

Minutes – October 4, 2021 – BRC for Arts and Nonprofits

Members in Attendance: Remote: Russ Grazier, Barbara Massar, Jason Goodrich, JerriAnne Boggis. In person: Courtney Perkins, Beth Falconer, Renee Giffroy, Kathy Somssich, Nihco Gallo, Tina Sawtelle, Robin Albert.

Non-members in attendance: Nancy Carmer, Ben VanCamp, Darci Knowles, Stephanie Seacord (remote).

Russ called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM

Corrections to the last minutes of September 20, 2021: Marketing initiative: Russ has spoken to Mayor Becksted and City Manager Karen Conard. Both are in favor of the proposal to make the \$51,700 left in the Art-Speak account available for a marketing initiative for Arts organizations in conjunction with the Chamber Collaborative. The City Manager will present the proposal at tonight's City Council meeting and will speak with the Legal Dept regarding a plan to implement the proposal.

Marketing initiative: Ben VanCamp and Darci Knowles presented the marketing plan developed with the subcommittee, with Jason as point person. The plan was developed to synchronize with the refresh of the GoPortsmouthNH.com website and will gain synergy from that effort by aligning messages, while addressing arts/culture messages that might be missing from the overall campaign. The dedicated arts/culture campaign will:

- Support all arts and culture entities and individuals, non-profits and for-profits.
- Add an arts/culture landing page to the GoPortsmouthNH.com website so that the specific campaign offers measurable results.
- Provide a pilot program delivering a branding/awareness initiative on behalf of arts/culture

The proposed strategic plan includes:

- Targeted demographics to those who deliver the highest traffic to GoPortsmouthNH.com and who respond to keywords: Family focus, music, arts, performing arts. By narrowing the focus, the campaign can maximize its effectiveness: a males/female audience age 25-65, day-trippers (which does not preclude overnight stays), within a 60-mile radius. A share of the Chamber Collaborative's Google AdWords campaign is incorporated.
- A digital media plan (YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn) with 20% reserved for print ads in Seacoast Sunday, specifically designed to reach an older demographic showing interest in "what's happening in Portsmouth."
- Campaign creative
- Alignment with other PR and BRC initiatives

The pilot program (Oct 2021 – January 2022) is designed to build a foundation of tested messages and tactics with a Portsmouth Arts & Culture brand preparatory to campaigns for other seasons. As it is difficult to message events with such a wide range of experiences and seasonal programming, this brand campaign serves a comprehensive and community-wide effort to help all Portsmouth arts and culture interests to continue emerging from the impact of the pandemic. Part of that messaging might also support year-end giving to non-profits. The suggestion of messaging "Vintage Christmas in Portsmouth"

was discussed but may not serve the widest constituency, such as more contemporary enterprises who “do not have a vintage lens.”

Some BRC members cautioned against spending the full \$25,000 all at once, while recognizing the need to “spend enough to succeed” and reserving some funds for January to preview “what’s next” in the 2022 season.

Russ reported discussions with the City Manager hoping to advance the allocation of the remaining ArtSpeak budget and proposing that a portion of the ARPA funds be allocated to the arts/culture effort. Nancy Carmer echoed that goal, noting that ARPA funds are meant “for the people and industries hardest hit by the pandemic” – certainly including the arts/culture sector.

In order to avoid the pitfalls of ArtSpeak, it was advised that the marketing campaign “starts fresh” without reviving the goals and objectives of ArtSpeak.

Robin and Renee continue to work with Nancy Carmer on the AFTA Study. The immediate goal is to expand and populate the list of participating organizations and venues. All four volunteers are on board and will be meeting on October 18 to start work on a database of Arts & Culture organizations. A meeting in the Library is planned for December to train representatives of participating organizations.

A committee to allocate ARPA funds has not yet been set up, but Russ is in communication with City officials to present our request.

The next BRC meeting is on Monday, October 18, 2021 at 12 PM. Valerie Rochon of Portsmouth400 will be attending.

Russ adjourned the meeting at 1 PM.

Submitted by Kathy Somssich