

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
ARTS & HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
ACTION REPORT
APRIL 17, 2012 – 2:00 PM
CITY HALL – 1737 MAIN STREET
COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM – 2ND FLOOR**



The Columbia City Council conducted an Arts & Historic Preservation (A&HP) Committee Meeting on Tuesday, April 17, 2012, at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Belinda Gergel (Committee Chair) called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. and the following committee member was present: The Honorable Brian DeQuincey Newman and the Honorable Sam Davis. The Honorable Leona K. Plaugh was also present.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Dr. Gergel, Committee Chair asked if there were any upcoming events.

Ms. Cynthia Hardy stated that they were holding their Deserving Divas event on April 26th.

Ms. Leona Plaugh added that the Chat Benefit for Aids event is on April 28th.

Ms. Libby Gober stated that the Columbia Museum of Art will hold their annual gala on April 27th.

1. One Month, One Columbia Update

Ms. Barbara Rackes gave an update on the rest of the events planned. She discussed the impact that Facebook and Twitter has had in getting the word out about One Columbia events. She provided the committee with a map of the Arts and Architecture Tour that Historic Columbia is doing. Ms. Rackes also reminded the committee of the upcoming Mayor Benjamin's Famously Hot Bike Tour and Dr. Gergel's Surprisingly Cool Trike Ride this coming Saturday, April 28, 2012 at 10 am.

There was a consensus of the committee to have Ms. Rackes return and give another update at the next meeting.

2. Hospitality Tax Fund

Mr. Bill Ellis, Finance Director gave the committee an update on the funds in the Hospitality Fund including projected levels for the coming fiscal year.

Ms. Libby Gober, City Council Assistant, along with Ms. Cynthia Hardy, Hospitality Tax Committee Chair, and Mr. John Whitehead, Committee Member, discussed how the committee chooses how to fund the different organizations. This go around they have received 86 funding requests totaling almost 12 million dollars. They meet over a four (4) day period and each applicant gives an overview of their event. The committee deliberates.

Dr. Gergel inquired if the committee sets aside a portion of the funds they have to help develop groups? What are your priorities and do you categorize groups?

Ms. Cynthia Hardy, Hospitality Tax Committee Chair stated they do not have written guidelines but use good judgment when deciding on who to give funds to. Having guidelines would not help in the process.

Mr. Newman inquired if it would be helpful if institutions would be taken out of consideration and how do you qualify an event as successful and funded in consecutive years.

Ms. Libby Gober, City Council Assistant stated that they look at the attendance, food and beverage sales for the past three (3) years. This is information requested on the application.

Ms. Cynthia Hardy, Hospitality Tax Committee Chair added that they look at the numbers and balance sheet. They attend the events to make sure they are funding good quality events.

Mr. Davis asked about marketing on these events. I understand that some of the funds they request go towards marketing and that's something the Columbia Visitor's Bureau and One Columbia are supposed to be doing.

Ms. Cynthia Hardy, Hospitality Tax Committee Chair stated funding this allows each organization to "toot their own horn" in their own way.

Ms. Libby Gober, City Council Assistant encouraged the committee members to attend their meetings scheduled for April 24th and 25th and May 3rd and 4th. They will be hearing from all 86 applicants about the events.

There was a consensus of the committee to have the Hospitality Tax Advisory Committee to back and give an update at the next committee meeting.

3. Busking Ordinance

Mr. Ken Gaines, City Attorney read the ordinance. There were several questions ranging from licensing to range of acts and possible noise disturbances.

Here are some of the items that Mr. Gaines was asked to revise: license issue date, extending time in hospitality areas, uses of amplification and noise level, types of acts performed, day or weekend licenses at a discounted rate, clarifying definitions, having the City Manager hear appeals to license revocation instead of council, and looking at allowing some pyrotechnics or fire acts.

There was a consensus of the committee to have Mr. Gaines, meet with staff regarding the different aspects of this ordinance and redraft the ordinance. Mr. Gaines will present a revised draft ordinance within a month to the committee.

Buskers present at the meeting were: Ms. Natalie Brown with Alternacirque, Ms. Gina Wolfe of Hoop It Up, and Mr. Matt Falter, a sidewalk musician. Each provided valuable insight and offered alternatives to limitations the ordinance presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Connie Lucius
Office of the City Clerk