

**Bend Cultural Tourism Fund
Minutes – Approved December 7, 2017
September 25, 2017 1:00pm-5:00pm
East Bend Branch, Deschutes Public Library
62080 Dean Swift Road, Bend OR 97701**

In attendance: Noelle Fredland; Kevin Barclay; John Flannery; Zac Boone; Jason Graham; Rene' Mitchell; Jenny Malone; Cassandra Schindler; Jenny Green; Aaron Switzer; Jodie Barram; Shannon Planchon; Jen Rusk, Facilitator; Shari Crandall, minutes.

Absent: Rod Porsche; Brian Wagner.

Guests: Scott Greenstone, Greenstone Financial Reporting; Kevney Dugan, Visit Bend; Valerie Warren, Visit Bend; Heather Vihstadt, High Desert Museum.

The meeting was called to order at 1:05pm.

I. Welcome/Introductions

Fredland opened the meeting and extended a thank you to the Commissioners for their time and dedication to the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund.

a. Introductions, including Jen Rusk (Facilitator).

Those present at the meeting introduced themselves, including Jen Rusk. Jen Rusk has worked with nonprofits in strategic planning for more than 30 years. Her role at this meeting is to act as the meeting's facilitator and time keeper to keep the Commissioners on track as they go through the agenda within the time frame allotted.

b. Overview of the work session and participation

Fredland and Mitchell closely reviewed each concern listed in the minutes of the BCTF Commission Meeting on May 23, 2017. They determined that many were already covered in the existing policies. The Executive Committee, along with Rusk, then worked on the remaining concerns over the summer. They also invited the FY17 BCTF applicants to a meeting held at Visit Bend to discuss the applicants' concerns.

The intent of the meeting today is to discuss the concerns raised in the May BCTF meeting and by the applicants; to possibly vote upon certain procedural and/or policy changes; and, to then form an Ad Hoc Grant Committee to do substantive work resulting from the remaining concerns and today's discussion. The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will then present its recommendations to the Commission at the December 2017 meeting for final action.

II. Commission Business

a. Budget Report – Scott Greenstone

Greenstone presented the "Bend Cultural Tourism Fund Financial Reporting Package, August 2017 [Package]." The Package does not include the BCTF FY18 line item budget. He will provide that to Planchon soon.

BCTF FY17 had a final \$210,000 grant fund surplus of which the Commission pledged approximately \$198,000. With two months into the new fiscal year, BCTF is close to budget: City funding is slightly ahead of budget, operating expenses are a little behind due to timing of the report [see Package, p3]. While the City decreased the percentage of revenue given to Visit Bend, the transient taxes are higher than originally projected. Based on the numbers, the revenue forecast for FY18 will be similar to FY17, with a projected starting figure of \$210,000.

b. Minutes from May 2017 meeting [Commission Meeting Packet 9.25.17 (CMP), p2-10]

The Commission approved the minutes as written.

III. Public Comment (Up to 3 minutes per speaker)

Heather Vihstadt, High Desert Museum, thanked the Commissioners and the BCTF funds awarded to the Museum which have supported some of the organization's dream projects.

IV. Policy Recommendations [CMP, p11]

a. Add an option to conduct closed work sessions to the Policies & Procedures

A proposed change to the BCTF Policies and Procedures states: "The BCTF Commission will have a minimum of four meetings per year (quarterly). Commission meetings will be open to the public *Any additional meetings that include a majority of BCTF Commissioners will also be open to the public, unless the Commission determines that a closed work session will allow a more robust conversation. The work session will be reported on at the next Commission meeting.*" (Italics added)[See CMP, p12]

The Commission uniformly understood the need for, and desired to have, transparency for BCTF meetings but also wanted to consider the option to conduct occasional work sessions and/or training sessions that were not necessarily open to the public.

Commission discussion led to several questions and need for clarification regarding: whether any of the Commission meetings could be "closed" to the public; whether and when "executive session" applies; who, in addition to the Commission, could attend the "closed" meetings, e.g. reporters; when the "closed" meeting could be called – within and/or outside a scheduled Commission quarterly meeting; whether "closed" is the appropriate designation; and, whether BCTF is subject to Oregon public meeting laws and associated rules.

