



**Minutes**  
**Niagara Centre for the Arts Task Force**  
**Thursday January 7, 2010**  
**Committee Room #1, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, City Hall**  
**7 – 8:30pm**

**Present:** Mayor Dave Augustyn, Patti Broughton, Tracy Cotton (Chair), Councillor Mark Elliott, Elizabeth Fritshaw, Jane Gardner, Hugh Gayler, Derek Knight, Art Lefstein, Joan Medina, Sara Palmieri, Kim Payne, Polly Hogan-Ritchell, Ron Ritchell, Jenn Wallace; **Staff:** Rebecca Cann, Annie Wilson

**Regrets:** Sue Morrison; **Absent:** Councillor Jeff Burch

**1. Welcome**

T. Cotton welcomed the committee and wished everyone a happy new year.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:** *To approve the agenda of the January 7 2010 meeting.*

**Moved:** A. Lefstein                      **Seconded:** P. Hogan                      **Carried.**

**3. Approval of Minutes of November 5, 2009 Meeting**

**Motion:** *To approve the minutes of the November 5 2009 meeting.*

**Moved:** S. Palmieri                      **Seconded:** J. Gardner                      **Carried.**

**4. Business Arising, Action Items Reviewed**

No business arising.

**5. Correspondence**

No correspondence.

**6. 2010 Schedule Development**

T. Cotton asked NCAT to reflect on the accomplishments and future direction of their work. The task force reviewed its work plan and noted that the majority of short, mid and long term goals have been accomplished. They discussed possible future roles in fundraising, public relations, newsletter development. In addition, J. Gardner has initiated a meeting related to the Youth Education goal in the current work plan.

R. Cann noted that low staffing levels at Cultural Services and departmental restructuring has made it very important that each committee meeting is about viable business. She suggested that following March the committee meet every other month. A. Lefstein joined the Business Outreach subcommittee.

**ACTION:** *Subcommittees are asked to look at Terms of Reference and how it relates to their current workload and future direction. Identify and establish an action oriented timeline. Subcommittees also asked to reflect on their role in the Capacity Building Plan. Please be*

*prepared to discuss this at the next meeting. The subcommittee's tasks and timelines will then be plugged into the larger NCAT work plan.*

## **7. Response to Ross Stretton re: Pipe Organ in Concert Hall**

R. Cann circulated responses from CUAG, MIWSFPA and M. Vinik regarding Rose Stretton's proposal to fundraise for a pipe organ in the Concert Hall space for the arts centre. As was noted in the needs assessment undertaken in 2007, the Niagara Symphony and Chorus Niagara are the only two organizations that have identified a need. M. Vinik noted that the potential soft and hard costs of a pipe organ would be approximately 1.3M. D. Knight added that MIWSFPA saw value but in the smaller recital hall. In addition, S. Palmieri surveyed performing arts centres in Canada and noted that there are only a few in Canada and rarely used in the centres that house them. She noted annual maintenance costs of \$3-5000. H. Gayler noted that there are several very good organs available for use in local churches that currently satisfy Chorus Niagara's need. R. Cann added that, moving forward, it is important to survey the short listed maestros of the Niagara Symphony as to their potential need. NCAT agreed that if there is a potential organ donor, this acquisition should be fully considered.

**ACTION:** *H. Gayler will have a detailed discussion with Chorus Niagara, Niagara Symphony to learn more about their needs and will discuss the proposal with Ross Stretton. D. Knight will have further discussions the Music department regarding their potential need and will report back at next meeting.*

## **8. Subcommittee Reports**

### *a. Arts Community Development Committee (ACDC)*

P. Broughton reported on the progress of their capacity building plan. The plan is now called *Building the Arts of St. Catharines: Plans for sector growth*. Following the first round of feedback, ACDC developed a few new sections and goals that provide additional context and further define the roles of partners. In particular, the plan now further acknowledges the need to build awareness and support for regional arts and culture. The plan aligns well with draft Regional Culture Plan as well. The Arts Council sees a leadership role in providing oversight to the overall plan in order to make sure that the strategies have lead partners and that the broader community is involved. The Arts Council will present this document to the Board and finalize the plan for NCAT's February meeting.

### *b. Community User Advisory Group (CUAG)*

P. Hogan- Ritchell reported that the majority of the last CUAG meeting was spent gathering feedback on a draft of ACDC's capacity building plan.

### *c. Outreach Subcommittee*

E. Fritshaw reported on the presentation that she and Jenn Wallace gave to City Council on the [www.inspireniagara.com](http://www.inspireniagara.com) website in December. Since the presentation, the "friends of" page has nearly tripled. The Outreach subcommittee is now working on a newsletter template. In addition, posters, tent cards and window stickers that promote the arts centre project and Inspire website. The subcommittee discussed their role in presentations throughout the region. Mayor Dave Augustyn suggested presentations to all City Councils in the Region.

## **9. Project and City Updates**

R. Cann reported that representatives from Brock and the City interviewed prospective Project Management firms for the arts centre project in December. The interview team made a

unanimous recommendation which has gone to joint executive committee; a formal announcement is expected in February.

#### **10. Brock University and Marilyn I. Walker SFPA Update**

D. Knight reported that Brock is still awaiting confirmation on their funding request for the project. He noted that media coverage on this topic should be expected in the coming weeks.

#### **11. Other Business**

- NCAT discussed the recent St. Catharines Standard article regarding the City as new landlords of the Old Courthouse and Carousel Players. T. Cotton objected to how the article noted the arts community ‘pleaded with Council’ when they had actually prepared a well considered analysis of the potential impact of the closure of Carousel Player’s theatre. R. Cann added that the Recreation Master plan and Creative Cluster Master plan both note the importance of this space. Councillor Elliott added that it is very important that the Old Courthouse remain a public building and thinks that Cultural Services and Economic Development and Tourism staff should be moved there.
- P. Broughton requested that NCAT share information on space available in the community for an inventory she is currently compiling.

**Motion:** *To allow information from the feasibility study be turned over to the Arts Council*

**Moved:** P. Hogan- Ritchell

**Seconded:** R. Ritchell

**Carried.**

- T. Cotton announced that he would be a guest on Mayor McMullan’s Cogeco program on January 14<sup>th</sup> with Rosemary Hale to answer questions about the arts centre project. He will keep NCAT posted on when the program will be aired.

**Motion:** *To adjourn.*

**Moved:** S. Palmieri

**Carried.**

12. Next Meeting: **Thursday February 4, 2010, 7:00 – 8:30pm**, The Atrium (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor), City Hall