

VISUAL, PERFORMING ARTS & FILM COMMITTEE

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the **Visual, Performing Arts & Film Committee** was called to order on Friday, **July 22, 2011** at 11:00 AM. Members present: Ellen Newbold, Chair; Saint Basnight; Betsy Brown; Robert Long; and Joanne Williams (late arrival). Commission members present: Linda Carlisle, NCDRC Secretary; Libba Evans (late arrival); and Fountain Odom. Also present: Eddy Browning, unseated RIC appointee; Tod Clissold, Friends of *Elizabeth II*, Inc. Board Chairman; Debbie Gibbs, Friends of *Elizabeth II*, Inc. Operations Director; Dwight Gregory, Friends of *Elizabeth II*, Inc. Board Treasurer; Bob Quinn, unseated RIC appointee; John Robbins, unseated RIC appointee; Perry White, unseated RIC appointee; and Earl Willis, unseated RIC appointee. Staff members present: Kim Sawyer, Executive Director; Andrea Hanganu, Administrative Assistant; Amy Hinnant, Operations Manager; and Johnny Walker, Program Manager. Absent: Joe Bryan and Glenn Eure.

Welcome

Chairman Ellen Newbold welcomed all in attendance and introduced new unseated RIC appointees Eddy Browning, Bob Quinn, John Robbins, Perry White, and Earl Willis. RIC members, staff, and visitors also introduced themselves.

Adoption of Agenda & Approval of Minutes

The agenda was adopted by consensus.

On motion by Betsy Brown and second by Saint Basnight, the committee minutes of April 28, 2011 were approved by consensus.

Chairman Newbold reviewed the history and purpose of the committee. She noted the following regarding the Performing Arts appropriation:

- Funding was redirected in the legislation from the Board of Governors to the RIC through DCR (handout was distributed and filed as an attachment in the official Report Book).

* Joanne Williams joined the meeting at 11:05 AM and Libba Evans joined the meeting at 11:06 AM. *

- Funds can be used to contract with community based or non-profit performing arts groups and other performing arts groups supported by state or local funds to provide music and drama.
- Focus has been bringing university students to get the experience and as a service to the community.

Old Business

Always Patsy Cline
Johnny Walker

Chairman Newbold reviewed prior steps taken regarding potentially having Elizabeth R & Company (ER&Co.) perform *Always Patsy Cline* at RIFP. Since opening performances were to be done at the Forum, ER&Co. was enlisted instead to begin performances of *Diary of Adam and Eve* at RIFP.

Discussion was held regarding current ER&Co. performances, with the following being noted:

- Verification of poor attendance numbers: 47 the first day; 105 the second day (Walker).
- In August 2011, ER&Co. will do four additional performances for a total of six (Newbold).
- Performances are financed by the Friends (Newbold).

Chairman Newbold reported that RIFP Program Manager Johnny Walker was asked at the April meeting to go back to ER&Co. about potential performances of *Always Patsy Cline* for a later time. Mr. Walker stated that ER&Co. is asking \$7,000.00 per performance with no potential dates in mind. Discussion was held, with the following being noted:

- Payment amount for opening performances of *Always Patsy Cline* by Forum is unknown; details of Forum's performances season and cost (White).
- Cost of *Always Patsy Cline* includes royalty fees much higher than other performances (Williams).
- Verification that performance appropriation cannot be used for ER&Co. (Newbold).
- Whether to ask Friends for money to do the performance at that price (Newbold).
- Whether ER&Co. charged for performances in the past (Carlisle).
- Whether anything in the Film Theatre will essentially require tickets to be sold (Williams).
 - Verification that RIC *can* charge for performances (Carlisle).
- RIC should know its costs to offer the Film Theatre for a day; recovery of costs would be a base point;

RIC eventually builds a replenishing fund by adding a per ticket amount (Long).