Action: At the request of the Commission and with an emphasis on transparency, Kevney Dugan, Visit Bend, agreed to obtain clarification from the City of Bend whether BCTF is subject to the public meeting laws, and, if so, what language BCTF may use to amend its Policies & Procedures.

V. Proposed Revisions to Marketing Grant Application, Guidelines and Review Process

Planchon drew the Commission's attention to the written explanation and goals to be achieved by the end of the meeting [see CPM, p15-16], and proposed revisions to the Grant Guidelines and Application Questions for Cultural Tourism: Marketing/Program Enhancement for FY18 [see CFM, p 17-20].

a. Present, discuss, adopt proposed grant application revisions [CMP, p17-20]

Grant Objectives [CMP, p17]:

- Revise introductory sentence to "Cultural tourism grants are intended to attract tourists to *regionally based arts and culture projects, activities or events with a measurable and positive economic impact on the community of Bend.*" (Italics added)

There was no objection by the Commission to the revision of the introductory sentence.

QUALITY OF CULTURAL PROGRAMMING [CMP, p19]:

- Change the section title from "Quality of Services and Outcome" to "Quality of Cultural Programming."

There was no objection by the Commission to this title change.

- Revise maximum review points allocated for Quality of Cultural Programming from "25" points to "15" points.

Planchon noted that to maintain 100 as the maximum review points allowed for an application, the maximum review points for Cultural Programming was reduced to 15 points since the maximum review points for ROI were increased because ROI has a higher priority in the guidelines.

Toward the end of the meeting, several Commissioners noted they would like to see the maximum review points for Quality of Cultural Programming changed to "20" rather than the suggested "15," maintain the recommended increase of maximum review points for ROI at "20", but decrease Collaboration, Partnerships, and Resource Development to maximum review points from "15" to "10". [See minutes under Collaboration, Partnerships, and Resource Development, p6.]

Action: The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review and make recommendations to the Commission at the next meeting with respect to a change in maximum review points for Cultural Programming and Collaboration, Partnerships, and Resource Development.

- Question 4. “If applicable what is the seating/audience capacity of the facility where the event will be held?”
- Question 5. “What has been the participant count in the past? If the event is already at full capacity, how will you accommodate additional audience members?”

Planchon noted that these questions broaden the capacity from seating to audiences and asks for a strategy to accommodate new audience members.

Discussion. BCTF was approved by Bend voters to enhance the local economy and support art and cultural activities through attracting tourists to Bend, the equivalent of “heads in beds.” Residents do not generate tourism revenue. Last grant cycle an applicant was at or near capacity with resident attendance and it was unclear how the applicant was going to extend capacity to bring in tourists. If an event has near-to-full capacity, the applicant needs to show how it will expand capacity. The question, then, for an applicant is how does the applicant show it is increasing capacity to accommodate tourists.

Action: The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review and make recommendations to the Commission at the next meeting with respect to the wording of Questions 4 and 5.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY [CMP, p19]:

- Question 6. “What is the mission/purpose of your organization?”

Planchon noted BCTF has not previously asked for the applicant’s organizational mission, and will now do so. There was no objection by the Commission for this inclusion.

- Question 9. “Provide a brief biographical summary of key staff, artists involved and/or volunteers for this project (resumes will be included in your uploads.)”

The Commission discussed the different elements of the question.

Action: The Commission determined that:

- i. “Key Staff” is to remain under Organizational Capacity;
- ii. “Key Staff” is to be defined as: personnel, including staff and volunteers, who are responsible for organizing and completing the project;
- iii. The applicant is to provide brief biographical summaries, including titles, of Key Staff, but need not upload resumes;
- iv. To strengthen grant applications, BCTF will make a recommendation to applicants to include the names of the “artists involved” but this will be placed under Quality of Cultural Programming rather than Organizational Capacity.

