

TWIN CITIES CULTURAL PLANNING COMMITTEE
Minutes from February 28, 2006
Meeting held at Dyer Library, Saco

Attendees:

Lynn Bivens	Cathy Breyley	Priscille Gagnon
Judith Kinsman	Ann-Marie Mariner	Peter Morelli
Diane Noble	Dave O'Connor	Don Sharland
Nora Tryon	David Versel	

Meeting opened at 3:00. David acknowledged letter from Sue Murphy congratulating the committee on Milling About.

David informed the committee that Andrea Strassner would not be attending today as she is sick.

Final Comments on Goals and Actions

- No comments—all were satisfied.

Organizational Plan

David presented a draft of the organizational and funding plans developed in meeting with Andrea and Don and asked for reactions from the group.

- Peter—two ideas
 - Steering Committee instead of Executive Committee?
 - Don—“steering” is less official—sounds better
 - Is five enough people on Exec Committee? Could be seven.
- Transition will take time, good to see that
 - Is it time to bring OOB into the process?
 - Is MaineArts open to that in next phase?
 - Festival of Trees—OOB people wanted to be involved in it. Need to draw them into the process
 - OOB Town government is heading in the right direction
 - Should we not say “Twin Cities”—might preclude involving them
- Is anyone missing from council?
 - Augusta connection—could have legislator on the committee?
- Mention Historical Societies—could have a seat at the table

Funding Plan

- Passport Memberships—does this work?
 - Cathy: sees role of this group as helping other organizations—shouldn't it help reduce the budget of individual organizations?
 - Organizations themselves need to be members—they pay into it in order to get promotional services from the Council
 - Make it like a “trade association” of arts providers
 - Conceptually—need to build cooperation, don't compete for the audience.
- Scheduling—making sure that different groups aren't having conflicts

- How do organizations get motivated about losing identity/money to larger groups
 - Branding and marketing need to clarify what we're selling to the community—all the boats are going to rise, but what are intangibles?
 - Ultimate result—our economy grows
- Augusta has strong interest in our area as a cultural community
- Coop gallery idea—very much of interest
- City government
 - Matters a lot how things are packaged—economic development work, dedicated revenues work best. Source could be TIF. Can Saco Island/Main Street TIF accommodate it.
- Collaboration, partnership—use words that make people feel like they're partners in the process.
- Library/Museum is considering doing away with membership entirely and going about fundraising in different ways—it creates massive headaches.
 - If orgs/people become members, Council gives list of “here's what we do for you now.” Council would become the attraction and would offer unique services that no one else can offer. Sponsorship comes from those who will benefit from the Council—they need to see the benefit
 - HOB and Saco Spirit have to go after sponsorships, is part of their mandated missions.
- We have determined that there's a need for a coordinating council, but what is it doing?
- Can call paragraph “other funding sources,” not “memberships and sponsorships.” Leave it alone.
- Budget—pros and cons of showing ambitious budget.
 - Could reduce it, but may lower expectations.
 - Is some of this detail premature? Need to do planning for some of this.
 - Turn into ranges, don't have hard and fast numbers.
 - Reference benchmarking—what do Portland, Brunswick, Bangor spend per year. What do other smaller ones do? Get from Maine Arts Commission

Selling The Plan

- Chamber—not all are going to be willing to help.
- City leaders, boards—need to be out there speaking regularly to as many people as possible.
- Stay visible, talk to every board. Is also responsibility of each board member
- Events—keep them in the forefront. Make people take notice.
- Need to get press about the Cultural Plan—get articles written, get word out in schools
- Give plan out to as many people as you can—do 5-page, glossy Executive Summary.
- Public Access TV—do shows on each channel. Could do 15-minute show each week done by artists/arts organizations.

Dates for Completing the Plan

- Meet week of Tuesday March 21, 3PM.

Other Notes

- Need for assistance with Sidewalk Arts Festival—Ann-Marie

- Just now taking it over and will need many volunteers to do it. Want festival committee to have artists on it—people who know the event from the inside out. Meeting Thursday at 4PM at 12½ Pepperell Square, 3rd floor
- Will be same weekend as La Kermesse—people know about it, don't want to mess with it.
- Biddeford shouldn't do outdoor art festival—will compete. Doing an indoor event in Biddeford will complement it.
- Have about \$8,500 in coffers of Discovery Research and Milling About
- Don't wait for next Milling About—do it while buzz is still out there.

Meeting closed at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David E. Versel".

David E. Versel