

## Minutes – Meeting #7

Wednesday, November 18, 2015

Burgoyne Woods Room, City Hall at 4:30 p.m.

**Members in Attendance:** Jeff Burch, John Crawley, Vickie Fagan, Councillor Carlos Garcia, Councillor David Haywood, Councillor Bill Phillips, Jennifer Wallace, Peter Wing

### Staff Liaison:

Rebecca Cann, Phil Cristi, Ashley Judd-Rifkin

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1. **Call meeting to order (C. Garcia)**  
4:30 p.m.
2. **Additions / Deletions to the Agenda**  
None
3. **Motion to Approve the Agenda for November 18, 2015**  
Moved by: J. Wallace                      Carried
4. **Motion to Approve the Minutes of November 17, 2015 - *deferred***
5. **Business Arising from the Minutes**

#### **5.1. Motion made by Councillor C. Garcia on November 11, 2015**

MOTION: Since this Committee has received and discussed extensive information on the history and potential needs of Arts/Culture Heritage funding, and further input will be received from two planned public consultation sessions (Meetings # 6 and 7),

Be it resolved that: Staff is directed to prepare a detailed recommendation on what changes may be required for review by the Committee at Meeting # 8.

Moved by: Coun. C. Garcia                      Carried

As a result, the Task Force's meeting on Thursday, November 26, 2015 has been cancelled and the Task Force will meet again at Meeting #8 on December 2, 2015.

Staff will provide a discussion paper with draft recommendations in advance of the meeting.

## **5.2. Motion to Approve the Minutes of November 11, 2015 - *deferred***

## **6. Business**

### **6.1. Community Consultation**

#### **6.1.1. Presentations and Q & A**

##### **6.1.1.1. Sandy Middleton, Individual Artist (Visual Arts)**

S. Middleton is a visual artist (photographer), an Arts and Culture Advisory Committee member and a SCCIP committee member. She noted the trickle-down effect of the arts sector is not just about paying the artists to create the work, but also the result of people who attend events and spend money on restaurants, parking, babysitter, etc.

B. Phillips arrived – 4:40

Arts sector is not seen in the same light as doctors/lawyers because the work isn't valued in the same way. BUT we'd have a very bleak existence if culture disappeared. It is important to make sure the City supports endeavours that help to enrich local culture and the legacy of "here" (St. Catharines). The Ontario Arts Council (OAC) is more likely to support individual artists when they have municipal support. She believes that there needs to be a local arts incubator – perhaps an arts council?

Q: Do you think it's important to keep putting efforts into those who are established?

A: It's important to nurture, foster young talent but also really important to support mature artists.

Q: If the City created an individual artists grant program, should it be project-specific? Or developmental in nature and focused on specific life-costs so you can work on developing an idea over a period of time?

A: If the City followed the model of the Canada Council (CC) and OAC, it would be best to offer more than one kind of grant – project and potentially sustaining for established artists.

##### **6.1.1.2. Joe Lapinski, Individual Artist (Music)**

J. Lapinski is a musician, producer and co-founder of In the Soil whose heart is in the city. As an individual musician, he has gone through several routes to find funding including the OAC, CC and FACTOR (Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent On Recordings) but noted that there are lots of fish in a very

small bowl so it's very competitive. It is especially hard for musicians outside of major urban centres like Toronto. It is expensive to create an album and musicians need money for recording, producing, package design, manufacturing and marketing.

Q: What does it take to become a professional musician and get your music out there?

A: Musicians can make some money playing gigs, but making albums costs money, especially since record labels don't pay bands anymore, bands pay labels. One of the only places to actually make money is in touring and playing shows.

Locally: what would be great is funding to spark young musicians who wouldn't know to apply for funding i.e. project-based grants – small amount for emerging artists to develop and write music. Mentorship opportunities are also important for emerging artists. For established artists, funds to cover costs like record production and spending time writing music would be helpful.

Manufacturing CD's doesn't cost that much (500 units for about \$600) but vinyl is more expensive (more like \$1,600 for 500 units). Getting the services of a professional producer to work with a musician on an album costs anywhere from \$2,000 - \$5,000, depending on who you work with.

Q: Would capital investment for facility development be useful/worthwhile?

A: Absolutely.

Q: What does the artist need money for?

A: Generally, producing the album more than creation – however, funding to subsidize creation is also important and could be very helpful.

Q: Do you know of any best practices in other municipalities?

A: Not specifically, but there are more music-based project grants through Kingston's Arts Council to, for example, produce records. The important thing is funding emerging artists.

R. Cann noted that larger municipalities often have music officers, recognizing the impact of the industry and working to cultivate local talent and business development. It would make sense for the Niagara Region to have this kind of staff support, as well as a film location officer, rather than the City of St. Catharines.

