

Minutes

Thursday, February 04, 2021

Electronic Meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Mo Al Jumaily, Robert De Wolfe (Chair), Sandy Middleton, Mark Roe, Peter Wing,

Absent:

Peter Wing

Guests:

Jean Bridge, Chair of Rodman Hall Art Centre Inc., Councillor Carlos Garcia

Staff Liaison:

Phil Cristi, Director of Community, Recreation and Culture Services; Kathleen Powell, Supervisor of Historical Services & Acting Supervisor of Cultural Services

1. Call meeting to order (Chair)

5:01

2. Recognition of Traditional Territories

Robert DeWolfe acknowledged that the land on which the Rodman Hall Task Force meets today is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Peoples. Acknowledging this is a reminder that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people.

3. Amendments to the Agenda

There were no amendments or deletions to the agenda.

4. Motion to approve the agenda

That the Rodman Hall Task Force approve the agenda for the meeting of February 4, 2021.

Moved by: M. Al Jumaily

CARRIED

5. Motion to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting

That the Rodman Hall Task Force approve the minutes of the meeting of February 19, 2020. Moved by: S. Middleton CARRIED

6. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

7. Presentations (invited guests)

Jean Bridge, Chair of the Rodman Hall Art Centre Inc. presented related to their current activities.

Jean provided an update related to Rodman Hall Art Centre Inc. and their future plans. They are investigating all possibilities related to future operations whether off-site or on site and multiple funding models.

Jean indicated that approximately 20% of the collection is considered culture property. They are carrying out an audit of the collection currently. Brock is also transferring two endowments that pertain to RH Arts Centre. Brock is funding the collections inventory and has committed to providing some start-up funding.

Rodman Hall Arts Centre Inc. currently has no short-term immediate plans to operate a gallery due in large part to the need to secure stable operating funds.

RHAC Inc. will focus on short term projects to exhibit portions of the collection, in partnership with organizations in the community.

Mid-term – looking for temporary operations provided they can raise operating funds.

Long term – developing a new public art gallery. Want a gallery that is indispensable for the community. Most relevant to the community.

Owners of Rodman Hall have indicated an interest in working with RHAC Inc. related to the property. Looking for a long-term commitment. RHAC Inc. is assessing options which they expect to take 6 months at least to decide what direction they would like to go.

Limited by the housing development and the requirement to bring it up to AODA standards. Lack of parking is a challenge and space requirements are inadequate at this time.

The City's Economic Development Department is helping with a business plan.

Can they stay until they have somewhere to go at the moment? They can stay where they are as long as they pay rent based on the amount of space they use.

Are they looking to generate revenue from exhibits? Would be looking to find sponsors to help mount new exhibits and projects.

Collection and building are not connected any longer.

Q - What is the ideal square footage that they are looking for? 20,000 sq ft. currently they have 12,500 sq ft. Considering the functions they would like to provide, 20,000 sq ft is the minimum they would be looking for. Do not have a cost estimate of square footage costs.

Q – What does appropriate city leadership mean? Political leadership and staff leadership. Potential of a Cultural Services Supervisor being involved in the development of this project. City could be as involved as possible. Leadership at the staff level to provide expertise and direction and political leadership to help build a budget for this.

S. Middleton noted that the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee should be involved if a new cultural facility is being developed.

Rodman Hall Art Centre Inc. have a business plan that was created based on different operating assumptions. They are adapting those assumptions based on new operational considerations.

Sponsorship and funding development has not begun. Current priority is auditing the collection.

Probably looking for a minimum of \$200,000 per year from the city.

Last time Jean presented, they heard that there was close to \$5 million in upgrades required for the building for AODA. Will require a study to find out what that cost really is. Roof and HVAC are good – building is in good shape.

S. Middleton noted that the work to move forward requires more people and different skills than those currently on the Task Force. That staff should be more engaged in the work in order to move it forward.

Rodman Hall is in private hands now, so the city does not really have any role in the future of the building.

If you are thinking Rodman Hall the building – it is in private ownership now. If you are thinking about the development of an art gallery in the community, the City can assist with that work.

The question was asked whether it is the building or the art gallery that we are working towards on this task force.

S. Middleton asked how the Task Force is reconciling the RH Task Force Terms of Reference considering the original direction prior to the change of ownership of the property and now re-grouping. Good to have someone from RHAC Inc. to provide additional context.

Move to accept the presentation by Jean Bridge.

Moved by M. Al Jumaily CARRIED

8. Business arising from the minutes

There was no business arising from the previous minutes.

9. Business

a. 9.1 – Task Force direction moving forward.

The Task Force discussed the direction forward for their work. The Terms of Reference for the Task Force were reviewed:

The Rodman Hall Task Force will provide information and recommendations to Council regarding the future of the Brock University's Rodman Hall building and grounds and the art collection that is housed in the facility. Generally, the Task Force will:

- Consult with the Rodman Hall Transition Board, the Rodman Hall Alliance, Brock's Board of Trustees and other interested stakeholders as appropriate;
- Review all available consultant and internal reports on Rodman Hall including the latest feasibility study;
- Evaluate governance, operation and/or funding of a public art / museum concept of other like municipalities, including but not limited to funding levels, processes, evaluation and reporting; and
- Prepare a final report through the Cultural Sustainability Committee and then to Council with their findings.

Of the four bullets that were a part of the Task Force's Terms of Reference, the first two bullets are no longer relevant due to the change of ownership of the property.

The Task Force can provide City Council with a report on the work of the Task Force to date in light of the changes in status of the building and collection and its impact on the Task Force work.

Bullet 3 and 4 of the Terms of Reference can continue to be addressed – research already prepared by the Task Force can feed into 3rd bullet which can inform the final council report.

Discussion of the current composition of the Task Force:

Discussion of the report to be prepared for the Cultural Sustainability Committee. Proposed that the report should focus on a recommendation for council to agree that they support in principle the idea of a civic gallery and that the budget standing committee consider at a future date whether a request from Rodman Hall Arts Inc. for a subsidy would be approved.

P. Cristi will connect with the developer in order to get more information related to their plans to help inform the work of the Task Force and invite them to come and speak to the Task Force at a future meeting.

Discussion related to the question of whether the community would like to have any further involvement in the heritage building and its future usage.

P. Cristi will draft a council report for the Task Force which will be sent out prior to the next meeting for feedback from the members.

P. Cristi wanted to emphasize that the work of the Task Force so far has been much appreciated and those efforts have been very helpful in informing the report to go forward to council.

10. Date of next meeting

Next meeting – March 4 or March 11 – final date to be determined.

11. Motion to Adjourn

S Middleton

CARRIED