

CARSON CITY CULTURAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Meeting of March 17, 2009

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Cultural Commission was held on March 17, 2009, at 5:30 p.m., at the Community Center-Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Chairperson Peter Barton
Vice Chairperson Karen Abowd
Commissioner Jed Block
Commissioner Stephen Lincoln
Commissioner James Shirk
Commissioner Molly Walt

STAFF: Joe McCarthy, Director of the Office of Business Development
Tammy Westergard, Deputy Director of the Office of Business Development
Jano Barnhurst, Recording Secretary

NOTE: A recording of these proceedings, the commission's agenda materials, and any written comments or documentation provided to the recording secretary during the meeting are public record, on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office. These materials are available for review during regular business hours.

- A. CALL TO ORDER:** (5:34:13) - Chairperson Barton called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.
- B. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:** (5:34:22) - Roll was called and a quorum was present. Commissioner Jeffery Scott was absent.
- C. ACTION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** (5:34:47) Chairperson Barton advised that action on approval of the November 18, 2008 minutes would be deferred as copies were not available and not all members had an opportunity to read them. He noted one change on page 8, Item H-4, paragraph 2, the Arts Council Community Conversation was October 27, 2008, not November 27, 2008.
- D. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENIZED ITEMS:** (5:35:36) - Robin Hodgkin of the Nevada Arts Council commented that March Madness Week was recently completed which included the Governor's Arts Awards, the Oasis Conference, and Poetry Out Loud. She advised that the First Place winner was Emily Oreana, from Washoe County, who won \$2,000 cash and \$2,000 for her school to purchase literary materials, and she will go to Washington, DC to compete. The Third Place winner in Poetry Out Loud was Stephanie Kula from Carson High School. She distributed programs to the Commission to show how Nevada high schools were represented. Swope Middle School students created and assembled art pins into a centerpiece at the Arts Advocacy Day Luncheon on March 5th. They are bringing together local arts agencies and community delegations from throughout the State for Arts of the Heart. She gave a presentation at the Oasis Conference regarding Community Conversations across the State and there will be two more in April in Sandy Valley and Pahrump. In response to a question, Ms. Hodgkin replied that the conference was a day long event hosted by the

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local arts agency in Reno, Sierra Arts, and the Siena Hotel. The topic focused on “crisis is a terrible thing to waste”. In response to another question, Ms. Hodgkin replied that the Arts and Culture Coalition will meet Friday at 1:00 at the Carson City Library and she will be discussing Arts of the Heart. The National Endowment of the Arts received \$50 million in stimulus funding which will be available in the State of Nevada to: 1) organizations that, in the last four years, have been grantees of the National Endowment of the Arts are eligible to apply for \$25,000 or \$50,000 by April 2; 2) the Arts Council as the State agency will be given an allocation based on population as a portion of the \$50 million; 3) organizations who were grantees of the Arts Council in fiscal year 08/09, have access to additional funds from the NEA through the Western States Arts Foundation. In response to a question, Ms. Hodgkin replied that unless an organization was a grantee in fiscal year 08/09, the funds cannot be granted, which is the same formula that the NEA follows. If an organization is not in good standing, through the grants program, they may not be prepared and able to meet the mandate of the NEA. In response to another question, Ms. Hodgkin replied that they were not sure when to expect to hear the amount of the total economic influx but have to start rolling out to the grantees what and how to apply. The new grants for the ARRA funds will be going through a similar panel process, but all of the details are still being worked out.

E. DISCLOSURES: (5:45:44) - None.

F. MODIFICATION TO THE AGENDA: (5:47:11) - None.

G. SWEARING IN OF NEW COMMISSIONERS BLOCK AND SHIRK: (5:47:28) - Chairperson Barton stated that the resignation of Jennifer Russell was accepted in November. He welcomed Jed Block, Molly Walt and Jim Shirk. In response to a question, Mr. McCarthy advised that there currently is no Cultural Commission stationery but will try to put something together. Commissioner Lincoln requested a statement from the new appointees. Commissioner Walt said she is very excited to be on the Commission and that she has been involved in the arts through the community and children and looks forward to helping the community move towards the arts. “You want to do your best in making children well rounded, and this Commission is on the top in helping the community emphasize that we need to work together to get all the arts and resources to work together to help the community help raise children.” Commissioner Block has been involved in the arts since he was a child and has been very involved in Carson City his entire life. His stepdaughters are in performing arts and have made various appearances at Dance USA and Dance Cup and he is being exposed to a completely different facet of performing arts. In the last couple of years, he’s become re-involved with the Brewery Arts Center and is excited to help the arts community as a whole. Commissioner Shirk stated that it’s an honor to serve and his interest is that he wants to bring his community to the arts, not bring the arts to the people. He explained that in his neighborhood, no one goes to a community play, or attends the events in town and that’s what sparked his interest. The same people are at community events time after time. Out of fifteen households on his street, three or four have been to a community event. He wants his whole block to attend an event. He also wants businesses interested in getting the events to the public.

