

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
PARKS, ARTS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
March 10, 2010

Minutes Present: Dave Schulze, Chairperson; Kevin Thompson, Peter Moe, Gregg Thompson, Rachel Berkowitz, Gordie Holm

Absent: Dan Wallerus, Vice-Chairperson

Staff: Randy Quale, Manager, Parks and Recreation Division; Jim Urie, Center for the Arts Manager; Marilyn Cooper, Recording Secretary

Visitors: Carolyn Pratt, Executive Director of the Fine Arts Council

Call to Order Dave Schulze called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Dakota Conference Room.

Bloomington Fine Arts Council
2009 Annual Report -
Carolyn Pratt, BFAC Executive
Director Carolyn Pratt, Executive Director of the Bloomington Fine Arts Council (BFAC), presented the 2009 Annual Report to the Commission. She gave each of the Commission members a copy of the January-June 2009 Footnotes magazine, as well as the Footnotes from July-December 2009 and the one from January-June 2010. She reported on highlights from the past year of each of the BFAC member groups.

The NOTE-able Singers celebrated their 35th anniversary in 2009 with a June concert in the Schneider Theater. The Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs partnered with the professional male ensemble CANTUS for a concert at a church in downtown Minneapolis.

The Medalist Concert Band celebrated its 40th anniversary with a concert in March of 2009. The band was founded by a group of Bloomington music teachers, parents and students who wanted to provide a place for musicians to perform after high school and college. To stress its roots in music education the band has concerts at various high schools throughout the year, where the band performs with middle school and high school students in joint concerts. The band also participates in outdoor concerts during the summer. The Medalist Band performed at the Minnesota Music Educators Association (MMEA) Mid-Winter Clinic.

The Bloomington Symphony Orchestra had a concert in April featuring the winner of the MNSOTA concerto competition.

The 15th Taste of Chocolate event, an annual fundraiser for the arts groups, will take place on Sunday, March 14. The event is being presented in partnership with the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and will feature samples of 15 different chocolatiers.

The Continental Ballet Company has a soloist trained in Japan and the Joffrey Ballet, as well as five new dancers in the Ballet Corps.

Carolyn Pratt reports that Center for the Arts Manager Jim Urie puts together an annual performance series featuring both the Fine Arts Council groups and other outside groups. Jazz, bluegrass, and folk music are some of the varieties of music which may be performed by the outside groups. There are sponsorships for many of the events in which the groups perform.

Carolyn Pratt reviewed the 2009 BFAC Comprehensive Activity Report and the 2009 Comprehensive Financial Report with the Commission. Regarding the Activity Report, the arts groups submit reports four times each year. The annual report includes the number of performances for each group, number of participants, ticket price, revenue, number of educational performances, number of educational classes, number of paid artists, number of volunteers, number of volunteer hours, and audience size. Carolyn Pratt noted that the Continental Ballet sold out nearly half of their concerts during 2009. For next year a column on free or reduced fee concerts will be added to the Activity Report.

Carolyn Pratt commented that a great deal of education takes place in this building. She stressed that the arts groups like to train and educate. The great importance of volunteers was noted. Carolyn Pratt remarked that the Activity Report is an excellent source of information to use when applying for grants.

The Comprehensive Financial Report shows a column for BFAC only and another one for BFAC re-granting, which refers to money that passes through BFAC to the member groups. Items included in the BFAC re-granting column include funding received in the City allocation, Taste of Chocolate revenues, and BFAC Corporation/Foundation contributions received from corporations and from people on the Grand Givers list.

At the beginning of 2010 the Bloomington Art Center and the Bloomington Civic Theater announced that they had separated from the Bloomington Fine Arts Council (BFAC) to form the Bloomington Theater and Art Center (BTAC). In previous years

the Bloomington Art Center had a calendar year budget while the Bloomington Civic Theater's budget year was from July 1 to June 30. Both will now be going to a calendar year budget.