#### **6.1.1.3. Patricia Vanstone and Emily Oriold, Foster Festival (Theatre)**

P. Vanstone and E. Oriold focused on the question: how does the City support new organizations or festivals? Is it reasonable to not fund them in their first year?

Restriction on eligibility is that SCCIP needs 1 year of activity and financials.

They suggest that looking at a business plan – including partnerships, money raised, board members, community support and budget – instead of just financials could be an alternative for festivals that haven't held an event yet to apply for SCCIP funding.

Reality: it is very expensive to produce art. Sales cannot make up the difference – arts organizations need the support of the community. The Foster Festival decided to be in St. Catharines because of the opening of the Performing Arts Centre (PAC), the Culture Plan 2020 and the Downtown Revitalization Plan. BUT the City needs to invest in local artists to be able to create and perform on the stage.

Audiences have already begun to support the festival, now they need to know that it will be supported by City Council, and that partner not-for-profits are supported by City Council. Culture is the new steel – the spin-off and economic impact potential are huge.

Q: Should the Foster Festival be funded through F&E or SCCIP?

A: It should be funded as an arts organization since its primary purpose is to create theatrical art in the community for the community; to employ local artists. The outreach program speaks to that.

Q: Are you worried about affording the PAC?

A: Yes. The Foster Festival has applied for grants to pay rental fees, which are quite high, especially because the technicians are IATSE (part of the International Alliance of Technical Stage Employees union). This is very problematic for many arts/cultural organizations because IATSE fees are very high, which push the rental costs higher.

Q: What kind of access to public funding does the Foster Festival have as a new festival?

A: There is potential for project funding through CC, OAC and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, but most funders require financials.

#### **6.1.1.4. Deanna Jones, Suitcase in Point (Theatre)**

Suitcase in Point (SIP) Theatre is in its 13<sup>th</sup> season and is one of only a few organizations that receives sustaining funding from SCCIP. D. Jones noted that the SCCIP Sustaining Program is very important to Suitcase. She made three main points:

1 – SIP's SCCIP funding is quickly eaten up in yearly operations and programming. The company provides lots of paid work to artists and arts workers throughout the year. They succeed with a staff of two, who each have a part-time job of \$20,000 per year.

2 – It is important to continue to receive funding year over year, for stability and so the company can plan one, two, three (or more) seasons ahead. SIP

relies on funding from the City to keep providing community services to residents of St. Catharines.

3 – It is important that SCCIP funding be increased to allow for growth. Many of the potential sources of funding are more make-work than support-work, and the skills/potential of the creative staff are diluted because they have to manage the administration required to keep the organization afloat. They are better utilized for making theatre and leading artists than writing grant applications!

D. Jones noted that St. Catharines is on the cusp of something big. Everyone wants the PAC to succeed and wants to see local organizations using the space. She and other SIP members are graduates of Brock University who made a conscious choice to stay in St. Catharines to create art here. There is a growing grassroots, civic pride movement.

It is important to support the growth of emerging artists and to keep supporting established artists.

Q: Do you see Suitcase in Point being self-sustaining?

A: No, there will always need to be a subsidy. However, SCCIP has helped SIP leverage other public and private funds.

R. Cann noted that in the Theatre sector, the standard rate of cost-recovery from ticket revenues is 25% of what it costs to produce the play. If companies charged the real cost, audiences would not be able to afford the cost.

Q: What is the importance of reflecting this community in the stories you tell? What do you think the impact is?

A: The significance is in the community seeing work **about** their place created **in** their place by artists **from** their place – seeing a reflection of themselves and their community in the work. This has helped to grow audiences.

Q: How many grants do you apply for per year?

A: At least 15 – plus sponsor requests, etc. Tourism packages can start to become the reason for the art, not the other way around.

Q: You must develop a following of people who come to everything you do and want to grow that following – are there any barriers that hinder you in expanding your following? What can the Task Force do? What can you do?

A: In the Soil has been a great way of sharing and growing audiences, and the PAC has that potential to bring Centre for the Arts audiences downtown. But expanding audience is hard when marketing money is the first to be cut in the budget. Further collaboration with PAC to strategize effective marketing would be very useful.

B. Phillips believes TF should talk to Steve Solski about specifically marketing local groups – perhaps by having free advertising for their work.

**6.1.1.5. Steve Remus, Niagara Artists Centre (NAC) (Visual Arts)**

S. Remus noted that the arts community shouldn't push hysteria over not funding the arts, but that the push should be: how much impact do we as a community want to have? The City should invest fully right now in order to leverage the bricks and mortar (i.e. the PAC) that was just built.

