



**REGIONAL ARTS
COMMISSION**
OF ST. LOUIS

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**Regional Arts Commission
Growth & Development Committee Minutes
January 11, 2024 via ZOOM
10 a.m.**

Committee Members in Attendance

Mont Levy, chair, Rhonda Carter-Adams, Sam Fiorello, Beverly Isom, Roz Johnson, ex-officio

Staff Attendees

Angie Peters, Savannah Babington, Nichole Belford, Tony Chance, Jay Scherder, Jason Schipkowski, Lea Sutherlin

Call to Order & Approval of Minutes

Levy called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Levy shared the following, regarding RAC's new Growth & Development (G&D) Committee: (1) thanked all members of this Committee for agreeing to serve; (2) G&D committee will reimagine how RAC develops funding; (3) this Committee may be called upon to make connections and some typical fundraising, but will serve as more of a strategic level group; and (4) during this meeting - will address purpose, duties, work plan, and some opportunities that have already surfaced through the work of Peters, VP of Growth & Development.

Levy asked Peters to comment and present the committee overview.

Peters thanked Levy for agreeing to serve as chair, and those who have agreed to serve as committee members, then shared that following: (1) her background and why she (Peters) came to RAC in the role as VP of Growth & Development; (2) RAC no longer being able to solely rely on Hotel/Motel tax revenue for single source of funding; and (3) gave departmental breakdown of Growth & Development and introduced members of the G&D team.

Committee Overview & Fundraising Efforts (Peters)

Peters gave the following overview of the G&D Committee and fundraising efforts: (1) strategic thinking and strategic partnerships; (2) importance of reputation management and awareness; (3) Peters' ongoing meetings with commissioners and stakeholders; (4) recent fundraising efforts; and (5) opportunities for RAC to focus on moving forward.





Approval of Growth & Development Committee Purpose & Duties

Levy reported the following: (1) duties give an idea of committee work in collaboration with staff; (2) job of this Committee, moving forward, is to get direction; (3) Levy read the redrafted purpose statement included in the packet for this meeting, which included the new sentence regarding strategic direction; (4) important to emphasize RAC's role in cultural tourism; and (5) his (Levy's) belief that the for-profit community does not want to see the arts fail.

Levy then asked for comments.

Isom shared appreciation for clearly explained mission and responsibilities.

Carter-Adams asked about the committee's measure of success toward the progress of this new mission in addition to increased funding beyond Hotel/Motel tax revenue.

Levy concurred, and that it must be in a way so as not to compete with grantee constituent agencies.

Fiorello concurred and added that this Committee needs to determine what that means as 'the pond' is small.

Peters noted that G&D will "look outside the pond" as there are some local entities interested in sponsoring RAC's 40th Anniversary Campaign. She added that there might be an opportunity for additional ARPA funds along with 1% for the arts around public art, and that traditional philanthropy will be a small part.

Levy noted that he is hopeful around the possibility of additional ARPA funds as RAC has proven the ability to get dollars out the door quickly.

Angie concurred and shared the following: (1) "success breeds success" and that RAC brings results; (2) gave example of a recent conversation between Cooksey and a national funder who has invited RAC to apply for a large amount of funds which will support the art of music in 2024-2025; and (3) while all partnerships might not bring big dollars, also looking to generate additional reputation, brand management and awareness around RAC.

Levy noted that as this Committee looks for dollars via new/reimagined methods, must be disciplined not to let opportunities for dollars send RAC into a direction not aligned with RAC's mission and strategic plan.