Carolyn Pratt was asked how the Activity Report for 2009 compared to 2008 and 2007 for the different arts groups. Carolyn Pratt stated that some groups' numbers have remained the same while others have increased.

Invasive Species Removal Event
Planning

Randy Quale informed the Commission about an event scheduled to take place at Pond-Dakota Mission Park on Saturday, May 15. The Great River Greening will be hosting a volunteer cleanup day as part of the native prairie restoration project. Approximately 200 volunteers are expected for the work event, which will involve picking up branches. As more information becomes available, it will be provided to the Commission.

The buckthorn bust has been an annual event in October since 2004 and will be at Parker's Picnic Grounds this year. The work is alternated each year between Parker's Picnic Grounds and Pond-Dakota Mission Park.

City Trees Sale

The City trees sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 1. Randy Quale commended Park Maintenance for the work they perform at the sale. He stated that they are very organized and provide excellent information on planting trees. Commission members are encouraged to volunteer the day of the sale to help people get the trees into their vehicles to take home.

Park System Asset Management
Update

Randy Quale reported that preliminary work on the park system asset management is continuing. The work is being done in-house due to the cost of having an outside company perform the work, which would cost an estimated \$75,000 to \$100,000. A condition rating scale is being set up for each of 48 assets. This rating scale will help in the establishment of a replacement system for Parks and Recreation assets. The actual asset inventory work will probably take place this fall.

MRPA Annual Conference
April 14-15

Randy Quale reported that funding is in place to send two Commission members to the MRPA Annual Conference April 14-15 at the Mystic Lake Conference Center. Since the conference is in the Twin Cities, it is anticipated that all Parks and Recreation staff members will be able to attend. Those Commission members wanting to attend should contact the Parks and Recreation office by Friday, March 19. It was pointed out that the conference provides an opportunity for attendees to remain guided and on the right path.

Regional Park Reserve Master
Plan Final Draft Update

Randy Quale reported that earlier today he had received comments back from the Metropolitan Council on the Regional Park Reserve Master Plan draft document. Randy Quale feels that a final draft can be produced in the next week or two and then will go to the City Council, Three Rivers Park District, and the Metropolitan Council for final approval.

Bloomington Fine Arts Council/
Bloomington Theater and Art
Center Update

As a result of Bloomington Theater and Art Center (BTAC) forming a group separate from the Bloomington Fine Arts Council (BFAC), one of the issues to be considered is the way to determine the method of dividing up the funding which the City Council has given to BFAC in the past. The City Council will deal with this item at their April 26 study meeting. Center for the Arts Manager Jim Urie will meet with representatives of the two groups in the next couple of weeks.

Park Improvement Project
Planning for 2010

Randy Quale pointed out that the Community Investment Program document which was sent to the Commission with the agenda packet contains all the projects that have previously been proposed. A miscellaneous Park Improvement and Equipment item has been created which includes project costs and equipment that individually fall below the \$50,000 threshold for inclusion in the City CIP.

Randy Quale stated that the current balance in the Park Capital Fund is \$250,000. He said that by summer the hope is to have about \$300,000 in this fund. Randy Quale stated that there should be enough funding available to undertake the Priority 1 projects. Funding for 2010 Park Reserve trail renovations is derived from the Met Council Regional Parks CIP grant and State Legacy Fund grant. The City share of the cost for the School District artificial turf fields, a 2010 Priority 2 project, is proposed to be provided by Beaverbrook Mitigation Funds.

Gregg Thompson suggested that it would be good to partner with the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District in applying for funding for parking lot reconstruction to aid in stormwater runoff reduction.

Randy Quale stated that Parks and Recreation, as a sign of the economy, is experiencing the problem of not having enough money to do all the projects that would otherwise be done.

Park Improvement Projects Update

Randy Quale reported to the Commission that the work on Toro Stadium at Red Haddock Field is progressing. Both the structure and frame for the grandstand are up. It is hoped that the field will be available for play on April 2. There may be an opening

celebration in June during the Legion Baseball/Red Haddock Wood Bat Tournament.

