

McKinney Community Development Corporation
Project Grants Subcommittee
December 9, 2019

The McKinney Community Development Corporation Promotional and Community Event Grant Committee met at 4:30 p.m. on December 9, 2019, in the MCDC offices at 5900 S. Lake Forest Blvd., Ste. 110, McKinney, Texas.

MCDC board members present: Chairman Jackie Brewer, Vice Chairman Rick Glew, Board member Kathryn McGill.

Staff present: President Cindy Schneible, Administrative and Marketing Coordinator Linda Jones, and Director of Parks and Recreation Michael Kowski.

President Schneible introduced **Angi Burns, Executive Director of Ovation Academy**, who presented an overview of the academy and a plan for expansion that includes a Black Box Theater.

Ovation Academy of the Performing Arts provides training for students interested in pursuing dance and/or musical theatre through two programs. The full immersion program is a daily 8:00-4:30 program where middle school and high school students complete required school credits while focusing on their passion for performing arts. They also offer home schoolers a 2-day program for kindergarten through 5th graders or a 3-day program for 6th through 12th graders, giving them the opportunity to take classes for fun or for fine arts credits. The Academy currently has 30 full-time students, and 12 who are in the home school program. They also offer an after school program for all ages (3-70) with ongoing participation between 75 and 100 participants. The academy's goal for this year was 60 students, and they plan to have no more than 240 in the future. Student success is superior compared to MISD and other academies. Successes include a significant number of students qualifying for state and national competitions (35 qualified this year compared to 38 from all MISD schools combined). Tuition for the full immersion program is \$11,800 per year. Ms. Burns stated that they are applying for Public Charter School status, which would provide funding and eliminate tuition fees.

The philosophy of the academy is to work in collaboration with other performance groups, rather than in competition. In that spirit, this year's Shakespeare in the Park production will be at Mitchell Park and is a collaborative effort with two other groups.

Ovation opened in their current building in August. That facility has a 3000 square foot black box, but it has low ceilings with pillars obstructing staging and viewing. Their goal is to open a new facility with a nostalgic design that would be about 25,000 square feet and would include:

- a 3000 square foot black box with high ceilings and a quality tech booth,
- a top of the line broadcasting studio,
- a film/TV screening room,
- a banquet room and conference room,
- dedicated office space,
- dedicated classroom space,
- practice/private lesson rooms,
- rentable entertainment space, and
- and independently owned and operated café.

The academy hopes to stay in the McKinney Cultural District. They are currently looking at a space in the Cotton Mill and land near The Mill at East McKinney. They estimate that the total cost of construction would be about \$9 million.

Ms. Burns stated that they have already received interest from companies for the café, and they have a connection with the architect who remodeled Dallas' Granada Theater. They have initiated research that indicates there is a great need for a facility in this area, and they believe it will be a popular venue that would be used by many groups in the area and will contribute to tourism.

President Schneible reminded the subcommittee that the MCDC can support entertainment but not schools. Subcommittee members asked that a future presentation address the following:

- data to show that the facility will be consistently booked
- breakout of revenue and building use for entertainment vs. education
- additional sources for funding
- percentage of expenses covered by rentals vs. grants
- data that relates to contribution to tourism

Michael Kowski, Director of Parks and Recreation, joined the subcommittee to present a potential request for MCDC partnership for an indoor tennis facility at Gabe Nesbitt Park. The facility is proposed as a 50,000 square foot, 2-story facility with a large welcome lobby, six indoor courts which could be converted to pickle ball courts for tournaments, offices, training rooms, upstairs viewing, temporary and/or rollaway bleachers and restrooms. The back portion (courts) of the facility would likely be constructed with fabric with an external façade, but they are also investigating a metal construct. Oversight for the project would be the responsibility of the current operator of The Courts - Life Time Tennis, Matt Hanlin's company. Once opened, Life Time Tennis would oversee all operations including human resources.

The indoor complex is planned as a public/private partnership. Construction cost is estimated at \$9 million, of which about \$3.7 is already secured -- \$701,000 from a Texas Parks and Wildlife grant, \$1 million from Life Time Tennis, and \$2 million from developer fees from Parkland Dedication. Mr. Kowski is initiating a conversation with MCDC to discuss the possibility of MCDC support to help close the gap of about \$5.3 million. Timeframe for the project is 3-4 months for design and six months to build.

Mr. Kowski indicated that with 23 outdoor courts and six indoor courts, The Courts could quadruple its business and the city would be in a position to bid on about 99% of all tennis tournaments throughout the country, so full-time utilization of the facility is not an issue. Additionally, pickle ball is a growing sport with large tournaments, and The Courts just signed a contract to host a tournament with 700 players that offers a top prize of \$100,000. The new facility would provide the ability to host 30 events a year including 18 national tournaments, some of which are week-long that would be tax dollars to McKinney through hotels, shopping and dining. They estimate that the tournaments would bring in 9500 attendees and yield an economic impact of more than \$2 million per event. He added that Visit McKinney is working to have McKinney declared as the "Tennis Capital of North Texas."

Mr. Kowski provided renderings and floorplans of the proposed facility as well as photos of fabric facilities already built.

Subcommittee members asked that a future presentation address various funding scenarios, data on tourism benefits and overall economic impact.

The subcommittee meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:20 p.m.

Mary Barnes-Tilley, Secretary