



Minutes
User Group Committee
Thursday February 3, 2011
Committee Room #1, 3rd Floor, City Hall
1 – 3pm

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

1. Welcome

M. Elliott welcomed everyone and led roundtable introductions.

2. Approval of Minutes of January 6, 2011

Motion: to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 6, 2011

Made by D. Knight Seconded by: J. Mills **Carried**

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda.

Made by J. Mills Seconded by D. Knight **Carried.**

4. Selection of Co-Chair

M. Elliott noted that two nominations were received, for Janis Barlow and Jack Mills. J. Mills left the room for discussion and vote. S. Remus declared a conflict of interest in the vote as J. Barlow is currently under paid contract with the Niagara Artists Centre. Discussion took place and a vote was held. J. Barlow was selected as co-chair of the Committee.

5. Project Updates

R. Lane reported that yesterday's Joint Executive Committee (JEC) meeting was cancelled due to snow. A report will be going to Council on February 14th recommending an architect. The buildings on the site are coming down quickly. Brock is going to its Board next week to have their selection confirmed. A joint press release will be coming out around February 18th and at that time the UGC will be informed who the architect/s will be. Discussion took place about how the City and Brock addressed hiring of the same or different architects, and whether reasoning for the decision, if two architects are hired, will be addressed in the final press release.

6. Committee Terms of Reference (ToR)

The most recent version of the Terms of Reference are dated February 2nd and were provided yesterday for UGC review. Discussion included whether the Executive Director and Co-Chair will be participating on the Design and Construction Team. The ToR do not formally include the organizational structure as provided in the appendix (this is for information only).

Motion to receive the ToR as provided.

Made by J. Gardner

Seconded by A. Wilson

Carried.

7. Executive Director Job Description

S. Palmieri asked how this position is going to be posted when the details of the relationship between the Centre for the Arts at Brock (CFA) and the new facility have not yet been finalized. She noted this job description looks very much like that of the CFA ED, particularly with the reference to including the CFA staff and program being part of the new facility. R. Lane explained that the City is moving forward independent of Brock in this selection process. It was noted that it may be precipitous to reference the Centre for the Arts in the ED job description.

Further discussion took place and included:

- Par 3 – is it appropriate to include reporting to a Board and City Council? (see Jane’s comments). Is this mixing roles, ie. supervisor vs. owner? Jane clarified that the reporting process will change over a period of time, ie, to start will be reporting directly to the City, later to a Board.
- ED will be founding the position and will be participating in many committees as the project develops – needs to be articulated;
- Clarity is required as to the fact this person will be a City staff person reporting through City staff – ie, who is s/he reporting to?;
- Will the facility be independent of the City as recommended in the feasibility study? This is not clear in the description and is important to the ED’s role and experience, as well as the level of expertise that will surface in prospective applicants.
- Clarification of the City’s role, in perpetuity, as owner of the facility, and therefore landlord.
- R. Lane noted the ED will likely report to the CAO, not City Council directly.
- R. Cann asked the group to clarify what terminology they would prefer to see to describe the 200-seat venue for theatre and dance user groups. The group agreed that “dance and theatre venue” best describes the venue. Discussion took place about the future uses that are likely to be included and agreed that clarity on the types of dance and theatre users that will be in the venue (ie many professional, *from* the local community, not “community” (ie amateur) groups) is important.
- S. Palmieri suggested some clarity around the word usage of “management of” in many instances this should be revised as the ED will more often direct staff who do some of these jobs directly – ie. fundraising, programming, technical direction etc.
- Some additional typos were also noted.
- Clarity as to whether the ED will be hiring staff and/or inheriting staff from the CFA will be an important issue for the ED as well as existing CFA staff.
- Change the reference to Brock students in par. 4 to” the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, who will schedule academic programming within these spaces” – this is more to the point than suggesting the spaces are actually academic, as they’re not.
- Qualifications – 5 years in arts management does not seem like a lot, given the degree of experience required. Would 10 or 15 years be more appropriate? References to “senior experience” and “leadership position” were positive.
- Will the job description include Canadian citizens only? TBD.
- When will it be posted? R. Lane suggested within the next 2 to 3 weeks.