Regarding the playground planned for Westwood, it is hoped to get bids out and have construction done in the summer in order to have the playground ready by fall when the students return to school.

The consultant on the tot slide project at Bloomington Family Aquatic Center is working on the slide design.

City Council Action Pertaining to Parks and Recreation

The Commission reviewed City Council action pertaining to Parks and Recreation from the regular meetings of February 22 and March 1.

Park and Recreation Manager's Report

The Summer Spectrum Super Sign Up will be held on Saturday, March 13 from 9 to 10 a.m. at the Bloomington Civic Plaza. The option to sign up for summer programs online is also available beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday. Online registration has been a very popular option for the program participants and has resulted in a decreased need for in-person registration. Since the implementation of online registration began in 2007, Parks and Recreation has seen a yearly decrease in the in-person registrations during Super Sign Up. In 2009 those people in line at 9 a.m. for Super Sign Up were processed and out the door in less than 21 minutes. Parks and Recreation still holds this event for those who need help with transportation, financial assistance, and with computer access as well as those who have in-person questions.

Randy Quale is continuing to participate on a planning team for the 86th Street Corridor Multi-Modal Transportation Study. Last week the planning team participated in a Health Impact Assessment for the corridor.

In the coming months the issue of electric-assisted bicycles is expected to come before the PARC, perhaps in April. The primary issue will be whether to permit e-bikes on City park trails and sidewalks. Regular bicycles are currently allowed on sidewalks and on bike trails. The Commission was given a recent article on e-bikes from the New York Times.

On April 16 the Bloomington Historical Society will be presenting the first annual spring gala: *An Evening with Bobby Jones and Friends*. This fund-raising event will be held at the Minnesota Valley Country Club and features history on stage with famous golfer Bobby Jones. The Commission members were each given a flyer on the event.

The Commission was given a copy of the Summer Spectrum 2010 and Summer Programs 2010 brochures as well as the new park map.

Green Infrastructure Workshop
Report

Rachel Berkowitz and Dave Schulze attended the workshop entitled “Redevelopment and Water Resources: Revitalizing Your Community with Green Infrastructure” at the Science Museum of Minnesota on February 27. Rachel Berkowitz represented both the Jefferson High School Go Green Committee, of which she is president, and the Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission. Rachel Berkowitz commented that the focus of the workshop was on the importance of recycling. Participants at the workshop were given booklets describing examples of things which people can do to live more environmentally responsible lives. In regard to pervious surface parking lots, which reduce runoff and protect streams among other benefits, too frequently used parking lots cannot have this kind of surface. Rain gardens are promoted as an excellent means of stormwater management.

Dave Schulze asked the question of who is concerned about ground water, and the answer was that the county is concerned with that issue. It has been found that chlorides are a large problem with the creeks. Dave Schulze commented that the representative for the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, who was the speaker at the workshop, would be happy to come to the City to talk with the Commission or with any other group in the City.

Rachel Berkowitz remarked that, as a result of attending the workshop, her family plans to get a rain barrel.

Randy Quale stated that some aquatic vegetation management will be done at Normandale Lake dealing with curly leaf pond weed starting fall 2010. Gordie Holm stated that these issues are part of an ecosystem problem.

2010 PARC Work Plan
Presentation

Commission members were each given a copy of the Power Point presentation which was given to the City Council on February 22. Randy Quale commended PARC Chairperson Dave Schulze for doing an outstanding job of presenting the report on the 2010 PARC Work Plan and the 2009 PARC Annual Report to the Council.

Gordie Holm commented that he had seen someone from the DNR Fisheries looking at Lower Penn Lake. That person found that

there was plenty of oxygen in Lower Penn Lake but not enough water in the lake for fish to survive.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Kevin Thompson, second by Peter Moe *to approve the minutes of February 10*. Motion carried 6-0.

The March 24 study meeting has been cancelled due to a lack of pressing business. The next Commission meeting will be on April 7 in the McLeod Conference Room.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Cooper
Recording Secretary