

**Bend Cultural Tourism Fund  
Commission Meeting Minutes  
July 21, 2014 - 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Brooks Meeting Room, Deschutes Public Library  
601 NW Wall Street, Bend, OR 97701**

Present: Shannon Planchon of Planchon Consulting, Aaron Switzer of Lay It Out Events and *The Source Weekly*, Marsha Stout of Arts Central, Brian Wagner of the Oregon Arts Commission, Julie Gregory, Chuck Arnold of the Downtown Bend Business Association, Cassandra Schindler, Matt Schiffman of City of Bend Arts and Beautification Committee, Jaime Aguirre of Ginger's Kitchen, René Mitchell of Scalehouse, Kevin Barclay of Deschutes Public Library, John Flannery of The Bend Tour Company, Amy Mentuck of The Nature of Words.

Absent: Noelle Fredland of The Old Mill District.

Guests: Rachael Rees of *The Bulletin*, Todd Looby of BendFilm, Isabelle Senger of High Desert Chamber Music, Cate O'Hagen of Arts Central, Dawn Boone of A6.

## **I. Introduction and Overview**

Doug LaPlaca called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Introductions followed.

Doug covered the purpose of the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund. It is an economic development fund for the promotion of tourism earmarked for arts and cultural organizations. It is not an arts fund.

Doug stated that Shannon Planchon would serve as the administrator. For the first year Visit Bend has appointed the Executive Committee: Brian Wagner will be the Chair, Noelle Fredland of The Old Mill District will be the Vice Chair, and the Treasurer position is currently open. For future years, the Commission will select its own Executive Committee.

Shannon Planchon introduced herself and stated that the Commission needs to decide how to work together in the future and how to involve as many arts and cultural organizations as possible. Shannon stated that the Commissioners have been charged with spreading the word about the fund and setting an example for other communities. Shannon also stated the Arts and Cultural Alliance would assist with announcements.

Shannon said that she is currently working on creating the BCTF program in Grants Online. She would like to ask applicants for a letter of intent by January with a March deadline proposed. This will help the Commission evaluate whether or not the program is reaching the right organizations. The fund is set up so that both small and large projects will be included.

It will be a challenge to assist organizations with understanding how tourism is defined as well as how each recipient's goal(s) will be evaluated as part of tourism promotion. The applicants will need to demonstrate that they have a measurement process in mind.

Over the next three months, Shannon will be asking the Commission questions to assure that the BCTF guidelines will be met as applicants use the Grants Online program. Shannon will be working with applicants up to one week before the deadline.

Shannon asked the Commission to suggest what might be dream project. Chuck Arnold stated that an off-season event or a very compelling public art program would be desired that would encourage visitors to select Bend as a destination. Aaron Switzer would like to see existing events coming forward to show how their small event would be able to grow in order to attract visitors from outside the area.

## **II. BCTF Leadership Team**

### Commissioners

Doug stated that the largest purpose (80% of the job) of the Commissioners will be to evaluate the grant applicants. The Grants Online program will make the process very streamlined and easy. All of the evaluations and reviews will be public. The goal is to have a soft launch of the program by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Shannon will be providing training.

The organization and/or event does not need to be in the Bend city limits, but it does need to demonstrate that it will create tourism revenue and economic benefit for the City of Bend.

Kevin Barclay asked about the measurement process. What about visitors who come for a cluster or group of activities? Kevin stated that it may be difficult to evaluate this correctly. Brian Wagner stated that part of the beauty of a large grant panel will be the different perspectives.

Part of Shannon's job will be to help with the post-grant follow up evaluation process. There will be a ROI plan included as part of the application process. The recipients will be responsible for presenting the results to the Commission.

Brian Wagner stated that if questions come up during the evaluation process, Brian or Shannon can go back to the applicant for additional information.

Doug continued that 10% of the Commissioners' job will be to serve as advocacy leaders of the BCTF.

### Grant Administrator

Shannon stated that her role will be to manage the online application process and serve as the liaison with Grants Online; providing assistance to the applicants; leading the Commissioners through the evaluation process; scheduling meetings; performing outreach; and to help the Commissioners succeed in their roles.

### Visit Bend

Visit Bend provides the BCTF with 7.5% of Visit Bend's total public funding as well as paying for the third party financial management of the BCTF finances. Visit Bend also hires and manages the BCTF Grant Administrator. The funds for the Grant Administrator come from the BCTF fund.

Visit Bend will also decide on an annual basis if the BCTF should be continued.

The Bend arts community will help communicate information about the BCTF.

### **III. BCTF Grant Process**

Shannon stated that she would like to ask for a letter of intent from the potential applicants and ask for consensus on whether or not this should be part of the process. Brian presented the motion to include Letters of Intent as part of the BCTF process. Kevin Barclay seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Doug stated that it is not necessary to be a non-profit to apply.

Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be submitted to the Commissioners for consideration.

Once the Grants Online program is live, applicants can apply at any time. The application launch will be September 30<sup>th</sup>.

The timeline presented in the meeting agenda is:

- i. Grants Online launch/completion
- ii. Application launch
- iii. Application deadline
- iv. Grant recommendations
- v. Awards made
- vi. ROI analysis and presentation to the Visit Bend Board of Directors

Doug stated that the grant amounts are not pre-determined so that both small and large awards could be included.

Brian said that it is necessary to determine a balance of funding. This is generally done during the final meeting between the Commissioners before the awards are given.

The online evaluations may be changed during the six-week evaluation period all the way through the final Commission panel meeting. The applicants may receive a compilation of all of the Commissioners' comments.

#### **V. Commissioner Comments**

Brian stated that he had had the opportunity to work with Doug LaPlaca on another panel and feels privileged to serve on the Commission and act as the Chair for the first year. Brian served on the tourism board when he lived in Durango, Colorado.

Brian feels that Bend is a good example of a place using the arts to strengthen the economy and livability of the community.

Kevin Barclay asked about potential conflicts of interest. Shannon pointed out that this is included in the Policy and Guidelines document.

Nominations for the position of Treasurer are open.

#### **VI. Public Comment**

Isabelle Senger asked how detailed the requirements of the ROI would be. She also asked if the amount of money as part of the applicant's budget would be a part of the consideration. It will not.

Isabelle also asked about the tourism promotion piece.

Todd Looby asked about the survey and data gathering process. He also asked about what type of tourism data is available – hotel rooms booked, etc.

Dawn Boone stated that the timing of the grant process would be difficult for the organization she works with.

#### **VII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55p.m.