

City of St Charles
Visitors Cultural Commission Meeting
May 17, 2017
Century Station Training Room
5:30 PM

Call to Order at 5:30 PM

Roll called by Chris Minick -

Present: Anne Becker; Debi Mader; Father David Peck; Jamie Swenson; Sharon Spero, Scott Corbin; Jodi Manthei (arrived at 5:35pm)

Absent: Larry Maholland and Kathy Melone

Also Present: Chris Minick, City of St. Charles; 2 members of the public arrived at 5:35pm.

Anne Becker asked for a Motion to Approve the Minutes from the May 10, 2017 meeting. Debi Mader made the motion and it was seconded by Fr. David Peck. The Minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote.

Public Comment: At this point in the agenda, there were no members of the public present.

Becker asked the group if she could read Larry Maholland's comments that he had emailed, since he was absent from this meeting. His impressions of using the new scoring matrix this year to arrive at funding allocation amounts and are based on 2 components. Organizations primarily are rated on: 1- the direct financial benefit the City achieves by the taxes on ticket sales, on dining, lodging etc. 2 – the latent benefit wherein people return to St. Charles because of the positive experience they previously had by attending or hearing about one of these organization's events. In his view, this year's funding recommendations reflect a shift to funding based on the scores these organizations achieved from the board's ratings. Becker asked if Minick would start off by explaining the matrix numbers, as they have already been entered into the spreadsheet he works from during the funding discussion. An average score in each of the 4 categories was compiled, based on the scoring sheets submitted by the 9 VCC board members, and were entered into a spreadsheet (see below).

Summary of Average Scores										
Organization	Economic impact	Enhance Community Culture	Resident benefit	Enhance St. Charles Reputation		Total	% of Total	Calculated Award	2017-18 Funding Requested	Final Award
Fineline Creative Arts Center	5	8	5	6		24	10.7%	8,692	20,000	9,116
Fox Valley Concert Band	3	5	6	6		20	9.0%	7,323	15,000	5,478
Preservation Partners of Fox Valley	3	7	6	6		21	9.4%	7,645	9,200	7,838
St Charles Art Council	4	6	7	7		24	10.6%	8,611	18,000	12,903
Steel Beam Theater	7	6	6	6		25	11.0%	8,933	20,000	14,000
Norris Cultural Arts Center	4	5	5	5		19	8.5%	6,921	20,000	6,182
Sculpture in the Park	3	6	7	7		23	10.2%	8,249	7,500	5,982
St. Charles Singers	6	7	8	8		28	12.5%	10,140	15,000	14,500
Camp Kane	3	6	5	5		18	8.2%	6,680	2,500	1,500
Marquee Youth Stage	4	7	6	5		22	9.6%	7,806	20,000	3,500
TOTAL							100.0%	81,000	147,200	81,000
						224				
						Funds to Allocate		81,000		(0)
Evaluation Instructions										
Use the below scale and correlate the rating criteria to each organization.										
1 = Remote										
3 = Moderate										
5 = Strong										
7 = Direct										
9 = Direct and strong										

Summary scores were entered and a total was calculated for each organization, with a corresponding percentage of the total assigned to each organization. Minick reminded there is \$81,000 to allocate this year and that the FY 16-17 allocations were somewhat inflated based on the additional \$7,131 of funding available in FY 16-17 related to the Fox Valley Repertory's closure during FY 15-16. So discussion then began using this summary sheet as a jumping off point, and tweaking of numbers occurred based on the group's discussion of each organization's scores. Last year's funding amounts were added to the spreadsheet for comparison purposes.

Minick asked the group where they would like to begin the discussion. Corbin mentioned in a couple of cases the funding requested is less than the calculated award so he thought that one of the first things they could do was to meet those requests and redistribute the additional monies in the calculated column to the other organizations. But others questioned whether that would be equitable at this point.

Becker asked that they look at the four criteria headings of Economic Impact; Enhance Community Culture; Resident Benefit; and Enhance St. Charles Reputation, that they rate organizations. Since the funding comes from a percentage of the City's hotel/motel tax it is important to discuss how they arrived at the numbers assigned to the four criteria. What are the Percentage of the Totals based on? Sharon Spero commented that some organizations might receive quite a bit less than they received last year. Manthei asked what is the concept really, with the matrix? Becker said that the matrix is now in place so that they can show City Council that there are categories/data that organizations are evaluated on and there is a method used to calculate funding to them. But in some cases where an organization scores higher than others in all 4 categories, the calculations will reflect that those organizations could get more than they even requested. Spero was uncomfortable with giving the two new requesting organizations their full amount, when the board is unfamiliar with these at this moment in time. Becker said she was uncomfortable with giving the new groups 100% of the funding they requested –

wouldn't be fair to the other groups, especially since there is less money to be allocated this year, than there was last year.