- Applicants will want to know the relationship between the new facility and the CFA.

Action: The Committee should forward any additional comments to Rebecca by early next week, so that she can forward on for consideration.

The Committee then reviewed the letter drafted by S. Remus on behalf of the UGC to Rick Lane. R. Lane responded immediately and noted that the CAO, the Mayor and the Director of Corporate Services will be on the hiring team. The City does not include external representatives on its selection committees for Senior Staff and they are treating this hire as comparable. S. Remus noted this is an unusual hire, and may warrant unusual measures to maximize the opportunity. R. Lane let the group know he will make the case internally.

Motion: to approve the letter as drafted and forward on to R. Lane.

Made by D. Vivian

Seconded by M.J. Mullins.

Carried.

J. Mills asked if the Search Firm has been selected and whether they will have some input into this description. R. Lane explained that Corporate Services is working on the selection and he expects the successful firm will be involved in the final drafting of the description. M. Elliott explained it is coming to Council in camera on Monday. D. Knight asked how long the ED selection process will take and R. Lane suggested a minimum of 3 months. D. Knight noted that Prism has suggested the design phase may move forward extremely quickly, and it would be useful to have the ED involved asap.

8. Feasibility Study Review

R. Cann noted that City staff will be providing the UGC with information on the requirements and limitations of the Federal and Provincial Funding as it relates to the building program, so they are informed as the group moves forward with discussions about the plan. She noted they should begin with discussion and review of the contents of the Community Needs Assessment as this informed the Feasibility Study results. Familiarity with the Building Program contained within the Study is essential before meeting with the Architects. She then noted she sent out minutes from several meetings of the Community User Advisory group (CUAG) that contain detailed comments on the building program – pay particular attention to the minutes of February 26, 2009 and the attached notes from Cole Lewis.

The review and detailed discussion of these documents will begin at the next meeting.

9. Draft Schedule of Work

R. Cann confirmed that there is no single time of week that is good for 100% of all committee members. Thursday and Friday afternoons provide maximum participation and she will alternate meeting dates for the group to ensure everyone can attend some meetings. Discussion took place about attempting to ensure that users specific to a venue are considered when meeting dates are set – all effort will be made but other schedules outside this group will be a factor in meeting schedules. It was noted that many people here wear multiple hats ie. Suitcase in Point and In the Soil, so they're interested in most venues, if not all, in the facility.

J. Gardner asked when this Committee will discuss the planned closure of the Old Courthouse, as it is a critical space for many arts groups. In discussion, it was noted

that Carousel Players has fairly modern theatre equipment in this facility. M. Elliott noted that keeping the Courthouse open was very challenging two years ago. He actively supports the future of the Courthouse as a theatre, but many at the City see it as the future Council Chambers for the municipality. R. Lane queried the role of this committee in the discussion around the Courthouse. R. Cann confirmed the Culture Committee may have more of a role to play in matters pertaining to “other” arts infrastructure provided by the City and plans to renew the Municipal Cultural Policy are in the works for later this year. The UGC will be kept apprised of this opportunities for further dialogue.

10. Other Business

J. Mills explained his concerns about not including a member of the UGC on the Hiring Committee for an Executive Director, with the expectation that the role would be treated with appropriate respect for the private and confidential nature of the process (ie. the UGC would not be expecting feedback from this representative.) It is not yet confirmed that M. Elliot will be on the Selection Committee, but he anticipates this will be part of the report going forward on Monday re: Search Firm. R. Cooper expressed concern that at the very least the search firm be an expert in the business of the arts.

11. Next Meeting: TO BE CONFIRMED – Expect it to be within the next 2 – 3 weeks.

Motion to adjourn – J. Gardner.