- Whether Theatre could potentially sit idle because RIC cannot afford to underwrite professional acts (Williams).
 - Need to discuss how much RIC can help while users find other partnerships/sponsorships; must be a bigger picture (Long).
- Need to bring closure to item (Newbold).
 - RIC should not commit to this until it sees how the rest of the schedule works out and what RIC can afford; need to look at a comprehensive plan (Brown).
 - Suggestion to think of the bottom line acceptable to the RIC or the collaboration it can make and provide that proposal to ER&Co., which can choose whether to accept (Carlisle).
 - RIC must first define a structure and understand what it is going to charge (Sawyer).
 - Cannot answer all questions today, but RIC needs to answer *this* question (Carlisle).
 - Option to keep RIFP as active as possible and not set the wrong precedents while determining real costs; could make the space available for free now; it would be up to ER to sell tickets and take the profit (Long).
 - Option to say RIC's cost for the Film Theatre is now \$450.00 per day (Carlisle).
 - RIC cannot pay the \$7,000.00 but can make the place available at cost; ER would choose their ticket price (Long).
 - Or RIC can continue to find a split somehow between receipts and some subsidies (Brown).
- If RIC opens it up then anybody can use the Theatre by paying \$450.00; level of what comes in is changed (Walker).
 - Need to re-think where RIC is today: would RIC not take \$450.00 to let anyone in the community use a vacant facility (Carlisle); agreement (Basnight); disagreement (Walker).
- Making Theatre available to ER for the fee can be a one-time deal until RIC gets a long-term strategy (Carlisle).

Motion

Robert Long made a motion that the RIC offers on a limited basis to Elizabeth R and Company the use of the Film Theatre for the rental fee and to continue negotiations with them to find an effective way to move forward. Betsy Brown seconded the motion. The motion carried, with one abstention by Joanne Williams.

Vote

Tod Clissold noted that the Friends has a certain amount of money drawn off its Endowment each year that narrows to a lump sum that comes to the Park each year. The RIC decides how it wants to spend that, including if it wants to use some funds for something like these ER&Co. performances.

New Business
ER & Company
Proposal
Johnny Walker

Chairman Newbold reported on the ER&Co. proposal, noting that in June 2011 there were emails from Sandy Semans of the *Outer Banks Sentinel* who suggested to the RIC Chair that ER&Co. could potentially help RIC make money with ticket sales by doing performances at RIFP. The RIC Chair asked for a proposal, which Chairman Newbold received from Ms. Semans. If scheduling can be worked out, ER&Co. proposes two evening performances of *Shepherd of the Ocean* and five of *Bloody Mary and the Virgin Queen* between July 20 and August 11, 2011 for a total of \$8,750.00. If desired, they can extend the run of *Bloody Mary* at the rate of \$1,250.00 per show.

Detailed discussion followed regarding the proposal from ER&Co., with the following being noted:

- Details of persons providing the proposals (Newbold and Walker).
- ER&Co. gets \$1,500.00 a show for *Adam and Even in the Garden* (Walker).
 - ER&Co. pays a royalty for *Bloody Mary and the Virgin Queen* (Williams).
 - Great difference between \$1,500.00 and \$7,000.00 (Long).
- Told Ms. Semans she would present the proposal to committee and RIC had contracted with ER&Co. for six afternoon performances in July and August 2011; Ms. Semans based her information on how much money RIC could make if 200 tickets were sold, a questionable number (Newbold).
 - Theatre has been full several times in the afternoon, especially for *Bloody Mary* (Williams).
- The issue is what the committee wants to do with the proposal (Newbold).
 - ER&Co. is already doing six shows separate from the proposed shows (Newbold).
 - Ms. Semans' plan is selling tickets and splitting funds with RIC; proposal is for RIC to again pay for performances (Walker).
- Original proposal has no cost to RIC with ER&Co. to make their expenses on ticket sales—unlikely (Sawyer).
- Verification that a plan has not been developed but needs to be discussed for how Performing Arts Funds will be used this next year, since RIC now has continuing control of Performing Arts funds (Newbold).
 - Funds can only be used for the Performing Arts; RIC might examine in the short term how to use these funds as a means to bring in additional dollars that will then go into RIC coffers to be used however it desires; the past has been all outgo and no income; though costs may not be fully recovered, those revenues would flow back in to support Park operations and not be designated only for Performing Arts (Carlisle).
- Verification that Performing Arts dollars are still available to be used for state supported groups (Carlisle).
 - ER&Co. does not qualify (Newbold); based on that definition; RIC has those other funds and must make a decision how to use them on the programming side; the other side is whether to institute a process for charging to get some level of income to return some dollars to the Park (Carlisle).
- Verification that dollars RIC takes in through state funding can absolutely go into RIC coffers for any future

