

Minutes of the
TOURISM AND ARTS COMMISSION
June 16, 2020
City Hall Council Chambers

Members: Chair Jim Kingwell, Vice Chair Julie Walker, Commissioners Steven Sinkler, Greg Bell, Mike Morgan, and Greg Swedenborg and Mike Morgan present

Excused: Claudia Toutain-Dorbec and Mike Morgan is on the phone without any audio.

Staff: City Manager Bruce St. Denis and Assistant City Manager/City Recorder Colleen Dick

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kingwell called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm.

DISCUSSION OF TOURISM AND ARTS FUND FY 2019-20 RECIPIENTS

Kingwell addressed the issue of the mid-terms and finals for this year. Some applicants had to change things because they had to cancel or reschedule their events. The finals need to be reviewed before we can accept new applications. Sinkler said there is no reason to review the mid-terms if the events were cancelled. St. Denis spoke of the status report request staff had sent to the grant recipients and that the results were cursory as we did not ask for details or tried to verify what they reported back. The status report was just trying to find out how much money may be returned to the city as unused, and how much money the recipients really needed for Quarter 3 (May payment) and Quarter 4 (July payment) referred to as Q3 and Q4.

Kingwell spoke of Q3 and Q4 payments and the cash crunch the fund is in. When the city distributed the funds in the TAF reserve, all of it was used, without accounting for the Q3 and Q4 payments that still had to come out of the reserve. The TAF reserve obligations were not considered when the entire reserve was given out in the business assistance grants. St. Denis said it was a policy decision and staff want to make the current TAF recipients whole; pay what was agreed, but we may not have the funds to do it on time.

Discussion followed about whether there would be enough money to pay Q3 and Q4 obligations by mid July or if it may have to be later. Also discussed was how to assess how much money is really needed by the applicants if they have had to cancel or postpone their events. Any unused funds could go to help next year's funding. Also discussed was the future of the TAF grant program; whether to take a year off, build up the reserve and start the following year. It was agreed that the events need to occur next year and be funded as much as possible, to keep the momentum going. Also, it would show that TAC and the City are behind the program. It may be that the events will have to be modified for COVID safety precautions and some things may be more virtual than actual events. The next season's applications will need to be creative and they may have to be scaled back due to the money situation.

The TAC agreed to ask the recipients to stop spending and prepare a final evaluation so the TAC could meet to review what is really needed and how much funding can come back to the City. They agreed that rather than ask for receipts and proof of spending, they would rely on the integrity of the applicants as they have always done with the evaluations.

TAC agreed to meet with the City Council in a special meeting on June 23rd to discuss these options and find out how the Council wants to approach the events; current and future.

Kingwell asked for a motion:

Motion: Walker moved to ask the FY 2019-20 TAF recipients for final reports to be used as a basis for verifying expenses for reimbursement within the context of the FY 2019-20 fiscal agreement; Sinkler seconded it.

The motion was amended after more discussion.

Motion to Sinkler moved to amend the motion on the floor to add the due date of July 15th; Bell seconded.

Kingwell asked for a vote regarding the amendment.

Vote: Bell, Kingwell, Morgan, Sinkler, Swedenborg and Walker voted AYE; the amendment was approved.

Kingwell asked for a vote regarding the amended motion.

Vote: Bell, Kingwell, Morgan, Sinkler, Swedenborg and Walker voted AYE; the amended motion was approved.

TAC members agreed that the intent is that the recipients will be reimbursed for funds they have spent prior to cancelling the event.

DISCUSSION OF TOURISM AND ARTS FY 2020-21 PROGRAM

TAC members discussed the value of continuing the Tourism and Arts grants and how much the events mean to the city. Discussion of the next year's schedule followed, and it was agreed to propose to the Council that the applications should not be due until October 1, 2020. We should have a better feel for the funding and safety rules at that time. When the program started, the applications were due September 1st then it was moved to July and in 2013 moved to May. Going back to October may not appeal to all the applicants, but the timing of evaluations and events could work out better and be less confusing. It is difficult to have to prepare a mid-term evaluation when you just finished your event, and conversely, some events have not even occurred when the applicants are applying for next season's funding.

TAC also discussed that in the interim, they could review and assess the guidelines and application. This will be done in a TAC work session.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

ADJOURNMENT 2:52pm

Colleen Dick, Assistant City Manager