Budget [CMP, p19]

Planchon explained “Budget” was moved to Organizational Capacity and three new questions were included to better help applicants understand upon what standards BCTF reviewers are basing their scores.

- Question 11. “What is your grant request? [do we want to cap the request?]”

Commissioners discussed whether BCTF should place a limit on applicants’ grants requests. This discussion included “cap,” “percentage of project’s budget,” and “no cap or percentage of project’s budget.”

Action: The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review and make a recommendation to the Commission at the next meeting with respect to limits, if any, on applicants’ grants requests.

- Question 12. “What percentage of your total budget is this request?”

Clarification was requested: does this question go to the applicant’s “total operating budget”? Yes.

- Question 13. “Will you be able to complete this activity if you do not receive full funding? What will you need to revise if you do not receive full funding?”

The Commission discussed Question 13 at some length. How best can the Commission tell an applicant that the applicant may not receive full funding and that the applicant may need to raise additional financing or cut some programming if it doesn't receive full funding? Does the Commission change the wording of one or both questions under #13? Does the Commission eliminate the first question? Does the Commission combine the two questions and ask one question, with an example put forth: “If you do not receive full funding, will the project continue? Please explain.”

Action: The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review and make a recommendation to the Commission at the next meeting with respect to the wording of Question 13.

Within the discussion on Question 13, the Commission addressed two additional issues: 1. whether BCTF will allow an organization that has previously received BCTF funds to apply each award cycle or require a break after a certain number of consecutive award cycles; and, 2. the process the Commission is to use to fully or partially fund applications.

1. Whether BCTF will allow an organization that has previously received funds to apply each award cycle or require a break after a certain number of consecutive award cycles.

Discussion. The Bend voters agreed to provide a stable source of funds through the BCTF for arts and cultural events to increase tourism in Bend during the shoulder/winter seasons. It is the Commission's job is to make the requisite decisions to fully or partially award the funds, on annually repeating, or different, projects.

The discussion raised different possibilities: future grant cycles might create a third grant –a sustaining grant – for which organizations that had received prior grants may apply; the successful organization would to take a rest-year, unless the organization submitted an application for a different event; BCTF is more about an event that brings “heads to beds” than the organization.

Action: After considerable discussion, Commissioners appeared to reach consensus: every fiscal year is a new year; the Commission will look at each submitted application with fresh eyes whether or not an applicant has received prior BCTF awards.

2. The process the Commission is to use to fully or partially fund FY18 BCTF applications:

Three general proposals were discussed. One proposal would include a two-step internal process. With the scoring software, each commissioner will review and evaluate the strength of the grant application scoring it up to a maximum score of 100; each commissioner will then estimate the dollar amount s/he would like to award the applicant; the commissioners' scores and dollar amounts for the particular application are then averaged for a final score and amount which would then be used in awarding grants. If a commissioner desired to solicit the expertise of another commissioner, this would be done during this initial review process. With this process, most of the evaluation will occur prior to the May award meeting.

A second proposal would score the application, but not use the dollar amount function in the software. The score for the applicant is then averaged prior to the May meeting. At the May meeting the commissioners will discuss the amount to be awarded. The award process may possibly appear messy, but the commissioners will work through process in an open meeting.

A third proposal would use the two-stage process provided by the software, the commissioners will do any vetting and the scores and dollar amounts will be averaged prior to the May meeting. During the May meeting the commissioners will then debate the dollar amount to be awarded.

Upon completion of discussion, Commissioners supported:

- i. An 80% threshold [see action immediately below];
- ii. Each reviewer/scorer will complete the two-steps provided in the software program - scoring and allocating a dollar amount -- for each application, while applying the Conflicts of Interest policy;

- iii. Planchon will provide the score and dollar allocation averages for each applicant to each commissioner prior to the May meeting;
- iv. The averages will then be used as a starting point by the commissioners to discuss the grant applications at the May meeting; and,
- v. The Commission need not award the full amount of the available BCTF funds within a given fiscal year.

