

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND APPROVED
Arts and Cultural Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 9, 2015
3:00p.m. – Conference Room # 4

Committee Members Present: Chairman Jane Joseph, Jim Collett, Meg Eberly, Janice Gray, and Bob Lee

Committee Members Participating by Phone: Lisa Snider and Ben Wolfe

Committee Members Absent: Vice Chairman Maryann Bastnagel and Hannah Horne

Town Council Present: Mayor Bennett

Town Staff Present: Jill Foster, Deputy Director of Community Development
Kathleen Carlin, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Chairman Joseph called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

2. FOIA Compliance

Public notification of this meeting has been published and posted in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Approval of the Agenda

The committee **approved** the agenda as submitted by general consent.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The committee **approved** the minutes of the August 24, 2015 meeting as submitted by general consent.

5. Presentation and Discussion:

Chairman Joseph introduced today's guest speakers and requested that they make their presentations.

Jean-Marie Cote, President of Hilton Head Plantation Artists

The Hilton Head Plantation Artists Association has 62 members, including new people from many areas of the country. The average membership age is 70 years. Their goals are:

1. Opportunity to learn and network within the arts community; some are very experienced artists and some are just learning.

2. Help to show their work: e.g. Art Market and Studio Tour. This organization sheds light on what Hilton Head Plantation artists are doing. They have art shows within the gates, using invitation letters for the public to enter Hilton Head Plantation. Recently, over 400 people attended during three hours and \$10,000 of art was sold.
3. Selling Art: Some do it as a hobby while others do it for profit. Hilton Head artists are selling in Bluffton galleries because sales are good there and the artists benefit from foot traffic in a central town street location.

Mr. Cote believes there is opportunity for better community support for the arts. Artists do not need fancy studio space, as the cost point is dependent on whether the artist is selling art and how much they can afford. Mr. Cote suggested \$10 per sq. ft. as a good price point. The best location option is to be concentrated in a walking area intermingled with other businesses. He mentioned that an 'Art Walk' area allows people to see and connect with the artists, which he believes better sells art. Art studios in Savannah's Market Square are good examples. Artists want studios with some intimacy - windows on the street are only for high priced artists.

Mr. Cote emphasized the need for better education on local requirements for the artists. Many artists do not know they need a business license to sell work, and that they are required to collect sales tax. He suggested a central place to find such information, including other types of information (such as, where to get art work framed).

He also indicated that big art events on the island need signage, such as banners. People don't know events are going on due to a lack of publicity, support and signage.

Chairman Joseph thanked Jean-Marie Cote for his presentation and requested that the next speakers make their presentation.

Linda & Glenn Neff, Co-Presidents, Choral Society:

The Choral Society started in 1975, with 40 continuous years, and is now the third largest performance arts organization on Hilton Head Island. The Choral Society is made up of 125 passionate singers, a world-class conductor, with good rehearsal space. Their goal is to recruit and nurture amateurs to create professional music. Their audience consists of visitors and residents. They collaborate with the Hilton Head Island Symphony Orchestra and other musical groups and with the town, performing on Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

The Choral Society has a strong positive economic impact on Hilton Head Island, even though they do not have much cushion to cover their costs. The average ticket price is \$25-\$30, but their sales cover only about 55% of the costs. Ideally, they would like tickets to cover 75% of the costs. Cost of their venue is \$11,000 for seven days of use.

There are limits in the selection of venue. The Choral Society hosts four concerts per year at the First Presbyterian Church. The space lacks proper lighting, acoustics and seating (1,000 limit). The Choral Society also brings in world-class groups to perform at Holy Family Church, which has similar performance problems. Ideally, a venue would have 1,200 seats. With a larger venue, they could bring in more outside groups.

Mr. and Mrs. Neff indicated they believe art is an after-thought for both visitors and residents because Hilton Head Island does not advertise it as an Arts Destination. They mentioned that the Choral Society is planning a Choral Festival in 2017, and they need community support and affordable publicity.

