

**City of Bangor, Commission on Cultural Development**  
**Minutes**  
**October 16, 2014**  
**8:30 AM**  
**City Council Chambers**

**Commissioners Present:** George Kinghorn (Chair), Judy Boothby (Vice Chair) Jamie Ballinger, Mary Budd, Emily Burnham, Uli Guthrie, Kierie Piccininni, Josh Plourde, Elissa Young, and Caitlin Brooke (staff)

**Commissioners Absent:** Kat Johnson

**Guests:** Brian Hindrichs (Bangor Symphony Orchestra), Sean Gambrel (WERU), Gibran Graham (City Councilor)

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

**2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Mary Budd noted that the Penobscot Theatre Company's Director of Education's name is spelled "Roeder," not "Reder" as stated in September's meeting minutes. A motion was made by Jamie and seconded by Judy to approve the previous meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

**3. Update on Arts and Cultural Policy**

George attended the Bangor Arts meeting in early October to provide an overview of the Council-approved Arts and Cultural Policy. It gave Bangor's cultural organizations the opportunity to review the document and ask any questions. The next step is meeting with Maine Arts Commission to present the policy.

**4. Bangor Symphony Orchestra Final Report**

Brian Hindrichs from the Bangor Symphony Orchestra presented the final report to the Commission on the funds granted to the organization in 2013 for their "On the Town" program.

Brian said that "On the Town" had two goals: 1.) Enforcing a commitment to doing more in Bangor and, in particular, downtown Bangor. This allows them to reach out to existing audiences and expose new ones to the BSO. 2.) Contributing to the Commission and the City's goal of building Bangor as a cultural center. Music, and especially free music, can play a huge role in that.

Events that they participated in were:

- Kid Central Fest (May 5) at the Maine Discovery Museum where a petting zoo was accompanied by chamber music.
- On two occasions at the downtown Artwalk the BSO supported musical acts—in June with dueling cellists and in September with the Amarantos Quartet.
- Penobscot Theatre's season opener "Scenes and Songs" on August 21.
- An Open House at Spectacular Events Center
- Pink Runway Project (October 18) at the Cross Insurance Center was a benefit for breast cancer awareness.

The early driver for this program was a partnership with Acadia Hospital. Their initial funding supported the formulation of a quartet and inspired the BSO to work on putting more chamber quartets together that can go out into the community.

Elissa asked if donations were received. Brian said that they did not take any donations at the events. Envelopes were left out, but he was pretty confident that nothing was collected.

A Commissioner asked if there were other ideas for where the BSO may have more pop-up performances. Brian said the airport is a possible location and they would work with the troop greeters. The Youth Orchestra does a music-a-thon at the Bangor Mall—another high traffic area where you can have an element of surprise and connect with new people.

Brian also noted that the individual musicians are getting something out of this program. They are receiving more inquiries which may sound small, but is a crucial element in keeping talent in Bangor.

Brian gave permission to use the BSO's final report as an example for upcoming professional development workshops hosted by the Commission.

## **5. WERU**

Sean Gambrel, a volunteer board member at WERU (community radio station), solicited the Commission's assistance in finding a person who may be interested in hosting a one-hour show about Bangor and the surrounding communities. They are looking for a host for a discussion show that would happen once a month. Send him any the names of any persons you think may be interested.

## **6. Review Grants**

A topic for discussion at the next Commission meeting is whether or not grant applicants should be present when their grant is being discussed. The budget for this year's grants is a little over \$12,600—this includes carry over from 2013 as well as this year's allocation of \$10,000.

- **Bangor Ballet**

Emily mentioned that she loved the outreach to Downeast School in the Bangor Ballet's project summary. The school creates access to the arts for underserved communities and is not typically exposed to these sorts of performances.

Question arose about the budget breakdown. Per the grant application, the total performance budget is \$5,577. The Bangor Ballet expects \$3,650 of this to come from revenue of ticket sales and the remaining \$1927 is the amount requested from the Commission. These funds will support outreach and performance at the Gracie Theatre and Downeast School. It was mentioned that the Bangor Ballet has, historically, had a good handle on what their expenses will be.

Judy reiterated Emily's comment about the Bangor Ballet providing the performance to an underserved area. Mary noted that the full ticket prices were very affordable at \$15/\$8.

Commissioners agreed that Judy should abstain from the vote being a Bangor Ballet board member. A motion was made by Jamie and seconded by Emily to fund the Bangor Ballet for the full amount requested of \$1,927. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- **Downtown Countdown**

George summarized the grant application. A commissioner asked if there were any plans to wean Downtown Countdown off of City of Bangor Funding. Caitlin (Downtown Bangor Partnership staff liaison) noted that since Downtown Countdown has been a production of the DBP, it has been supported by the City via the Commission on Cultural Development without hesitation. A Commissioner asked what the arts and cultural events planned for

Downtown Countdown were? And shouldn't these endeavors be supported by the City directly? Caitlin said that musical performances, the Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bunyan contest, and perhaps a few other acts were being planned for the evening. The event scope is dependent on the funding via sponsors.

Questions continued in the vein of: Why the delay in sponsorships? Where do the funds go directly? Are the Commission funds a deal breaker? What is the Commission's definition of culture? Could the Commission fund with restrictions on funding only arts-related portions of the event?

Kierie said she isn't ready to fund the event. Jamie said she feels comfortable funding the event with the caveat that the DBP should not look for the Commission to fund another \$2,000 in the coming years. A motion was made by George and seconded by Jamie to fund the Downtown Countdown for the full \$2,000. The motion passed by a 6 to 2 vote.

## **7. Committee Structure and Chairs**

The Commissioners decided that the structure of committees should be point people instead of chairs. The sections and point people are:

- Education – Uli and Kierie
- Marketing – Elissa and Emily
- Cultural Vibrancy – All
- Funding – None
- Advocacy – George's recommendation is that the point person for this committee be the new Commission Chair. Jamie said she would also assist.

The group decided to continue this discussion at the November meeting along with discussion of a new Commission Chair.

## **8. Other Business**

Caitlin noted that The Kindling Fund will be hosting an information session at the UMaine Art Museum 10/16 at 6 p.m. The Fund will award grants to Maine artists.

Emily reported that The Bangor Book Festival begins 10/16 at the Bangor Public Library. His Majesty Cabaret performs at Tantrum on 10/30 and 10/31. Paraween, a local dance troupe, will perform at Tantrum on 10/25.

Mary mentioned that the Penobscot Theatre Company's 2<sup>nd</sup> show of the season, "The Mystery of Irma Vep," would be opening on 10/17. There is a master class on 10/18 for \$25 which lasts 2.5 hours. At the end of the month the Dramatic Academy presents "Frankenstein."

George summarized the five new exhibitions opening at the UMaine Art Museum this fall.

Councilor Graham told everyone that part of the Bangor Book Festival, the Danby book launch, kicks off the Festival on 10/16 at 6 p.m. Visit the website for more information.

Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

To watch a full version of the Commission on Cultural Development's October 16 meeting, please visit: <http://bangormaine.pegcentral.com/player.php?video=4d36156458f83b43b16fb6eadcdb339d>