Action: Schindler moved, Fredland seconded, those applicants who earn an average threshold score of 80% or more will receive some amount of BCTF funding. The Commission unanimously passed the motion.

Action: The Commissioners agreed to state within the FAQs: the Commission need not award the full amount of available BCTF funds within a given fiscal year.

Action: During the discussion, the Commission understood the need to have a written procedure that provides an avenue for an applicant's grievance. This issue will be forwarded to the Ad Hoc Grant Committee for review and recommendation to the Commission next meeting.

Conflicts of interest was raised during this discussion. Given the several conflicts of interest among the commissioners for different applicants, the number of scorers is reduced for several applications and that then gives increased weight to an inconsistent commissioner's score, high or low. Planchon explained she reviews each commissioner's scores and will call a commissioner, if necessary, if there seems to be an inconsistency. She noted that there are inherent biases among the commissioners, that is why there are 13 commissioners. Further, to offset the number of commissioners who were unable to score due to conflicts of interest in FY17, two additional non-Commission reviewer/scorers were included.

Historically, Planchon explained, to assure transparency and decrease conflicts of interest, the reviewer/scorers could have consisted of: commissioners, possibly with conflicts of interest but who would be required to recuse themselves when a conflict arose; commissioners, all of whom would not have conflicts of interest; or, a third-party panel not associated with the Commission and all of whom had no conflicts of interest. It was determined to create a commission that included commissioners who had conflicts of interest but would be required to recuse themselves as defined by BCTF policy.

A question arose: given the Conflicts of Interest policy, who can and cannot talk during the review process.

Action: The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review and make a recommendation next meeting with respect to who can and cannot talk during grant review discussions.

QUALITY AND THOROUGHNESS AND MARKETING PLAN [CMP p19]

- Question 17. "What is your proposed media plan? Please include all media tactics, frequency, size (if applicable) and costs."

Discussion. While the commissioners are not the "advertising police," they do want to have a clear understanding of whether marketing is to be paid with cash and/or through an in-kind agreement. An example arose in FY17 in which an applicant had budgeted \$10,000 for marketing in the Portland area. It was clear to the Commissioners that \$10,000 would not be sufficient to cover Portland's high marketing costs; but, it would have been helpful for the Commissioners to know whether the applicant had arranged for in-kind services.

Discussion also included: providing very specific marketing-related questions that outline the components of the marketing/media plan and then allow the applicant to attach a marketing/media plan; marketing costs could be listed in the Budget as a line item and then have questions that break out the marketing/media plan of action under Quality and Thoroughness and Marketing Plan; the Scoring Rubric for this section could provide guidance to the applicant of what the Commissioners expect and how they will score.

Action: To assure applicants include marketing dollar expenditures and in-kind agreements, the Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review and determine whether the questions currently listed under Quality and Thoroughness and Marketing Plan

capture the Commission's intent [see CMP 19-20]. If not, the Ad Hoc Grant Committee will make new recommendations to the Commission at the next meeting.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION [CMP, p20]

- Planchon recommends a revision to allow "20" maximum points for ROI.

Action: The Commissioners agreed with this change in maximum points.

- Question 24. "Describe how the arts & culture-based activity has or will attract tourists and have measurable economic impact for Bend, e.g. visitors expected, rooms booked, off-season enhancement, etc."

Planchon shifted this question to ROI, because it fit better than its prior location.

Action: The Commissioners noted the change and had no need to discuss or take action.

- Question 25. "Number of visitors expected X \$120 per day based on Visit Bend's calculations posted at <http://www.visitbend.com/Bend-Winter-16-17-Visitor-Survey-FINAL.pdf>" (where the calculation is based on total lodging, dining, etc.)

Action: After brief discussion, the Commissioners agreed with \$120 per day per visitor.

- Question 26. "Provide further information on the expected return on investment (ROI) that the BCTF should expect from its investment in the proposed activity – particularly regarding measurable economic impact for Bend, e.g. visitors expected, rooms booked, off-season enhancement, etc. that may exceed the \$120 per day anticipated."

Action: The Commissioners agreed to remove Question 26, but add a box to Question 25 to provide a field for "Additional Comments."

