

**TWIN CITIES CULTURAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes from January 31, 2006**  
**Meeting held at McArthur Library, Biddeford**

**Attendees:**

Lynn Bivens

Diane Bowie Zaitlin

John Bubier

Ann-Marie Mariner

Diane Noble

Dave O'Connor

David Versel

Meeting opened at 4:00

**Recap of Milling About**

- Lots of kids—very encouraging
- Surveys—got people thinking. Five years in future got people confused a bit, hard to answer
- Good feedback—people are already asking about “when will this happen again?”
- John B is intrigued by where large groups of retired millworkers are—could be large market
  - What aren't we learning?
- Active audience, not just passive event
- Food/music/event model works. Could do at many other venues and variations could be:
  - Theater event, maybe children's theater
  - “Poet Pourri” food, music, poetry
  - History event—living history, oral history collections
- Could make weekend long event. Portland did “Rhythms around the world”—Hebrew, Armenian, Greek, German, Franco. Drew 2,500 people for weekend
- Parking challenge needs to be overcome
- David: Grant extension is possible from Maine Arts Commission—we have a concept plan and now need to implement it
- Building an organization
  - Could fall under banner of downtown organizations, needs to go to boards
  - Ann-Marie—would be beneficial to have both downtown groups come together for this
  - Event was a joint effort—wasn't clear to public that this was Saco and Biddeford coming together, that needs to be emphasized
  - Lynn: early stages of cultural group agreed that a leader is needed—self-motivator could step in to acquire further grant funding
  - Revenue generation—not mutually exclusive from grants
  - Could maybe share position between HOB and Saco Spirit to oversee arts events
  - Ask cities to match money now to get ball rolling
    - It's a strategically correct time to ask for it
    - Will cities match state funding for it?
  - Make sure that different groups aren't fighting for the same funds
    - Distributes funds to many groups
    - Mission needs to be clear—what are funds being used for?
- Mill district—John thinks—why have La Kermesse at St. Louis Field? Could do it in mill area on both sides of river and would work even better
  - Reaches blue collar crowd too
  - Saco's only involvement with it is Thursday night

- What's next?
  - Keep it in January—people will associate it with time of year
  - Mardi Gras North—could involve Saco, needs to happen. Ann-Marie and Rachael need to talk
  - Money raised should become part of creating organizational structure—this organization can be “child” of Saco Spirit and HOB and can use funding to move in that direction
  - Steven Sobol is talking about “Rock off” with 100 bands at Riverdam. Organization from Florida would run it
  - Thornton does one-act festival
  - History of community—set up interview/living history space for it
    - UNE multimedia department wants to get involved with it
    - History professor at UNE (Lynn met him) wants to do local history research
    - Pepperell has “Supervisors Club” meeting at Mulligan’s each month. Has many retired people. Ron at mill outlet store organizes it.
  - Have art done live—set up easel and do live—some artists would like to do it
    - Live demonstrations—jewelry, leather, pottery, woodcarving, painting, glassblowing
    - Could do brief art lessons as means of marketing work
  - Sidewalk Arts Fest raised \$5,000 per year
    - Saco Spirit does 10-11 events per year, only a few make money
- Need to build event into fabric of the community, covering costs is goal, not earning money

### **Mission Statement and Goals**

- Mission statement was presented again: “Highlighting, enhancing and sustaining the region’s creative economy by promoting collaboration among the diverse communities of Biddeford and Saco.”
- David presented five goals based on discussion at January 10 meeting. Draft Goals are as follows:
  1. Artists and businesses interact and support each other.
  2. The larger community actively supports local arts and culture.
  3. The community understands and appreciates the history and contributions of local ethnic and cultural groups.
  4. Children learn to celebrate arts and culture from young ages.
  5. Local leaders continually work to sustain the arts and culture communities.
- Committee thought that mission and goals were very good, but whole committee needs to weigh in.

### **Completing the Plan**

- Next meeting 2/14 3:30 PM, Dyer Library? Need to ask committee for input.
- Will need three more meetings to complete plan
  1. Mid-February: Discuss goals and implementation plan
  2. Early March: Discuss organization and funding strategies
  3. Mid-March: Review draft plan and offer final comments
- Aim to get on both council’s agendas in April, ask in next few weeks
  - Make specific funding requests through city managers at that point.
- Outreach


- Targeting individual councilors to prep them for the presentation. They often don't read things in advance
- Meet with mayors/managers in early March to go over proposals

**Other Notes**

- UNE arts person—Greg Murphy—has he been involved? Needs to be part of this discussion
  - Looking to set up non-traditional arts program—opportunity to create horizontal view of arts that doesn't separate different arts disciplines
- Figure out 2-3 events for next one
- Invite new players into future events: Greg Murphy (UNE arts person), Nina Vansuch (new resident, experienced arts fundraiser/programmer, Nat from Space Gallery (inquired about being involved), etc.
- UMO has state of the art multimedia lab—could they do event here to showcase it?

Meeting closed at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



David E. Versel