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H. NON-ACTION ITEMS - DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION ONLY:

H-A. PRESENTATION BY SARA JONES, CARSON CITY LIBRARY DIRECTOR, REVIEWING THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PERTAINING TO FUTURE LIBRARY SERVICES (5:53:07) - Chairperson Barton introduced the item and Ms. Jones showed a video that the library foundation produced, called "A Place for Everyone" which shows all the things that the library has to offer, including: 1) lots of information, find stuff you're not expecting; 2) books on audio; 3) a place for everyone. One quarter of a million people visit the Carson City library every year. There are lots of books, reading materials and internet terminals; 4) graying population with variety - large print collection; 5) 21st century library; 6) auto repair manuals, cookbooks, etc.; 7) English as a second language; 8) lifelong learning; 9) students can learn online; 10) informational brochures; 11) crowded - there is no more room to grow; 12) library was established in 1971 when it served 15,000 people and serves nearly 60,000 now. Carson City has outgrown the facility. The capital city and cultural hub of the State deserves a public library for which all can be proud.

Ms. Jones stated that they were trying to demonstrate the value of the public library and its aspect of cradle to grave. It serves everyone at every age and for every purpose imaginable. They want to build a new library but needed to ask the community what it wanted so they conducted a survey, a copy of which is incorporated into the record. The library has had no expansion in 27 years which is the only library in Nevada that can state that claim. There were 5,000 surveys mailed to local citizens; 1,200 of which were returned representing a 20 percent response. Sixty five percent of the community has a library card and uses it. Last year, 268,000 people walked through the door. Focus groups advise that there aren't enough materials, but even if they could afford to buy them, there's no place to put them.

She explained that the library will be adopting a strategic plan regarding a new library. She distributed a Library Building Planning Timeline which is incorporated into the record. They engaged a space planning consultant to determine the accurate square footage based on the collection, what it needs to grow in the next 30-40 years, population and segment growth. They will be determining how big a library it needs to be and will be discussing that with staff, trustees and community leaders. Kathy Page has done a variety of space planning for buildings. This is not architectural concepts, but how big the library needs to be, how to make it useful and the expected amenities. A valid initiative would be forming a political action committee. They are still looking for a site and staying downtown is important. An important consideration is securing a site because they want it to go to the voters in 2010. They're trying to make the process as transparent as possible so everyone knows about it. She narrated slides of three libraries that are parallel models to Carson City: Cheyenne, Wyoming, was the library of the year. It is very similar to Carson City and built a \$20 million facility last year. Rockville, Maryland has a similar size population and built a library next to a business incubator which was a huge redevelopment effort. Milpitas, California did a redevelopment effort in a new library. When a town invests in a civic investment like a public library, the surroundings are good housing, good retail, and other good business development.

(6:17:16) In response to a question, Ms. Jones replied that she would like to get the site selection

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settled but that is probably one of the more difficult tasks. This may be a nice window of opportunity to secure a good site because it's not too competitive right now. Everything else could then follow along, particularly housing. Living near a library is a huge selling point. Chairperson Barton commented that it is obvious that a library is a key component of cultural and strategic planning and welcomes the Cultural Commission's participation in support of the effort. Ms. Jones responded that the advisory group will meet at 5:30, Thursday, March 19th in the Carson City Library auditorium. The architect will do some high level visual conceptals, which will move them along with some exciting dreams.

(6:19:30) Commissioner Walt applauded Ms. Jones for her passion and enthusiasm. She commended her for the work she does for all age generations. "I encourage you and please don't lose your enthusiasm." Ms. Jones advised that April 13-18 is National Library Week and on April 14 there will be a collaboration with Galaxy Theater, demonstrating "Second Life", an internet two dimensional world. It starts at 6:00 p.m. and is free and open to the public. The next evening there will be a technology petting zoo, showing people using ITouches and gaming with Wii. The following night there will be a presentation about Twitter. Chairperson Barton thanked her for her presentation and hopes her passion continues.

