

Waukegan Park District
Jack Benny Center for the Arts
Cultural Arts Advisory Committee Meeting
March 29, 2018
12:00pm meeting
Jack Benny Center
39 Jack Benny Road, Waukegan, IL 60087

- I. Call to Order
 - Mike Mayfield, Deputy Superintendent, called the meeting to order at 12:05pm

- II. Roll Call & Introductions
 - In attendance: George Bridges, Park District Commissioner; Jay Lerner, Executive Director; Errick Beverly, Superintendent of Recreation; Mike Mayfield, Deputy Superintendent; Ty Rhorer, Manager of Cultural Arts; Debra Carl, Cultural Arts Specialist; Bryan Escobar, Cultural Arts Specialist; Elizabeth Fallon, Department Coordinator; Harry Came, President of the Waukegan Historical Society; Dave Fletcher; Mark Harms.

- III. Review, Discuss, Decide
 - A. Updates on New Cultural Arts Staff/Responsibilities – Mike Mayfield
 - The Cultural Arts and Recreation Departments have combined into one department to provide a team approach to programming in the Waukegan Park District.
 - Update on staff job titles and organizational changes
 - B. Review of Waukegan Park District Cultural Arts Summer Program Offerings 2018 – Ty Rohrer
 - Free/low cost programming – there will be many additional programs and opportunities in the Summer Brochure to encourage participation in arts and history programming.
 - Free introductory classes
 - One and two week half day camps some of which will be low cost
 - Considering lowering the cost of private music lessons with one fee structure. The current fee, at the high end, is \$22.50 per half hour lesson and under consideration is lowering the fee to possibly \$15.00 per half hour lesson.
 - Committee member comments supported this idea and included:
 - Harry Came – a selling point could be that the cost is off-set by scholarship or sponsorship like what is done with NSG and the free Learn to SwimSmart program
 - Errick Beverly – word of mouth will help to spread the word that the quality hasn't changed
 - Jay Lerner – the park district has a track record of increased attendance with decrease in cost to the customer
 - Mark Harms – sounds like just an issue of marketing correctly
 - Mike Mayfield – ongoing highlighting of accomplishments would also help get the word out that the lower cost does not equal lower quality
 - Summer Arts in the Park Programming is all free to the community
 - New music, art and history camps will be offered this summer. These will be half day camps for one or two weeks which will provide an introduction to the arts and history.

- Lunch and Learn is another new program this summer with topics covering history in Waukegan. This will be a free program. Initially Ty will be the presenter but the long range plan would be to bring in a variety of presenters and topics that might interest the community.
 - The theatre is developing a renewed interest and Staff will be exploring unconventional ways to utilize the theatre such as for day camps, outside groups, exhibits.
 - Jay Lerner commented that the large endowment money can be utilized
- C. Updates on State and Local Agencies and Organization
- Update on Waukegan Art Council (WAC)– Ty Rohrer
 - Ty was recently elected to the board as the park district representative with Greg Petry and Claudia Freeman still on the board.
 - WAC is looking for a new way to be perceived in the community and provide arts information to the community
 - ArtWise committee is working on next fall’s program which will highlight member organizations offerings in arts and health & wellness
 - Update on Lake County Art League – Debra Carl
 - The Lake County Art League’s Spring Show will exhibit at the Jack Benny Center with a closing critique which is open to the public on May 21 from 7-9pm
 - Update on the Historical Society – Harry Came
 - The Historical Society celebrates 50 years with an anniversary luncheon for members at Bonnie Brook Club House on April 21 which will also be used as a fundraising kickoff event to raise the additional funds needed for the Museum addition. Over \$200,000 has been raised so far of the \$400,000 needed.
 - Updates on Capital Improvements FY17/18 – Mike Mayfield
 - The Jack Benny Center lower level waterproofing is complete and the dance studio space has been finished so classes can resume in the dance studio.
 - The floor in the back stage area has been replaced with a woodgrain vinyl flooring so this space can now be multi use including art classes.
 - Window treatments were installed
 - General building updates are being completed
- D. Staff Reports
- Ty Rohrer
 - Ty Rohrer reported the upcoming Museum exhibit will be “Waukegan’s Top 50 History Events” with a bracket style voting which will be open to the community and unveiled at the anniversary luncheon. This exhibit will be social media driven.
 - The Abraham Lincoln Traveling Exhibit will be coming to the Waukegan Historical Society as a donation for the permanent collection due to the connections of Josh Bill, Waukegan High School History teacher. Initially it will be displayed as a pop-up exhibit in the theatre.
 - Debra Carl
 - New dance class offerings this summer will be Salsa and Bachata
 - Still in need of a Ballet and Hip Hop instructor

- Summer movies in the park include a movie at Country Lane Park which was selected by the Country Lane subdivision facebook page poll of members. They voted to see “The Greatest Showman.” There will also be a movie at Clearview Park after the Grand Re-Opening, and a movie at the beach after Touch A Truck. New this year Popcorn is free thanks to the generous sponsorship of Mark Harms of Edward Jones Financial.
- New groups to Music at Washington Park are Nashville Electric Company and Chi-Town Soul
- Bryan Escobar
 - History Outreach in the schools has increased to 225 programs which has reached 7000 students
 - The Oral History Grant has been selected to move on to the next level in the process and this proposal has been submitted. The focus will be on stories of the African American and Latino community which are missing in many narratives of Waukegan history.
 - Continuing to digitize the collection, which is a huge but very important project
 - Art program classes have moved from the Visual Arts Center to the Jack Benny Center and so far there has been a great response to this change
 - The current Museum exhibit, Sweetheart Mine-WWI Love Letters, is also online and will remain online
 - Working on planning summer camp programs which will include games in history but also incorporate the newer game of disc golf
- E. Update on Waukegan Park District Projects – Errick Beverly
 - The Belvidere Park and Outdoor Pool Project is progressing. The park will be renamed the Corrine J. Rose Park in honor of Waukegan’s first female and longtime Executive Director. It will be a destination park like Bowen Park with a new pool with play features, 3 picnic shelters, splash pads in the park, and a new playground. The work is expected to begin this summer.
 - The current administration building in Belvidere Park will be demolished to make room for more park/community space and the administrative offices are moving to the newly purchased building on Golf Rd which was the form Waukegan Savings Bank. Renovation of this space begins in April with an expected move in date mid-June.
 - The park district is developing an APP which will be interactive and also incentivize park and program usage.
- F. Discussion – input, questions, comments, concerns
 - Jay Lerner expressed it is great to see so many new camps and free/low cost programs being offered this summer
 - The 6pm meeting has been cancelled for today due to low expected attendance. The committee members stated having the meeting offered at the two times provides flexibility.
- IV. Closed Session – No Closed Session due to a lack of a quorum
- V. Meeting Adjourned at 1:00pm

Next meeting August 30, 2018 – Please mark your calendars for the next meeting.

2019 Meeting dates: March 28, 2019 and August 29, 2019. (5th Thursday of the month)