

MINUTES
MCKINNEY ARTS COMMISSION QUARTERLY MEETING
April 15, 2010

The McKinney Arts Commission met in regular session on Thursday, April 15, 2010, at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 222 N. Tennessee.

Commissioners present: Thom Chesney, Carol Witt, Anne Royer, Terry Prescott, Linda Spina, Barbara Johnson, and Nichole Belford. Commissioner Royer had to leave the meeting at 9:25 a.m.; Commissioner Witt left the meeting at 10:45 a.m.; and Commissioner Prescott left the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Staff present: City Liaison Aretha Harvey and Secretary Mona Robinson were present. City Council Liaison Ray Ricchi was unable to attend as he had another meeting he had to attend, and at his request, Secretary Robinson extended his apologies for missing this meeting. Communications and Media Manager, Anna Folmsbee; Website Coordinator, Susan Mardele; and McKinney Performing Arts Center Director, David Taylor, were also present.

Chair Chesney called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. after determining a quorum present.

Commissioners unanimously approved the motion by Commissioner Prescott, 10-20
seconded by Commissioner Belford, to approve the Minutes of the Special Meetings held on February 18 and March 18, 2010.

Chair Chesney opened the discussion on the Arts Commission Guidelines, 10-21
Application, and Timeline for FY 2010-2011, and the Commissioners discussed the language which was added to the Timeline which emphasized the presentations in late August are formal presentations with no performances allowed. Commissioner Johnson stated she hoped applicants will carry their creativity over into their Application. Commissioner Witt asked for additional clarification pertaining to a deadline for grant recipients to submit their Final Report for payment of their final 20% of their grant funds. City Liaison Harvey stated the groups must submit their request by the end of the fiscal year. Chair Chesney explained that to include that date on the Timeline would be confusing. Secretary Robinson stated that grant recipients should notify her in a timely manner if their Final Report will be submitted in mid to late September 2010.

Chair Chesney discussed his suggested modifications to the Guidelines which included clarification of the type of art the City of McKinney is promoting as well as emphasis being added to specific areas of Guidelines. City Liaison Harvey stated the grant writing workshops will reinforce the fact that application presentations will not include any type of performance.

Commissioner Spina asked for an explanation of the differences in funding a “season” or a “special event”, and Chair Chesney explained there is no preference given to either “season” or “special event” grant applications. Chair Chesney stated that allowing organizations to submit a “special” event” application is one way of encouraging the growth of the arts in McKinney, especially by organizations residing in surrounding cities. Commissioner Spina stated that the “Artistic Merit” portion of the Application is very subjective while the other portions are very objective, and Chair Chesney agreed with her and further explained that the second part of the grant presentations will bring out the diverse set of philosophies of what is artistic and what is not.

Commissioner Johnson asked about the statement in the Guidelines which discusses non-profit organizations with primary arts related mission. Chair Chesney explained that with the funding limitations of the Arts Commissions, past applicants have had the singular mission focused on the arts. As other groups have come in with service orientation, the Arts Commission has encouraged them to look at their broader mission and see where that fits within the City. Chair Chesney stated groups may partner with other art groups as the lead organization in making a presentation to the Arts Commission. The lead on any grant proposal needs to be primarily art focused.

Commissioner Johnson also asked about the “administrative, technical support” statement in the Guidelines, and Chair Chesney explained that type of support is specifically within the subject project. Commissioner Witt voiced her approval of the modifications of the Guidelines, specifically the portion that addresses assistance to artists in development of their skills.

Chair Chesney noted that the only modifications to the Grant Application were changing fiscal year to 2010-2011, and he stated that the Application makes it very clear the grants are for events occurring only during the City of McKinney’s 2010-11

fiscal year. Staff's preliminary review of grant applications is very helpful in determining the time frame of the grant performances and adherence to the fiscal year time frame.

Commissioner Spina stated she felt the part of the Application which discusses McKinney Performing Arts Center events is more of a survey question, and Chair Chesney explained that is basically asked for information gathering purposes. City Liaison Harvey stated that information can be incorporated with David Taylor's quarterly update at Arts Commission meetings. It was recommended that portion of the Application be stricken from the Application.