use, not just performing; funds can go back into operations (Carlisle).

- Question is can RIFP provide programming important to the greater community that gets people to RIFP; try to reach a collaborative arrangement that RIC does not lose, covers some daily costs, the Auditorium is in use, and people are at RIFP; RIC is paying for the Theatre whether used or not; prefers to see resources in use and the associated activity; RIC must decide if it wants this programming and the Theatre in use, if a satisfactory arrangement can be reached (Carlisle).
- Verification that nothing else is currently scheduled for the Film Theatre during that time (Walker).
- Email from Secretary Carlisle several weeks ago noted an additional 5% now being taken off operating with no cut to the Performing Arts Fund; need to discuss appropriation and know this body has blessed those performances; staff can book those and come back to the committee before October 2011 (Sawyer).
- She has personally deemed it permissible for RIC to charge for university performances; no different than universities who get appropriations and then charge; nothing in the legislation says RIC cannot charge (Carlisle).
- With the allocation this year for performances, the formula of soliciting from schools to come to RIFP and perform should continue; schools can fill the year-long calendar; other people can fill in spots; offer it in the format of *at RIC cost* (Long); include some profit in there (Carlisle); agreement (members).

Members agreed that RIC staff will go back to ER&Co. to negotiate the proposal and see what can be done. Saint Basnight and Fountain Odom noted that if anyone wants to rent the Theatre for \$450.00 per day, or whatever amount RIC decides, then it should be offered for rent and RIC will split a ticket gate with them because RIC needs funds.

Performing Arts Appropriation

Chairman Newbold reported that the RIC received the Performing Arts appropriation for this year for \$398,241.00. She said the operating fund was cut 30% rather than 25%, so that amount can be spent until June 30, 2012. DCR Secretary Carlisle noted that the General Assembly took the additional cut for the Performing Arts against the RIC fund as well. Secretary Carlisle said the Performing Arts Fund does not revert on June 30, 2011, and RIC has a carry over from last year.

Chairman Newbold requested that RIFP Operations Manager Amy Hinnant review the budget and inform the committee of available funds. Chairman Newbold noted that she suggested to Kim Sawyer that because the funds are available and operations is tight, that part of the RIFP Program Manager's salary and RIFP Program Technician's salary be taken out of the Performing Arts money, and that marketing be done out of the money like last year. Kim Sawyer stated that the salaries piece was discussed earlier and has been approved through DCR Secretary Carlisle. The two Program staff will keep a booklet of their hours spent on Performing Arts.

