

BCC Minutes, November 19, 2015

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Present:

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

The meeting convened at 7:05. All members were in attendance by 7:30.

Minutes of the prior meeting (October 22, 2015) were accepted.

Community Survey: Juliette will be compiling the results of the community surveys and convey to us in December. She estimates that we have more than 50 completed surveys. Laurie reported that we have complied with the MCC requirement for conducting the survey and our LCC site states that the survey was done.

Treasurer's Report: Annette reported that we have \$5,650 to give away in this grant cycle. \$5,000 was this year's MCC award and the remainder is made up of interest payments, grants not completed and donations. She is holding \$250 back for administrative expenses (printing, mailing, mail boxes, possible reception etc.) Additionally we have \$236.79 that can be used for administrative costs or future grants.

Jirair has proposed that we use some of these administrative funds for a printed card about the BCC that can be used at public meetings and left in public places (library, town clerk's office etc.) He proposed a rack card that would be 8.5 x 3.66. Laurie suggested that it be created and printed on Vista print since she has various discounts there. Jirair will draft the card and send it out to everyone possibly before the next meeting.

There are two approved grants from the prior year cycle that have not been paid as yet: Share a New Song (event is December). Grant amount \$500.00, and A DerMarderosian, \$350.00. Rebecca is requested to contact her about her reimbursement.

Discussion ensued on the grants that the BCC members had taken home and studied.

1. Mr. Baboian discussed the Powers Music School request for \$400.00 for their series of musical story hours at the library. He highly recommended funding the request.
2. Mr. Baboian also discussed Arto Asadoorian's \$675.00 request for funding for the 60 person BHS Belmont Community Summer Band to rehearse and then perform at the Payson Park Music Festival. The funding is for a custodian for the rehearsal

space as well as a rental truck for equipment for the concert. . Mr. Baboian highly recommended the group and suggested funding the whole amount.

3. Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas then discussed the Wellington School PTA's request to fund a performance for a performance of "Lowell Mill Girl" for all of the fourth graders. Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas spoke with Wellington grant writer Allia Bucciarelli, and found that the performer has received rave reviews, kids love the program, and it will serve a large school community. The artist fee is \$800.00 of which the PTO is raising \$300.00, and the request for the BCC is for \$500.00 Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas highly recommends we fund this.

4. Ms. Jenkins reviewed the Delevana Theater Company's request to perform "All the Presidents' Women" for the Council on Aging. She liked it—it is a 2 woman show with costume changes, and they have done tons of performances and garnered many good reviews. Ms. Jenkins spoke with Lillian Hartman at the Senior Center about possibly doing shows on Wednesday afternoons so that there was the possibility of school-aged children coming to the Beech Street Center for programs, but she said that the times are established and can't be changed. Ms. Jenkins also spoke with Nava Niv-Vogel at the Beech Street Center who reported that the big draws are dance and music performances, and not the plays. Ms. Jenkins gave the grant request 16 out of 20 points, but worried that it wouldn't be a big draw.

5. Ms. Linde spoke about John Root 's request to do a Beech Street presentation on songbirds. It is clearly a successful program, and he has done it in several places. He got an unofficial endorsement from Garden Club--but hasn't got a letter from them yet. Mr. Root suggested getting bird-loving plants to sell at event. Nava Niv-Vogel had prioritized the various requests for the Beech Street Center, and this was 3rd on her list. It was suggested that it would be nice to include a possible field trip after the talk. Ms. Linde liked the program and highly recommended it.

6. Rebecca Richards reported on the Belmont Women's Club's request for \$1,000 to create a five-minute film about the 40 year connection between Winslow Homer and Belmont and the house that is the home of the Belmont Women's Club. Susan Smart thought it would serve educational and marketing purposes. Ms. Linde will be involved in making the film. The Media Center would be involved in showing the film. In 2016 Homer would turn 180. Ms. Richards would highly recommend this endeavor, giving it the full 20 out of 20 points. Good thing to do for the community of Belmont--real viable artist, with Belmont ties. Mr. Hovsepian noted that there is a similar short film shown at the Old North Bridge in Concord, and wondered if there could be something similar. The Homer film would certainly screen at the Media Center, and all agreed it would make sense to show it at the Women's Club. Ms. Roffman wondered if there was a way to connect the film to connect it to the Homer Studio in Maine.