Commissioner Spina asked about the "in kind services" portion of the Application, and Chair Chesney explained that the Commissioners will review the Applications before the presentations. If a Commissioner has any questions following that review, they should make a note to ask more questions about their concern with that portion of the Application.

Commissioner Spina asked if there was anything that addresses funds not spent being returned to the City. Chair Chesney explained that possibility is addressed in the documentation, and the grant recipients are required to live by the financial accounting audits of the rules of the City. He also explained there have been occasions when the Arts Commission did not recommend funding of a recipient's final 20% portion following a review of their Final Report.

Commissioners unanimously approved the motion by Commissioner Spina, second by Commissioner Belford to accept the Timeline, Guidelines and Application with the edits as discussed.

Chair Chesney opened the discussion on approval of the Final Report submitted by Children's Chorus of Collin County, and he provided a recap of the Final Report as their liaison had resigned from the Arts Commission. City Liaison Harvey pointed out that their final expenses were under budget; therefore, their final 20% grant amount should be reduced to reflect the reduction of expenses so their final grant total would not be more than fifty per cent of their expenses. Commissioners unanimously approved the motion by Commissioner Belford, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to accept Children's Chorus of Collin County's Final Report with their final twenty per cent grant amount to be reduced so their total grant amount will not exceed fifty per cent of their total expenses. 10-22

Chair Chesney opened discussion items with an update of McKinney Performing Arts Center redirection. McKinney Performing Arts Commission Director, David Taylor, was invited to come forward to discuss the status of MPAC's redirection, and Chair Chesney passed out updated copies of the Summary Report for McKinney Performing Arts Center User/Patron Survey prepared by Chair Thom Chesney, Commissioners Royer and Prescott. Chair Chesney explained the updated version is to provide more information, more content, and more insight to the City Council for their decision making on the options provided to the Council. Director Taylor discussed what had been happening since the Town Hall Meetings held in February and March. MPAC's website had received over 85 public online responses regarding how MPAC could be improved, what some of the public concerns were, and general overall operating practices. MPAC also received over 227 online survey responses regarding programming. MPAC's Ricky Skaggs concert sold out; over forty-seven percent of attendees at that concert were from outside McKinney; about fifty percent of the attendees were first timers; and the attendees completed information about their activities on the square. All of that information will be provided to the Council to show the economic impact MPAC has on the square. MPAC sent out another survey on economic impact on downtown retailers on April 14, 2010. MPAC had submitted this same survey in 2008 to 125 downtown business owners with 25 responses being returned to MPAC, and 2008 results showed ten percent of retailers saw an increase in revenue and activity, had extended their hours, had moderated their schedules based on whatever MPAC activity was occurring. Not all of the 125 business owners being surveyed in 2010 are retail based but some are service providers. The current survey asks if businesses were retail or restaurant so it can be clearly defined who is getting the most impact of MPAC activity, and the survey addresses only the businesses in the historical district.

MPAC has been testing new programs this year with relative success, and one new program will work with downtown restaurants to offer restaurant, hotel, and "Food Fight" ticket packages through MPAC's ticketing office. Director Taylor is trying to educate the City Council that MPAC does not set ticket prices, does not do programming nor controls the quality of programming of arts groups; MPAC will advise as MPAC's mission is to provide support where they can. Next year for MPAC's fifth anniversary they are working on a big program with Heard Craig, Hall Library, and

10-23 &
10-27

Chestnut Square, and this will be an opportunity for MPAC to start a rebranding process. MPAC is trying to expand how they offer support and remind art groups of other local marketing tools available. Director Taylor is also trying to clarify questions regarding industry standards, and this redirection emphasis has been a good opportunity to educate and explain why MPAC has limitations. The MPAC website has a fact sheet which answers some of the questions arising from the Council's redirection process, and MPAC staff is rethinking how MPAC can change and adapt to various situations and scenarios.

Current MPAC office suites are not working, and another new survey is being launched to arts instructors, educators, and arts groups regarding virtual office spacing, and Director Taylor has customized a program based on virtual office space for review. MPAC is also increasing its arts education based on the Parks, Recreation and Open Space formula. As of April 14, 2010, MPAC has seventy-five pre-registrations for educational classes at MPAC.