- Question 28. "Briefly describe how you see the event or program evolving in the future."

Action: The Commissioners agreed to delete Question 28 as not relevant to Marketing grant applications.

COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIPS, AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [CMP, p20]

- Revise maximum points allotted to "15" points for Collaboration, Partnerships, and Resource Development.

Many commissioners expressed a desire to change the "15" points to "10" points in order to allocate more points to Quality of Cultural Programming.

Action: The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review and make a recommendation with respect to the new maximum points for both Quality of Cultural Programming and Collaboration, Partnerships, and Resource Development. [See minutes under Quality of Cultural Programming, p3.]

- Question 29. "Describe the cash and in-kind resources, partnerships and collaborations that have been developed to support and complete the proposed activity (Mandatory: Upload no more than 2 letters of collaborative or partner support.)"

Discussion. Commissioners want meaningful cultural partnerships and collaboration. What does the "letter of support" mean? What is the level of support - a partnership that is superficial or that has a greater level of support - and how does the Commission define that? The Commissioners like the idea behind the question but might want to make it stronger. Since the Scoring Rubric will break down and itemize how the Commission will score a question, does the Commission keep the question or tighten the question? Should BCTF provide examples to the applicants of what the Commission is looking for?

Action: Commissioners note the reference to "in-kind" resources will already be addressed in Budget and Marketing. There is no need for "in-kind" in this question.

Action: The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review Question 29 and make a recommendation to the Commission at the next meeting.

b. Revise and Propose scoring guidance and relation to guidelines (Scoring Rubric) [CMP, p21-23]

MARKETING GRANT REVIEW 100 points total – Draft Scoring Guidance FY18.

The intention of the Scoring Rubric is to provide scoring guidance within each topic to the scorer/reviewers, the Rubric will then be shared as part of the application packet to aid applicants as they prepare their application.

Action: The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review the Scoring Rubric under each section and make recommendations to the Commissioners at the next meeting.

VI. Appoint Ad Hoc Grant Committee

The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will review and make recommendations upon which the Commissioners are to vote at the next meeting. The Ad Hoc Grant Committee need not publish notice of their meetings because a majority of commissioners are not meeting.

The Ad Hoc Grant Committee will include Planchon, Schindler, Switzer, and Boone.

VII. Commissioner Education and Support

Discussion. Fredland noted that the Commission experienced a turnover of 7 commissioners last year. There will be additional incoming commissioners in FY2018. The handout listing the BCTF Commission positions [see CMP, p25] includes the “term year” of the commissioners. “Term year” represents the year a commissioner “terms out” of the Commission. Several current commissioners’ “term year” ends either December 31, 2017 or 2018. Commissioners serve two year terms but no more than three consecutive terms. The Visit Bend Board approves all commissioners and reviewers.

Planchon requested volunteers for a Nominating Committee who will help reach out to potential prospects to determine whether they would like to serve on the Commission and to help nominate a new Executive Committee.

Action: The Nominating Committee will include Planchon, Fredland, and Mitchell.

a. Review current requirements of Commission members [CMP, p24]

Planchon provides an orientation to all incoming commissioners.

b. Identify new processes to help Commissioners prepare for work and other options for support (orientation, mentor, etc)

To aid future incoming commissioners, the Commissioners discussed possible support options that might be helpful: a mentoring program; buddy program; and, technical assistance work session for all commissioners, new and current.

Each current commissioner volunteered to be a buddy to a new incoming commissioner. A technical assistance work session for all commissioners may be scheduled.

VIII. Closing Comments

Dugan thanked the BCTF Commission. He noted the importance of the human element in evaluating the grant applications. Since Bend is a small community there is bound to be some perceived conflicts of interest, and that is okay. He appreciates the Commissioners who are doing their best to assure BCTF funds are invested in the best possible ways.

IX. Adjourn

Rusk adjourned the meeting at 4:30pm.

The next meeting will be Thursday, December 7, 2017, from 3:00-5:00pm at the Bend Tour Company.