7. Ms. Roffman then talked about cellist Mike Block who has a planned a wide-

ranging solo cello performance (\$500.00) at the Belmont Public Library. He is Berklee trained, and has performed all over, including very recently at the High School with his wife, and this week at Club Passim. The kids all know him from the recent performance, and advertising through the schools would be great, particularly as the date is a Wednesday evening, when not as many audience members come out as for the weekend concerts at the library. Ms. Roffman highly recommends it.

8. Ms. Linde discussed Steve Henderson's request for \$450.00 for a production of a play entitled "Haverston Mills" at the Beech Street Center. While Ms. Linde found him lovely and funny, she had some reservations. Henderson's original production of the work was out in western Massachusetts, where he lives, and he was able to include local people in the play, and rehearsed with them beforehand—so there was audience participation, and about 100 people in the audience over 2 performances. Rehearsals and audience participation wouldn't be an option in Belmont. He'll be driving out with actors--he's not local. Henderson is a former RN, and Ms. Linde found him very personable. The BCC did not fund his previous request (Jerry Atric), and Ms. Gianotti put this down as questionable. Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas suggests that in discussion, we might consider putting all the Council on Aging requests together, as well as all the school requests.

9. was already declined.

10. Ms. Goodro then discussed Habitat's request of \$1590.00 for a 4-hour caterpillar lab, which would take place on June 21 or 23 from 3-7. Since all second graders study caterpillars, this would be a great learning opportunity. The requested amount is what it will cost the Caterpillar Lab to bring the lab to Habitat. Habitat staff is donating their own time to the project. If they do not get full funding, Habitat will turn to other sources. Ms. Goodro informed Marianne Miller, who filled out the application, that we couldn't give them nearly that amount of money. Ms. Miller said she did the application to beat the deadline, but will be meeting with other potential donors, including individuals at Chenery, the HIP program and the Green Alliance. Habitat is committed to having this happen, but knows we can't fund it fully. The Habitat folks loved their own visit to the Caterpillar Lab. Ms. Miller wants to do it now, as there is some talk that the Caterpillar Lab may not exist much longer. Ms. Goodro recommends giving them \$400--what we've given them in the past.

11. Ms. Ellison discussed the Belmont Food Collaborative's request for \$500.00 for large digital frames to display healthy food photographs taken by students at the Chenery Middle School, and, possibly other sites such as the Beech Street Center, Belmont Media Center and perhaps the annual school art show at the Belmont Gallery of Art. Suzanne Johannet, of the BFC is partnering with Chenery Middle School teacher Leon Dyer for this project. The plan is to have students take photographs based on different themes and display every reasonable photo in the digital frames for two weeks at a time—once in February and once later in the

spring. There was some question as to how much the frames will cost—Mr. Dyer seemed to have access to better prices than Ms. Johannet, but the hope was that the 500.00 would purchase five 12 -inch digital frames. This seems like a wonderful idea—getting the Chenery students interested in healthy foods and encouraging creativity. Ms. Ellison highly recommended funding this project.

12. Ms. Linde then brought up the Laramie Project Workshop (\$300.00) put on by the Parents of Performing Arts Students. The play, about the brutal murder of gay student Matthew Shepard, is fabulous. However, it has already happened. Ms. Linde talked to the woman who had applied--using theater for education. Discussion ensued about funding something that has already occurred, as the BCC can't get any publicity for such an event. There was lots of publicity for this event. The consensus was that perhaps we could give them a little money and encourage them to apply for something before it happens.

16. Ms. Richards discussed the Belmont Art Association's request for \$500.00 for Public Art Exhibits. The BAA would like to see artists at work, and while they have been doing research to find space, there also seem to be a lot of loose ends. Ms. Gianotti agreed that it is vague, but the idea about bringing visual arts to people is important. Mr. Hovsepien reiterated that there is not a defined project. It was pointed out that if it doesn't happen, we don't pay out. Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas pointed out that they tried to get space 20 years ago for visual artists—it has been a long struggle, ever since the Kendall art building burned down. Christine needs help to look for a space—perhaps we could give a small amount to help her explore defining a space. Look for empty storefront--give some support for her to work on this. Ms. Gianotti said it would be a leap of faith on our part. Mr. Hovsepien doesn't feel we should fund research. Money would be for a rental space. Ms. Richards intends to have one more meeting with Christine to clarify. Ms. Gianotti suggests a tent on Belmont Town Day--buy a tent for having artists work. There was something like this summer--which was fabulous--in Belmont Center. They should do more like that.

