

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL PRODUCE IOWA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

KIM REYNOLDS, GOVERNOR
ADAM GREGG, LT. GOVERNOR

CHRIS KRAMER, DIRECTOR

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Barbara Determan
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10/14/2022

Iowa Great Places Citizen Advisory Board Meeting

June 28, 2022 - 1:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Aaron Burnett, Barbara Determan, Duane Hagerty (arrived at 1:08pm), Darryl High, Joe Hrdlicka, Mark Jackson

Board Members Present via Zoom: Danna Kehm (arrived at 1:08pm), Tammy McCoy, Jacque Rahe, Angel Wallace

Board Members Absent: Alexis Fleener

Public Present: None.

Staff Present: DCA Director Chris Kramer, Administrator David Schmitz, Arts in Community Development Program Manager Jon Berg, and Board Administrator Sarah Florian.

Call to Order

Determan called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Welcome

Determan welcomed board members to the meeting.

Roll Call

Florian called the roll and deemed a quorum present.

Review Meeting Agenda

Determan reviewed the June 28, 2022 meeting agenda. No comments or additions noted.

Approval of Minutes

Determan approved the March 10, 2022 Minutes. No corrections noted.

Report from Chair

Determan shared that the next board meeting will be September 28 at 1 p.m. in Des Moines.

DCA Director's Report

Kramer welcomed new board members, Darryl and Jacque. Thank you to Aaron Burnett and Robin Anderson for hosting the Preserve Iowa Summit in Mason City. More than 200 leaders from across the state joined for that event. The summit focused on professional development, tours and convening. Additionally, the State of Iowa Historical Society Board met in Cedar Rapids last week and was able to tour the NewBo City Market and cultural anchors. We also held the Iowa History Awards and Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg was in attendance. Kramer also encouraged board members to check out the storytelling videos available on iowaculture.gov that highlight these communities and projects. Kramer also shared that the impact of recent natural disasters in Cedar Rapids is still being felt and shared additional details about the visit to Cedar Rapids.

Since the last board meeting, the State Legislature convened. The Iowa Great Places program was allocated \$1 million again for Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure projects. The Community Attraction and Tourism grant program was funded at \$10 million this year, which is an increase from \$5 million previous. Governor Reynolds recently announced a \$100 million

investment in Destination Iowa. The Department is also excited about the Field of Dreams Prequel, an NBC Universal Film Project. Governor Reynolds also announced another \$20 million for nonprofit organizations. If anyone has questions, please connect with the department. We've had some Iowa Great Places site visits recently and have also been conducting our grant rounds for Historic Resource Development Program grants, Department of Cultural Affairs Grants, Arts Council grants, and we also have been informed by the National Endowment for the Humanities that we will continue the interim humanities council partnership which comes with additional funding. Kramer also shared that we are looking forward to activating our strategic plan.

Burnett asked a question about the overlap with Destination Iowa and CAT grant funds. Kramer responded that applicants are eligible for these opportunities to reach total project funding, but timing could be a factor. Reach out to the program manager for further guidance.

Kramer also congratulated Wallace as Sioux City was part of the first round of grant recipients. Wallace shared that the grant is for a regional trail project and they are partnering with Sergeant Bluff and LeMars to connect these trail projects.

Program Updates

Schmitz noted the ongoing grant cycle and that the funding announcement will be released shortly. He highlighted the new small matching grants on a quarterly cycle to support artists, schools and communities. Additionally, there are ongoing webinars and professional development series, which included a public art webinar series this past spring. Schmitz encouraged board members to visit the department's YouTube channel for great creative placemaking videos as well as videos highlighting communities that are supported through the Iowa Great Places program. The Iowa Arts Summit is coming up on August 10-12, virtual for the first two days and the third day will be in Des Moines at Mainframe Studios. The event focused on connections between artists, nonprofits and communities and how they can work together.

Berg shared that we are getting back into communities and he was able to visit seven Iowa Great Places this spring. He noted it was great to learn more about them, check in on projects and share information about programs with the state. Berg noted that three communities received the Cultural and Entertainment Districts designation this spring - McGregor, Winterset, and the Iowa City Downtown District - so look for an announcement coming soon about those communities.