H-B. PRESENTATION BY JOE MCCARTHY AND TAMMY WESTERGARD REVIEWING THE INAUGURAL ARLINGTON SQUARE HOLIDAY ICE RINK, THE UPCOMING 2009 SPECIAL EVENTS PROGRAMS AND THE CULTURAL COMMISSION'S NEW WEBSITE WWW.CARSONCITYCULTURALCOMMISSION.ORG (6:22:18) -

Chairperson Barton introduced the item and explained that he requested a report from Ms. Westergard. The State Museum was a neighbor to the ice rink and they saw a significant increase in business in December and January which was not seen elsewhere in the system. He commended Ms. Westergard on the Cultural Commission website and called it "new and refreshing". Ms. Westergard stated that the ice rink was the first wintertime street life activity downtown. Sales reflected an unprecedented increase in food and drink. The uptick affected business in that category 35.4 percent and businesses throughout Carson City did \$2.5 million more in December than in years past. For the first time in 2008, gaming, recreation and amusement taxable sales were up by 14.1 percent in Carson City. Thirty five seasonal and eleven-week part time jobs were created from the Arlington Square Ice Rink. Three local companies staged and crafted the venue which employed over 20 local professionals. Cash sponsorships raised \$23,500. In-kind matches and partnerships equaled another \$15,000. She thanked Tahoe Fence, who donated all of the fencing and also thanked Western Nevada Supply for their donation of pipes and tubing. Twenty downtown businesses, retailers and service providers and eighteen downtown restaurants were part of the Cheapskate Partners Program. Twelve community organizations, from Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare to the Boys and Girls Club were aligned as partners. There were two downtown lodging properties and twenty three ten-visit punch passes were sold. Weekly programs focused on everything from ice disco to country western sing-alongs. Five thousand cups of hot cocoa were sold and there were no incidents of vandalism or criminal activity. Things could be done a little differently next time but going from good to better to great is always the goal. There will be a presentation to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) on Thursday for support to

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launch the Curry Street Promenade and 2009 Summer Concert Series. They are a partnership of Saturday morning Farmer's Market, Downtown Consortium, Downtown Business Association, Nevada Certified Farmers' Market Association, Brewery Arts Center and the City of Carson City. "We aspire to increase access to the arts to low income households, seniors, children and residents of Carson City." She said they want to support small independent businesses and provide a public meeting place for the community, strengthen the interdependence of downtown and the rest of the community, and sustain a flow of healthy resources between the two. There will be seventy concurrent activities over a sixteen week period. In response to a question, Mr. McCarthy replied that there has been a positive feedback from thousands of citizens who would like to see the ice rink return because they see how it affects the community self esteem and bottom line of a lot of businesses. "The ripple affect has been tremendous. It's very hard to quantify and it's our job to continue to create that type of narrative that is crisp, clear and identifiable for decision makers in the future." He said that this is a very difficult economic and fiscal time in the community so the need is to be fiscally prudent but also not miss the opportunity to grow the economy. He didn't know if there will be an ice rink in 2009, but expressed the need to continue proposing it, and if there is momentum and resources to support it, it will be done again. He commended the Carson Nugget who was instrumental in partnering with the community and the City to continue in downtown revitalization efforts. "The ice rink would not have happened without their investment and enthusiasm." In response to a question, Ms. Westergard replied that the Curry Street Promenade will begin the first Friday in June and conclude the first Saturday in October. In response to another question, Mr. McCarthy indicated that he has been in contact with the officials at the Fandango who have a number of events they are coordinating. He will try to coordinate with Gold Dust West and Fandango regarding their concert series. "It's unwise to try to compete with each other. The community likes to have alternative things to do and with the Curry Street Promenade and concert series, every effort will be made to drive foot traffic to those casinos. The return on investment is terrific and the goal is to support all businesses, not just downtown." Ms. Westergard then narrated a presentation regarding the Cultural Commission website. Chairperson Barton suggested updating the roster. Mr. McCarthy thanked Ms. Westergard for her efforts and suggested taking advantage of it as an easy way to do business which is less paper oriented. Chairperson Barton thanked both Mr. McCarthy and Ms. Westergard. He advised that completion of the \$5 million project connecting the two buildings of the Nevada State Museum will be in two weeks. Ownership will be taken later in March and May 14 will be the opening ceremony of the facility. Commissioner Walt thanked Ms. Westergard for her enthusiasm and passion and wished her luck.