A core organization should respect the audience's interest and also challenge the audience. What artists need is development space, rehearsal space and gallery space. There is lots of private sector buy-in for STRUTT (NAC's wearable art show). Usually, the public sector leads and private sector matches. In St. Catharines right now, it's the other way around.

The City should fund the organizations, not the events. What NAC needs is more money to invest in human resources and they could make STRUTT even more significant and impactful.

S. Remus brought up the idea of a billboard tax – something that works in Toronto but might also work here. As well, he believes that a \$2 per capita levy could be sold to residents of the City – but that an Arts Council would need to undertake that project.

Q: Do you feel like NAC is taking on a lot of Arts Council work because it's a hub?

A: Yes, in a way, for some artists. But arts advocacy needs to happen and needs to be arms-length from organizations and from the City.

**6.1.1.6. Monica Dufault, Essential Collective Theatre (ECT)**

M. Dufault talked about the need for stability for arts organizations. Artists and companies can only make things happen when they have a stable base from which to be creative. They can't make anything happen if they don't know about the funding. The small investment that SCCIP makes to ECT allows the organization to expand their support base and leverage funding from other sectors, both public and private.

ECT has doubled their operating budget in the past year. The value of stable organizations is that they can make things happen and have impact on the community. They can create immersive, community-building experiences that help audience members learn about themselves, their neighbours and their community.

Q: Did the Niagara Region's Niagara Investment in Culture program fund *Senior Stories*? [An original play based on stories told by older adults across the Niagara region.]

A: Yes, it did, with \$20,000, and this funding made the project possible. But if they wanted to continue work on the project they could not return to the NIC because that program only funds new initiatives or significant new components to existing initiatives. In order to access NIC ECT would have to create a new project, not build on a successful one.

**6.1.1.7. Candice Turner-Smith, Niagara Symphony Orchestra**

C. Turner-Smith noted that SCCIP funding allows other funders to get behind the organization. PAC marketing materials state that “The arts live here” – how do we figure out how to **pay** for the arts to live here?

There is a big difference between operating/sustaining funding and project funding. Operating funding pays the bills, the administration of the organization and staff. Project grants do not fund anything but that specific project.

She noted that if the NSO didn’t have the human resources infrastructure that it has, things would be very difficult. Does the City really want/need the NSO to be here? The NSO is riding the curve of the opening of a new arts centre – their box office is up 40%, but so are costs.

The current \$150,000 SCCIP budget will not go far in the next 5 years. Organizations will not be able to afford to perform in the PAC. If the PAC is going to be a “roadhouse” (i.e. if it will just present touring artists from outside the region), then the community should know *now* so local organizations don’t invest time and money into trying to perform in the PAC. If it does become just a roadhouse, it will be a drain because the artists performing there will take money *from* the local economy while local artists keep money *in* the local economy.

C. Turner-Smith asks, what are the priorities of Council? If the PAC is designed to be *of* the community, *for* the community -- and we all want this to be successful -- then the investment has to be made. Bricks and mortar require additional investment. Arts organizations can invest in the PAC if the City invests in arts organizations.

**6.1.1.8. Robert Lalonde, Niagara Integrated Film Festival (NIFF)**

R. Lalonde sees NIFF as playing a role in Council’s strategic vision of putting St. Catharines on the map. The hub of NIFF will be in and around downtown St. Catharines and they hope to use the PAC as a main venue. NIFF has the potential to be an economic driver with an economic impact of potentially up to \$1M. He noted that internationally renowned film festivals, such as

Sundance, the Toronto International Film Festival and the Cannes Film Festival, all started off struggling and needing public support in order to grow into strong, successful festivals.

Direct benefit to St. C:

- Major int'l exposure of City and region
- Major economic impact
- Cultural programming to enlighten general public to film
- Cultural growth for the artists in this city
- Cultural growth through having local film students, enthusiasts
- Profound cultural and economic impact for years to come

Q: NIFF is a great example of a festival that arrives in town and is very exciting. It is much easier for Council to invest in a one-time ask. The return for funding is the challenging part. How to make the case to St. Catharines Council that it should invest in a regional event?

A: The mapping of the festival is regional – 2016 programming will have over 60% of the activities in St. Catharines, especially at the PAC. They are hoping for funding from other areas of Niagara and from the Region as well. The cultural and economic impact of NIFF has the potential to be seen many years from now.

Q: Would NIFF partition local filmmaker series and apply to SCCIP just for that?

A: Potentially – to be determined.

Q: Would NIFF come back to SCCIP and other municipalities year over year?

A: Yes, for the first few years, it would apply to the City for seed funding. But the long-term goal of NIFF is to be self-sustaining after a few years.

**7. Date of next meeting**  
**TBD**

**8. Motion to Adjourn**

**Materials distributed prior to or at the meeting:**

1. Community Consultation Schedule for Wednesday, November 18.