



**Minutes**  
**User Group Committee (UGC)**  
**Thursday January 6, 2011**  
**Committee Room #1, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, City Hall**  
**2 – 4pm**

**Present:** Janis Barlow, Rebecca Cann, Robert Cooper, Councillor Mark Elliott (Chair), Jo Henderson, Derek Knight, Jack Mills, Mary Jo Mullins, Sara Palmieri, Brian Power, Kelly Reichheld, Stephen Remus, Alan Titley, David Vivian, Annie Wilson  
**Regrets:** Pablo Felices-Luna, Jane Gardner, Deanna Jones, Rick Lane

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

M. Elliott welcomed everyone to this new phase of the arts centre project and led roundtable introductions of members of the User Group Committee (UGC).

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:** to approve the meeting agenda for January 6, 2011.

Made by: D. Knight Seconded by: D. Vivian **Carried.**

**3. Correspondence**

M. Elliott explained that the letter from Rick Lane that was circulated in advance of the meeting was in response to a letter sent by the former Community User Advisory Group. Discussion took place as follows:

- There was some confusion as to whether or not the City would consider independently hiring theatre and acoustical consultants. Clarification: Only if a peer assessment is deemed necessary, and the City would welcome the input of the User Group Committee if they felt it was;
- It was confirmed that the UGC will be involved in all phases of the design, prior to a commitment to the final design;
- With regard to the co-chair roles and responsibilities
  - Suggestions included keeping definitions of roles to a minimum to keep emphasis on the committee as a whole;
  - Elliott will be relating to the political process and representing the UGC at City Council; Community Chair will be responsible for carrying messages to community user stakeholders;
  - It was agreed that both Co-Chairs should participate on the Design and Construction Team;
  - Clarification was provided on makeup of the Culture Committee, the Centre Operations Committee, and other project-related committees.

**Action:** R. Cann will draft a summary of the Co-Chair roles and send out via email for everyone to review before the next meeting;

- With regard to the participation of Martin Vinik in meetings:

- R. Cann noted that once the workplan/architect is confirmed there will be a clear workplan for the project, and for the UGC. This will clarify when the UGC will need Martin attending our discussions. He will be very accessible via email and phone, if required.
- The Committee requested clarification on how Martin will be kept informed of our process. R. Cann will send him minutes, and she noted he's already aware of the formation of this committee.
- Discussion took place about whether we should shape a budget to assess the cost of bringing Martin into the process to ensure we use his available time wisely. It was suggested that we wait until we know what our workplan is before proceeding with this.
- The purpose as to why we need Martin will need to be clarified – at this point he is the brain behind the Feasibility Study – in future he may become the mediator between user groups and the architectural team and/or the City and/or Brock, pending project changes etc.
- Re: qualifications and posting opportunities for the future Executive Director (ED)
  - R. Lane is seeking input into the job qualifications of the ED from UGC by January 15<sup>th</sup>;
  - The Committee asked the following questions in response:
  - Who is the employer? In the immediate future, the City, although this will change with the formation of an independent central operating entity (the COE)
  - Who is on the hiring committee? M. Elliott noted he was, and surmised that it was probably HR staff, but no one knew.
  - Is HR researching other job descriptions before developing the ED job description? It is believed so.
  - Is the City working with a Search Firm? The intention is to do so, however, this firm has not yet been selected. The Committee noted that the right search firm should know where to advertise, so UGC input is not really required in this matter.
  - R. Cann clarified that an RFP is in the works to identify a Search Firm.
  - Can both Chairs participate on the ED Selection Committee? K. Reichheld noted that volunteers may be problematic on the Committee with regard to privacy requirements, etc. within a municipality.
  - The Committee noted the City should ensure that someone on the Selection Committee has experience and expertise in managing performing arts facilities – can this be addressed with an expert from another community?

**Action:** The group determined they would shape a recommendation on this subject to forward to the City – S. Remus and S. Palmieri will develop and forward to R. Cann who will forward onto the Committee. Committee members are to forward names of potential outside participants as well as potential search firms to R. Cann.