Corbin asked Minick to comment on whether adding 2 new groups to the funding mix drastically changes the numbers in that sense? Minick said it could, but it depends on how the scores and requests fall, that an individual group would get less than they did last year. With less money to begin with this year, and if one group stood out much higher than the others in the scoring, there would not necessarily be an opportunity that one organization would get more money than they got last year. Corbin asked if it would be reasonable to start the discussion with the dollars allocated per org last year. Others noted it might be better to start with the adjusted funding from last year.

Becker said as a starting point to take the groups with the 4 highest scores this year, and start the discussion by giving them the \$ they got last year, and then from there look at the other groups in terms of their percentages, or go into the two new groups and discuss their dollar amount first. (Corbin left the meeting at this point due to a work commitment). Spero asked about the amount of buildout that Marquee Youth Stage is anticipating for their new space. She wondered if funding was for this purpose. Becker reminded that Manthei brought it up at the last meeting that it was mortar/brick, but lighting and equipment. Becker reiterated that VCC funding isn't to sustain a group. This is a grant to help support their work. And, decisions should be based on the information received by these organization's applications. And, the way the funding is allocated, on a quarterly basis, and if an organization were to fold before the end of this new fiscal year, the anticipated funding for 17-18 would not be distributed to that group.

Mader asked if Camp Kane needed the funding for their Memorial. Do they have another way to raise funds? Becker thought the DAR may fund them as well. It was decided that they would start with giving the top 2 scorers 100% of what they received last year, then the next 3 top scorers receive 95% of last year's funding, the next 2 top scorers received 90%, and the next 3 receive 85%, leaving the two new organizations, and then Camp Kane and Marquee Youth Stage would receive the remaining funding available.

Manthei asked if the evaluating scale from 1 to 9 could be discussed and tweaked a bit more for next year. The interpretation of what each meant differed from one member to another. For example, the question was posed as to what is the difference between the ratings Direct and Direct and Strong? Manthei said it would be helpful to know ahead of time what/how the other members interpreted the criteria of Remote, Moderate, Strong, Direct, and Direct and Strong. Becker agreed that could be dealt with ahead of the meetings next year by getting board's input. She did reiterate Maholland's written expression of an example where St. Charles Singers may score higher than Fox Valley Concert Band in the category of Enhance St. Charles Reputation, because they perform quality programs that people remember and there is a direct connection because their name includes "St. Charles" in their title. While Fox Valley Concert Band also provides good music, but its association with St. Charles is less clear. Manthei agreed with this definition.

Becker asked for another look at the amounts being allocated to each, and the group came up with a way to ensure groups that received money in past years did not get lowered too much this year, while still being able to give the two new organizations, Camp Kane and Marquee Youth Stage, some funding.

The group returned to the concept of using the scores as a starting point and making sure that the groups that scored the highest received in this allocation at least what they had received for FY 16-17. The top two groups, STC Singers and Steel Beam Theater, were granted allocations of \$14,500 and \$14,000 respectively. The next two groups Finline and STC Arts Council

started with base allocations of 90% of the adjusted prior funding amounts. The two new groups, Camp Kane and Marquee Youth Stage were allocated \$1,500 and \$3,500 respectively based on their requests and anticipated use of funds. Allocations based on 85% and 80% of the adjusted funding for FY 16-17 were then allocated to the remaining groups. After these allocations, the remaining funds were allocated equally between the 3rd and 4th highest scoring groups (Fineline and STC Arts Council) to bring them as close as possible to their FY 16-17 adjusted funding amounts). Upon brief further discussion, there was general agreement on the allocation schedule and the rationale used to calculate the amounts recommended for funding for FY 17-18.

Becker asked for a motion to approve the proposed funding allocation schedule for the Visitors Cultural Commission for FY 17-18, which was made by Jodi Manthei and seconded by Jamie Swenson. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Becker asked the board to send their interpretations of the Scaling criteria to Carylie Forte, for comparison sake for future funding allocation discussions. Manthei said she would like to hear Becker's interpretation, but she said she'd prefer to hear everyone else's first.

Mader made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Swenson. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Minutes prepared by Carylie Forte.