(Amy Hinnant)

Amy Hinnant then reviewed the *Proposed Line Item Allocations – Performing Arts – Fund 2586 – 2011/12* (previously distributed and filed as an attachment in the official Report Book). The review and discussion was held as follows:

- \$101,829.08 balance June 30, 2011 (Hinnant).
- \$73,272.00 encumbered funds: four performances in May and June plus sound expenses currently being paid; actual beginning/ending balance is \$28,557.00 (Hinnant).
- \$398,241.00 appropriation; \$80,299.00 for the previously discussed two salaries plus fringe benefits (Hinnant).
- \$500.00 Repairs; number used in the past (Hinnant).
 - Currently in good shape (Long).
- \$50,871.00 Advertising/Marketing: less than last FY; as far as the state is concerned RIC advertising and marketing basically comes out of one line item; includes printing of advertising documents (Hinnant).
 - Includes all marketing, not just advertising (Newbold).
 - Verification the \$50K is basically for promoting the Performing Arts program not the Park in general (Hinnant).
 - Last year \$61K was put in, and the Park had \$61K; this pays half of the Park total (Newbold).
- \$2,950.00 Other Materials & Supplies: gels for lights, duck tape; miscellaneous needed supplies (Hinnant).
- \$263,621.00 Contractual Services: payments to universities, non-profit groups, or community based groups; also for sound; \$28,557.00 left as current ending balance—committee decides how to budget (Hinnant).
- Looking at \$250K for performances (Newbold); the rest is for sound, technical, and piano tuning (Hinnant).
- Verification that RIC would have additional cost for sound or lighting, if ER&Co. came in for instance (Newbold).
- Question whether RIC is not only paying performing groups but covering all those costs as well (Carlisle).
 - RIC does not cover sound (Walker); just lighting (Carlisle); ER brought a light person this time—unusual (Walker).
- Money can be made since existing funds can be used beyond the next FY; restrict requested shows and bring

- them in at peak times for more income; cheaper if performances can be spread out over time (Walker).
- Verification that an outside Pavilion performance would not necessarily bring in more money (Walker).
 - Pavilion will fill up if the right people are put there that young people want (Basnight).
 - But this money will not pay for those kinds of people (Walker).
- Question of how much money is needed and how much of the Friends lump amount available can be transferred every year to plan for some big performances (Robbins).
 - Suggestion to hire outside and take a part of the gate rather than risking Friends money or RIC money; if someone is that confident they can bring in a band, let them do so with a minimum rental cost and get part of the ticket; if they lose money, RIC does not lose; if they make money, RIC makes money (Clissold).
 - Agreement (Sawyer and Basnight).
- RIC has been looking at putting together a fee structure for Park spaces that can be rented; need to think about potential weddings and receptions on site next FY (Sawyer).
 - Agreement for potential weddings (Clissold); potential to make a lot of money (Evans); agreement (Carlisle).
- Need a rental policy not just a fee structure (Brown).
 - Included in reference (Sawyer); request to stop calling it just a rental structure due to its importance (Brown).
 - Sub-committee already exists that Ellen Newbold chairs (Sawyer); has already met (Newbold).
 - Suggestion to factor in work already done into the plan (Long).
 - Process got stalled, but that will be figured out (Newbold).
- Verification that the approximately \$263K Contractual Services is similar to last year (Newbold).
- Question whether a record of attendance exists of how many people were serviced by this \$263K (Quinn).
 - Can be provided to the Commission (Sawyer).
 - Utilize numbers within the fee program for a formula to forecast and make decisions (Quinn).
 - Modest money maker (Long); at least something and not \$263K *spent* (Quinn).
- Opportunity exists with Film Theatre, Pavilion, and potential weddings (Long).
 - Suggestion to book fewer weddings a year and charge a premium price that includes staff to supervise (Clissold).
 - RIC must not forget RIFP's mission and the site history; weddings could support RIC's work (Sawyer).

Chairman Newbold inquired how members desired to use the Performing Arts appropriation. She stated that the RIC must ensure universities can afford to come and perform. Upon request by Chairman Newbold, Johnny Walker provided additional information as follows:

- RIC is currently in the same timeframe as the first year when it is nearly impossible to book anything.
- A few performances might get booked between now and Christmas; universities plan a couple of years in advance.
- RIC cannot prepay schools; 2-3 universities cannot commit because of lack of up-front funds due to budget cuts.
- Campus music/drama organizations with a standard program repertoire are available for an evening.