- Re: Fundraising:
  - R. Cann outlined the work CUAG has done in the past discussing the many issues around fundraising and the engagement of fundraising consultant Halsey North in a dialogue about the many issues. One of the primary concerns in the arts community is the inevitable loss of donation dollars to existing arts organizations when the arts centre fundraising begins, a loss that few organizations can afford. She also explained that the City has funds in the

2011 budget (not yet approved) to hire a fundraising consultant to undertake a Fundraising Plan/Outline Campaign Strategy.

- The group noted that this fundraising consultant needs to know the competition for fundraising dollars will be an issue between the arts centre and the rest of the arts community.
- The Committee noted that the ED will likely be the primary spokesperson for the centre's fundraising. K. Reichheld confirmed that ideally yes, it would not be a City staff person doing this work.

There were no more comments with regard to the letter.

#### **4. Selection of Co-Chair**

This will be deferred to the next meeting. A discussion about selection process took place.

**Action:** everyone will send in their interest and/or nominations to R. Cann who will then share resumes with everyone in advance of the decision-making at the next meeting.

#### **5. Committee Terms of Reference**

The group reviewed the Terms as circulated and made the following observations and clarifications:

- last sentence 1<sup>st</sup> par – UGC will report through City reps AND Co Chairs – also, correct reference to City representatives – to include staff, councilor and contractors;
- Reference to relationship with Centre Operation Committee requires some clarity to ensure that the UGC is defined as the primary resource group and consultation point for them with regard to user issues.

**Action:** R. Cann will revise the Terms of Reference, and once reviewed by city staff, the revisions will come back to the UGC for final comment.

#### **6. Stakeholder Communications**

R. Cann explained that the first communication item for the UGC is the list of CUAG topics, which is a list of items identified following a thorough review of the 2008 Feasibility Study.

Discussion took place about the role of the UGC in communications, with reference to the Terms of reference. The group asked about the InspireNiagara.com website and what the relationship between the City's Communications office and this committee is. It was generally realized that the relationships and roles are currently unclear.

However, it was suggested that the first concern of the UGC should be to identify what project information is important to the broader community of prospective user groups. Presently, communications staff from the City and Brock are working to develop a website for the project, and the Inspire Niagara group are interested in seeing a stronger presence for user groups on their website.

**Action:** R. Cann will share fundraising info and additional background info on topics from CUAG meetings.

## **7. Project Updates**

M. Elliott informed the group that the architectural proposals are currently being reviewed from three firms, as one firm dropped out and one was disqualified. The group asked which were the three finalists: Kuwabara Payne McKenna Bloomberg, Diamond & Schmitt, and Saucier + Perrotte. It is anticipated that the architect will be confirmed in early to mid February.

## **8. Historic Review**

R. Cann distributed hard copies of the Community User Needs Assessment which was researched and developed by the Niagara Centre for the Arts Task Force and presented to City Council in 2008. Its contents are the findings on which the Feasibility Study was based and the report includes important information about local community use that this committee needs to be aware of.

**Action:** R. Cann will forward a pdf version of the Needs Assessment out via email.

## **9. Schedule of Work**

It was generally understood that a schedule of work is not really possible until after an architectural team is hired. Once this has happened, they will provide a workplan that will include dates specific to the involvement of the UGC.

The committee asked whether UGC members can get a copy of the selected Architect's proposal.

Further discussion took place on the role of the UGC in relation to all public meetings – City staff have envisioned that members will participate in those meetings and then meet with the architectural team afterwards for a debrief.

**Action:** Staff will investigate whether the UGC can receive a copy of the successful proponent's proposal.

## **10. Other Business**

- MJ. Mullins asked about the process for adding an alternate to the Committee. R. Cann noted the process will be for an Expression of Interest to be submitted and for the Committee to agree to the addition of a member. **Action:** R. Cann will send MJ Mullins the form.
- D. Knight noted there are some timing conflicts with this time and could the schedule be revisited. **Action:** R. Cann will address.

## **11. Next Meeting: To be finalized.**

**Motion to Adjourn:** Made by S. Palmieri