The Neffs discussed the idea of an Office of Cultural Affairs. They suggested that if this is recommended, there must be multiple people with multi-faceted support. It cannot be just one person. People need to know that the Town and the Chamber of Commerce are supporting the Arts. It is why many people move to Hilton Head Island. People have choices but other places do not have what we have here. They mentioned Charleston's Spoleto and Savannah's Music Festival as being the type of venue that could be done on the Island.

Chairman Joseph thanked Mr. and Mrs. Neff and introduced the next speaker.

Janice Gray, President, Art League of Hilton Head Island (ALHH)

Ms. Gray indicated the ALHH is the only non-profit visual arts organization on the Island and includes all media, all ages, and all levels of skill. Their goal is to offer a place for artists to show their work. For a small fee, artists can show their art 10-11 months of the year (the other months are the Gullah Show and Biennale National Show).

Ms. Gray explained how their organization operates. Over 160 exhibiting artists are currently involved with the League. There is opportunity for new and established artists to join them. The artists receive a high 65% commission, whereas Academy teachers get 55%. Jewelry from 12 artists made up 25% of sales last year. Their venue is at the Arts Center, which works well. There is good collaboration, but the rent is difficult to overcome.

They collaborate in a few ways. They have done an outreach program to the schools. Children are working with art teachers and the PTA. Also, they have set up satellite exhibits at Starbucks, the Library, Share Center, Hospital and the French Bakery. They would like to collaborate with the For Profit galleries. She envisions the ALHH to be the "first place to go" by getting the more well known, experienced artists to put one piece in each show. It would be a way to direct interested patrons to the galleries which sell many works of that artist. It would also bring more traffic to the Arts Center. Ms. Gray indicated she would also like to see collaboration with off island arts groups.

Ms. Gray explained their issues. Limited parking at Shelter Cove causes scheduling difficulties, especially in the summer months. The Art League also has to work within the artists' schedule. At their current location, signage is limited – they would like to have a

sign on US 278. Another idea for festivals is to use banners on light poles. She also suggested competition for banner designs. Ms. Gray also sees insufficient marketing and lack of resident awareness. She also supports a centralized web-based calendar of events and an Office of Cultural Affairs with a web site containing links to the arts organizations.

6. Unfinished Business

Discussion: Review of research on Dropbox documents.

Chairman Joseph indicated there are ArtsPlace Americas Grant educational sessions sponsored by the South Carolina Arts Commission that should be investigated. This grant program offers between \$50,000-\$500,000 to support place-based arts projects. She plans to attend the session at Penn Center on September 22nd.

Chairman Joseph then requested a presentation by Ben Wolfe on documents he has reviewed.

Ben Wolfe reviewed three documents and reported on two of them. They had a 'future' focus about millennials and livestreaming video. Mr. Wolfe pointed out that millennials are very social, use lots of social media and want to always be online (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) Millennials like the arts, especially experiential events, and events that serve food. However, it was cautioned that the millennials do not want to pay for anything.

A concern was voiced about live streaming performances with equity actors and unionized crews. Lisa Snider said that Denver allows live streaming to schools because there would not be a charge. The committee discussed the use of Snapchat Regional Storage. Last summer, Hilton Head Stories showed many pictures of the beach.

Mr. Wolfe suggested that the committee think outside of the box to attract millennials. He also discussed live streaming as a future need, possibly by using apps.

Mr. Wolfe also reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the interviews conducted with the schools. Their only issue was the question of requiring non-profits that get ATAX funds to demonstrate support for school arts programs. There is a concern about forcing a non-profit to spend donor funds to support another non-profit. The committee will discuss this further when their recommendations are developed.

Chairman Joseph stated that due to time constraints, Meg Eberly and Lisa Snider will make their presentations on September 21st.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. by general consent.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

September 21, 2015

Kathleen Carlin
Secretary

Jane Joseph
Chairman