17. Ms. Ellison contacted Ellen Gittelman, Executive Director of Belmont World Film, who has requested a grant of \$750.00 for their 13th annual Family Film Festival, which will take place in January at both the Regent Theater in Arlington and the Studio Cinema in Belmont. The event serves children ages 3-12 and their families in Belmont and outlying communities, including Arlington, Cambridge, Lexington, Medford, Waltham and Watertown. As both film and theater rental costs have risen, and because of the positive impact of the event on the cultural life of children in Belmont, they have requested more funding than in years past. This year's event features four days of animated and live action short and feature length films from countries around the world, taking place during the MLKing weekend.

On Saturday January 16th, at the Regent Theater, children's author/illustrator/ animator Peter Reynolds will speak and autograph his books and

videos based on his books following the screening of animated versions of several of his books. The weekend includes educational enrichment as several films and programs will be about the environment as well as films that espouse the values and ideas of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This is a very popular event in Belmont (and environs), and we have funded Belmont World Film in previous years—last year was also for the Family Film Festival, but for a different purpose. BWF would like to know of a tentative plan by mid-November, so that they could use our logo in their printed material—which the BCC agreed to. Ms. Gittleman is very organized, has done this many times, and is on her own town's Cultural Council. Everything is done well and thoroughly, and Ms. Ellison highly recommended funding it.

19. Ms. Goodro then discussed the Arsenal Center for the Arts "Open Arts Day". – Last spring's event had 650 audience members. The spring of 2014 event had 11% of attendees who were residents of Belmont. The audience is primarily kids aged 1-16 and their families. It is publicized in their website, the Boston Globe, the Watertown paper and schools. Last year they requested \$1000, and we gave them \$250—which happens to be more like 11%). This year they are only asking \$250.00. Last year, Watertown gave them a total of \$1000.00 and Waltham gave them \$100.00. The Watertown LCC gives Belmont \$ too. Ms. Goodro would like to give them what they are asking. Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas suggested that we stipulate that they must publicize in Belmont as well as Watertown if we give them money.

20. Mr. Hovsepien talked about The New Repertory Theater's performance of "1984" at the Senior Center. The New Rep is requesting \$450.00. The original purpose was intergenerational, but the high school pulled out at the last minute. This already took place in November. Since Lillian Hartmann at the Beech Street Center said that plays are at the bottom of their list at the Beech Street Center, and this event already happened, Ms. Gianotti suggested we decline this. She will write a letter, saying that we are sorry for what happened, and we would like to be able to promote such an event, and wondered if it would be possible to have similar events at the Belmont High School, and have Seniors attend via Belderbus?

We could change the guidelines to say that projects must happen AFTER we vote.

21. Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas discussed the request from the Elders Ensemble of Prometheus Dance to perform at the Beech Street Center—this would be an intergenerational piece, that has been performed many local places. They pay their dancers \$50-100 dollars per show. While there was some discrepancy between the letter of support from the Council on Aging versus what the Prometheus dance person said—it sounded like they didn't really have a date. Ms. Ellenberg-Dukas gave it an 18 and thinks the Center would like it.

Ms. Richards has talked with the Belmont Citizen Herald about the cultural council having a weekly column, which sounds like a distinct possibility.

We then discussed our next meeting as being either Wednesday, December 9 or Thursday, December 10th, but subsequently chose Wednesday, December 9th.

The meeting ended with a recap of the declinations: the ones we had agreed on in our October meeting: nos. 9, 13, 14, 15, and 18. In this meeting, we are adding nos. 4 and 20. Next time we will talk more about the Laramie Project--probably give less funding as it has already happened. Also, we will discuss no. 16, possibly fund less--Rebecca will discuss it with the applicant. Also, no. 8 --a discussion is needed with the Council on Aging--if it had a participatory function, as originally planned, perhaps we could fund it.

Next time we will look at the declination letters as well as discuss amounts for the applicants.

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Ellison, secretary