording was rather vague, and Rebecca Richards, who will take this application, will need to ask for specifics.

17. Belmont World Film is requesting \$750.00 for its children's program-. The Family Film Festival, which will take place over the Martin Luther King weekend at theaters in Belmont and Arlington, and is meant for children aged 3-12, and their parents. Sarah Ellison, who took the BWF grant last year agreed to take it this year as well.

18. Elyse O'Connor from Westborough requested \$950.00 to present Musical Visits with seniors. She has no local partner, nor was it clear exactly what the programs were to be. This was declined.

19. Arsenal Center for the Arts requests \$250.00 for its Open Arts Day (May 7, 2016). BCC members who attended last year said it was terrific. Annette Goodro, who took the grant last year agreed to take it again this year.

20. New Repertory Theater, along with the Council on Aging and the Belmont High School English Department, to put on an intergenerational play based on the book 1984. Jirair Hovsepian was assigned this one.

21. Elders Ensemble of Prometheus Dance requesting \$500.00 to put on an 8 person performance "There's a Dance in the Ol' Dame Yet", sponsored by the Council on Aging. Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas agreed to take this grant.

To recap: the Belmont Cultural Council decided to decline five grant proposals immediately, mostly due to their lack of having a local partner. Declinations were for numbers 9, 13, 14, 15, and 18. Laurie Gianotti will send out the declinations.

There ensued a discussion of the need for the Belmont Cultural Council to be more visible in the community, particularly because very few of the schools submitted applications. It was suggested that perhaps we could reach out to the schools in the spring to get them interested in applying for grants in the fall. Perhaps we could have more visibility in the Belmont Citizen Herald, particularly as the paper was the number one way that people who took the survey said they got their cultural news.

It was suggested that perhaps a photo of all of us would be helpful, Jirair Hovsepian would be the one who could take the photo. Also, perhaps there could be a weekly arts column in the paper, which Rebecca Richards could suggest to the editor. She or Ms. Linde also hoped to talk to Citizen's Bank and the possibility of having art displays in its front window as it used to do.

The meeting concluded at 8:51.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Ellison, secretary