H-C. PRESENTATION BY CHAIRMAN BARTON ON THE STATUS AND POSSIBLE STATEWIDE IMPACTS OF PROPOSED BUDGET REDUCTIONS ON THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (6:39:06) - Chairperson Barton introduced the item and reviewed a handout entitled "What's at Stake?" which is incorporated into the record. He noted that it is a very grim budget and all have been working tirelessly for the last several months on a variety of proposals hoping to salvage more programs. He stated they are working aggressively to mitigate some of the cuts; the Nevada Historical Society in Reno would lose almost 50 percent of their staff and close their history galleries and the ability to program the Arts Council. He advised that there is a movement to do away with the Department of Cultural Affairs and there have been discussions about restructuring the

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entire Department. He welcomed any questions or comments.

Sharon Rosse with Capital City Arts Initiative stated that Senator Amodei told her there was a move to get rid of Cultural Affairs and move it into the Secretary of State's office meaning that Arts and Culture would lose their cabinet level position in the State. She asked voters to contact their legislators. "To lose our place at the table would be awful." The Capital City Arts Initiative is hosting an artist from Wisconsin with an exhibition at the Carson City Courthouse until Memorial Day. The last Nevada Neighbors Talk will be April 1 at the Carson City Library and they are bringing an artist in from Croatia who is doing her residency at the University of Iowa. Chairperson Barton thanked Ms. Rosse, the Capital City Arts Initiative and all of the groups that supported the budget hearings. There were two hearings in February and several legislators went on the record to note how enthusiastic the supporters were. Ms. Rosse commented that she didn't hear any negative questions from legislators; all were supportive. She advised that the Arts for Nevada website is www.arts4nevada.org and sent out e-blasts when they needed people to contact their legislators. In response to a question, Chairperson Barton replied that at an informal level there have been discussions about alternative ways to operate museum facilities if staff is reduced. Last year there were over 81,000 volunteer hours in seven museums; 20,000 volunteer hours just in the railroad museum and they are looking at ways that volunteers may be able to take on different or expanded roles. He said that Cultural Affairs is a rare intersection of the government and public where ninety percent of people go away with a positive experience and they are looking for ways to perpetuate those assets and volunteers. Mr. Livermore commented that he doesn't want this to deteriorate because of lack of use. The Commission has a role to determine how to leverage opportunities; volunteers, non-profits, private funding, etc., and encourages them to look at non-profits throughout the State. "This will be a historical loss for preservation of archives throughout the State." Chairperson Barton commented that these are tough times for everyone and for a small amount of money they could continue on a path forged and play a more significant role in people's lives. "As people suffer personally you don't want to take away arts and culture."

H-D. DISCUSSION REGARDING SCHEDULING OF A STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP FOR THE CULTURAL COMMISSION (6:55:35) - Chairperson Barton introduced the item and stated there is a commitment to have a work plan to the Board of Supervisors by May 1st, so a strategic planning session needs to be done as early in April as possible. He suggested a Saturday morning session and offered the Nevada State Museum conference room. "This would be great for fiscal year 2010 with a strategic plan that looks out three to five years or begin framing that sort of plan." He advised that the Nevada Arts Council has a wealth of information through their Community Conversations to help in their efforts. He proposed April 4 or April 18 for consideration with no opposition to April 18th. Mr. McCarthy cautioned that this is only a discussion, not an action item so it cannot be voted on but thought staff would be able to firm it up once there is a consensus on a particular date. "Think good thoughts about Saturday, April 18th, 9:30-noon."

H-E. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING IN JUNE, 2009 (6:59:09)
- The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 2009. Mr. McCarthy stated that this is the

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perfect opportunity to review the website and ordinance establishing the Commission and by-laws regarding duties and functions and advise what is wanted on the agenda. In response to a question, Mr. McCarthy replied that he would prefer agenda items a couple of weeks before the meeting. In response to a question, Chairperson Barton advised that it would be appropriate to have a follow-up report regarding the State budget. Ms. Hodgkin offered an hour presentation of the Community Conversations process for the Saturday training session. Mr. Livermore commented on an earlier discussion about having a work plan to the Board of Supervisors by May 1st. "You don't meet until June, so you'd need to approve that which might be sometime after that. I think we can arrange that. That's an item you need to approve on your June 16th meeting."

H-F. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (7:02:43) -
None.

I. ADJOURNMENT (7:02:51) Chairperson Barton entertained a motion for adjournment. Commissioner Lincoln moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m. Commissioner Abowd seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The minutes of the March 17, 2009 meeting of the Carson City Cultural Commission are so approved this _____ day of June, 2009.

Peter Barton, Chairperson