Motion made by Fiorello, seconded by Carter-Adams, and unanimously approved to adopt the Growth and Development Committee Purpose & Duties. Vote was as follows:

Yea –Levy, Carter-Adams, Fiorello, Isom, Johnson

Nay – none

Abstain - none





Levy then reviewed the following: (1) gift acceptance policy – will ask staff to draft for a future meeting; (2) revenues of generation, roles and partners; (3) review and support of RAC fundraising materials – high priority for Angie to develop for the April meeting; (4) plans for RAC’s 40th Anniversary Campaign, and the role of this Committee to support those activities and plans; (5) possibly reimagine what it means for RAC to be a 501c3; (6) review what the Board and Staff are doing toward strategic goals in giving efforts; (7) working together to support idea of pursuing partners; (8) review/support cultural tourism efforts; and (9) advise, support and participate in advocacy efforts at the federal, state and local levels. Levy gave kudos to Belford for her incredible work and stated that while he will be unable to participate in Advocacy Day in Jefferson City, he encouraged members of this Committee to try to accommodate these opportunities. Levy then noted that this Committee will meet at least four [4] times per year and invited comments.

Johnson thanked Levy for agreeing to chair and commissioners for being part of this Committee, and staff for being committed to this work along with all else being done. She noted the following regarding this Committee: (1) a long time coming as the pandemic forced tough choices related to funding and slow return of Hotel/Motel tax revenue resulting in somewhat of an urgency; and (2) not a daunting task but a worthwhile investment in everyone’s time and effort. Johnson then stated that she is excited about this work and reemphasized that the G&D Committee has no intention of competing with grantees but taking the lead as an organization of good stewardship. She then noted Cooksey’s impact on the community in general, the arts community in particular, the staff/team she (Cooksey) has assembled along with her clarity of the mission and how to accomplish it, and that Cooksey will be a huge part of the work of this Committee

Fiorello noted that this is very exciting and gave kudos to Peters, Belford, Scherder, and the entire G&D Team. He added that overall, RAC is fortunate to have such an incredible team. Fiorello then shared an example of an anticipated corporate foundation presence in STL, and possibly looking to connect with this major foundation.

Carter Adams asked how a committee member without corporate connections can still be impactful.

Levy noted the following: (1) this Committee will brainstorm and discuss a list of partners that help tell that story and how G&D Committee members can be valuable; (2) reminded that this is not a “30-day project” but that this Committee exists to lay the foundations, reimagine and think outside the box. Levy then asked Peters to share her thoughts on partner prospects.

Potential Partners for Revenue Generation

Peters reviewed the list of potential revenue opportunities (included in the packet for this meeting) and noted it was generated by Scherder. Peters noted the following: (1) G&D continues to brainstorm on prospective partners and that the G&D team is looking at how to “divide and conquer” the list; (2) gave examples of product branding - company that might use RAC’s name, logo and push forth a STL artist; and (3) return on investment of sponsorships.





Committee Work Plan

Levy highlighted the 2024 Work Plan and requested that the fourth quarter meeting (10/10/24) be rescheduled for either September 24 or September 25. He reminded that this will be a fluid work plan and for committee members to feel free to contact him or Peters with any questions.

Levy asked Nichole to report on Advocacy Day.

Belford explained the process for Advocacy Day reported the following: (1) RAC has opportunity to participate in Advocacy Day, February 7, 2024; (2) RAC bus of 50 to Jefferson City, Missouri will go speak with legislators on the importance of supporting the arts; (3) she (Belford) works with Missouri Citizens for the Arts (MAC) and that board reviews and takes concerns to legislators; (4) pushing for more funding for MAC and RAC; (5) she has set appointments for participants to meet legislators on Advocacy Day; and (6) currently have a group of 30, invited anyone interested to participate, and noted that lunch will be included.

Carter-Adams Rhonda requested to participate in Advocacy Day.

Adjournment

Motion made by Levy, seconded by Carter-Adams, and unanimously approved to adjourn the January 11, 2024 Growth & Development Committee meeting at 10:57 a.m.

Votes were as follows:

Yea –Levy, Carter-Adams, Fiorello, Isom, Johnson

Nay – none

Abstain - none

Submitted by
L. Sutherlin, Exec. Asst. & Commission Administrator

Attachments

- Growth and Development Committee Purpose & Duties
- Committee Work Plan
- Potential Partners for Revenue Generation – Sales Proceeds