Discussion followed regarding potential use of the Performing Arts appropriation, with the following being noted:

- Question to Tod Clissold of whether the Friends could provide the money on the front end and be reimbursed by the RIC at performance time (Carlisle).
 - Would not be a problem if there is assurance the Friends would be reimbursed (Clissold).
 - Universities have the money; they are going to sign the contract (Carlisle).
 - Clarification that prepaying for university performances by RIC is not allowed (Sawyer).
 - Must be a way to manage around that (Carlisle).
- Need to examine the legislation as an opportunity to broaden RIC focus; universities are first priority, but other groups that fit the criteria may provide an opportunity for more variety to sell tickets (Sawyer).
 - Legislation that went into effect last July 1 was clear that funds are for the university and any other non-profit receiving state or local funding (Carlisle).
 - Includes any local group that gets a grant from the Arts Council, state or local funding (Newbold).
 - Verification that the way the legislation reads if somebody is funded or has grants from those organizations they would then qualify for some of this money; RIC must ensure they are a certified non-profit and have their appropriate tax forms in (Newbold).
- Friends fronting money could be an incentive for universities to bring shows that RIC desires (Brown).

Chairman Newbold initiated discussion regarding next steps with the Performing Arts appropriation, with the following being noted:

- Johnny Walker is tasked with talking to contacts and returning to the committee with proposals (Newbold).
- Need for another committee meeting before October 2011 (Newbold).
- Verification that many more than five performances could be brought using the \$260K (Walker).
- Verification that RIFP will charge for these performances (Newbold and Long).
- Need to finalize and employ space rental structure; staff need to discuss how to create and sell the ticket (Sawyer).

- Need to discuss ticket price, considering attendance information requested by Bob Quinn (Newbold).
- Kim Sawyer agreed to provide all noted items by the time the committee meets again.
- Verification that when the appropriation runs out the two positions must revert back to operating (Newbold).
 - Decision would not affect the two employees so far as retirement (Brown and Newbold); no more vulnerable than all other employees; way to even up the mistake the legislature made (Carlisle).

Motion/
Vote

Joanne Williams made a motion that the committee accepts the figures as provided to help pay for salaries and marketing. Betsy Brown seconded the motion. The motion carried by consensus.

Joanne Williams reported that on the 4-minute drive from her home in Manteo to RIFP she heard two advertisements for the Park on Public Broadcasting, though she does not know the extent of that audience.

Staff Updates
(Kim Sawyer)

Kim Sawyer presented the following staff update:

- NC Symphony performed at the RIFP Pavilion Friday evening before last (07/08/11).
- *NC Weekend* on UNC TV broadcasted a piece featuring RIFP and other groups.

Chairman Newbold inquired whether the group needed to set a meeting date. Kim Sawyer pointed out the need to wait and allow Johnny Walker time to work on assigned tasks. Ms. Sawyer anticipates a potential meeting would be held late August/early September 2011. Chairman Newbold said notice will be sent to determine when members can meet. Betsy Brown noted preference to meet around Labor Day.

Chairman Newbold expressed appreciation to new RIC appointees in attendance and said she looks forward to working with them to make RIFP the greatest site in the state. Upon request by Saint Basnight, Amy Hinnant reported that RIFP attendance for FY ending June 30, 2011 was 146K. Mr. Basnight noted his pleasure in having the new appointees on the Commission.

**Commission
Recommendations**

No Commission recommendations were noted.

Announcements

The next meeting of the Visual, Performing Arts & Film Committee is Thursday, October 27, 2011 at 11:00 AM.

Adjournment

With no further business, and on motion by Saint Basnight, the meeting was adjourned at 12:21 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Andrea Hanganu, Administrative Assistant

Upon a vote by the Visual, Performing Arts & Film Committee, approved by:

Ellen Newbold, Chair, Visual, Performing Arts & Film Committee