Commissioner Witt addressed rumors regarding the future of MPAC, and Director Taylor stated MPAC is working on education of citizens in addressing the various rumors. He discussed ticketing advancements being explored by MPAC's ticketing office, and he also stated that MPAC must have, and currently does have, a certain level of expertise in his staff to show improvement. Director Taylor stated that one of the largest MPAC expenses has been salaries and benefits, but MPAC must be staffed based on a seven day week.

Chair Chesney restated that the MPAC redirection process has been an educational process for everyone to learn what MPAC is and what it is not. Director Taylor stated that people do not donate nor become sponsors to any arts facility that does not produce or present something, and he wanted to emphasize the national arts MPAC is bringing in MPAC are selling out. MPAC would lose sponsors should it become strictly a rental house. Commissioner Spina expressed her gratitude to Director Taylor for the tour, time and information he had recently provided to her.

Following Commissioner Spina's comment that the Ricky Skaggs concert was phenomenal, Director Taylor stated it was an amazing event with people flying in from Canada for the concert. He has had people fly in from Connecticut, Chicago, Florida and Colorado to attend other MPAC presented concerts.

Chair Chesney encouraged all present to personally contact each Council member as a follow-up of the updated Arts Commission report, and he requested a copy of said report be placed in the City Council's mailboxes today. Director Taylor stated MPAC should not be compared to other specific arts facilities as such comparison is not valid. Commissioner Spina asked to what should MPAC be compared, and Director Taylor said a comparison would have to be piecemealed. No other area theatre has the historical designation which MPAC must work under. MPAC is very different from other art facilities, and MPAC is the only theatre designated as a Texas Historical Archeological Landmark.

Chair Chesney opened the discussion on the Arts Commission marketing brown bag workshop, and Vice Chair Belford set out topics and presenters for this workshop. Vice Chair Belford and Commissioners Royer and Spina will work on organizing the brown bag to be held on May 25, 2010 from noon to 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Commissioner Witt suggested that an Arts Commissioner be the moderator to introduce five groups for a marketing discussion.

10-25

Arts Commission Secretary Robinson stated the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Boards and Commission Reception is June 21, 2010 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at MPAC, and she displayed the foam core board which the Arts Commission has used at the Reception in the past. Commissioner Spina asked if running video could be utilized at the Reception, and Commissioner Witt stated she did not know how long people would stay at the Arts Commission table. Chair Chesney stated this was the Arts Commission opportunity to educate interested parties on what the Arts Commission does. City Liaison Harvey stated that a Power Point presentation could be put together which would continually loop as she had spoken to David Taylor about this. Chair Chesney encouraged all Commissioners to attend the Reception to meet and educate attendees about the Arts Commission.

Commissioner Chesney listed the art group recipients which did not have an Arts Commission liaison, and he discussed the role of the Arts Commission liaison. Commissioner Johnson was assigned to McKinney Musical Arts Society, Junior Players and Word of Mouth Productions; Commissioner Spina was assigned to Children's Chorus of Collin County and McKinney Community Concerts. Chair Chesney briefly explained the liaison responsibilities and answered Commissioner Johnson's and

10-24

Spina's questions. City Liaison Harvey stated that Commissioners Prescott, Witt and Royer had left messages that everything was fine with their liaison groups. Vice Chair Belford stated that she had received some concern from her groups regarding the downtown economy.

City Liaison Harvey introduced City of McKinney Media Manager, Anna Folmsbee, who gave an update of the developing McKinney Arts Commission website. Ms. Folmsbee introduced Susan Mardele, the website coordinator, and stated Secretary Robinson is the Arts Commissioner website administrator. Ms. Folmsbee stated the Communications & Marketing Department will offer administrative support of the Arts Commission website. Chair Chesney suggested that the website must immediately address the upcoming arts grant cycle, and a brief discussion followed addressing the contents of the Arts Commission website. 10-26

Chair Chesney opened a discussion on the status of the Arts Hotline, and City Liaison Harvey asked if the Commissioners felt the Hotline was a relevant source of information or should it be eliminated. City Liaison Harvey stated any hotline information on Arts Commission documentation will be removed, and should any feedback be received about the lack of an arts hotline, the matter will be revisited.

Commissioners unanimously approved the motion by Vice Chair Belford, second by Commissioner Spina to adjourn the meeting (4-0).

Chair Chesney adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Thom Chesney
Chair

Mona Robinson
Secretary