Board Discussion

Berg noted that we would discuss new designations first then continue the conversation about redesignation applications at the end. Berg shared his thanks to board members who participated in the review panel and site visits. The plan is to go through each application, move to review panel comments, then open up to board discussion.

Proposed Iowa Great Place	Applicant	City	County
Sweet Vale of Avoca	City of Avoca	Avoca	Pottawattamie
City of Jefferson	Jefferson Matters	Jefferson	Greene
Mammothly Creative - Oskaloosa	Mahaska Future View	Oskaloosa	Mahaska
City of Washington	City of Washington	Washington	Washington
Woodbine & Willow Lake	Woodbine Main Street	Woodbine	Harrison

Schmitz noted we will go through the list of applicants for motions at the end.

Avoca

Hagerty noted the application outlined the community character and historic nature well, but struggled with a sense of how this fit with the Iowa Great Places criteria, mission and goals. The applicant utilized application material for another program. Kehm noted the vision plan was overwhelming and some of the execution seemed missing from the application. Needed to better prioritize what would be applicable to the Iowa Great Places program. McCoy noted the vision plan partners were not well defined and the applicant was weak in identifying the arts and culture components. Kehm noted that the application didn't demonstrate what they've accomplished, which the site visit provided; a crosswalk was a focus

at the site visit which didn't feel like a great fit for this program, a community center wasn't in the vision plan in the application and trails were also a focus. Overall, strong community, but the application didn't demonstrate this. Wallace noted that the theater/community center was a focus of the site visit but wasn't included in the application. Main Street had a lot of development. The applicant has potential, but needs stronger partnerships and/or mentorship. Determan echoed what Wallace and Kehm said; commend them for progress made, but the applicant needs to narrow focus. Berg noted they have good programming and creative placemaking happening in this community.

Jefferson

Hagerty noted this was a well done written application with a strong vision plan and clear plan to implement; had a few concerns about evaluation. Kehm echoed the strong application; strong community; was initially unsure about the funding structure, but it appears that they have a strong relationship with the development corporation. McCoy noted this is this community's third time applying for this program, which they've clearly listened to feedback provided. McCoy also noted that art is the backdrop for all of their goals and they have a great narrow focus and want to tell their own story. Jackson has only positive comments to share; strong connections with community entities; strong finances. Kehm agreed and noted the community members participated in site visit. Determan echoed the positive comments and shared that art is an important part of the community.

Oskaloosa

McCoy shared that she acknowledges the community's efforts, but the application was a bit unfocused; wishes she could have gone on the site visit to gain clarity. Kehm shared that their vision plan had good content on the organizations in the city, but felt disconnected and not a cohesive vision plan. Hagerty noted the application and vision plan were challenging to follow; could have done a better job of tying things together; the site visit went well and community was well represented; presentation from the entire arts community and could see the projects they were looking to move forward. Hrdlicka felt very comfortable with what they were planning to do after the site visit; leaders in the community were present for the site visit. Berg noted there was a lot to take in during the site visit and included great support for creativity in the area. Kramer noted that this community is evolving and by the time they got to the site visit they were more cohesive and connected to the city's goals. Jackson asked about who is sponsoring the application. Berg responded that the organization is Mahaska Future View. Kramer shared additional partners that are part of the vision and planning.

Washington

Kehm shared that this applicant had a strong vision plan, identified several funding options, great letters of support, and they have already identified several vertical projects that would benefit from Iowa Great Places funding. McCoy thought this applicant had a clear vision for growth and they were very proud of their community during the site visit; goals appear accomplishable. Hagerty shared the application was well done; understood community character; well done vision plan and road map to accomplish this vision; disappointed in the site visit presentation because we didn't hear from all stakeholders, just a couple of them, wanted to see more in the community related to arts and culture rather than see overview of everything in the town. Kramer shared that she agrees with previous comments; Iowa Great Places has many priorities, but it felt like a miss to not focus more on the arts and culture; we will want to ensure communities understand the focus of this program.

Woodbine

McCoy shared they had a strong focus on affordable housing in their application; the community wanted to combine their efforts with other community partners. Hagerty shared that they illustrated the community character well; the vision plan was well done; they did a good job explaining how this all fits together. Kehm shared that they have already had some success and understand some of the costs; the footprint is very large to combine the town of Woodbine and Willow Lake, but it is a beautiful area; noted they are looking at a trail system to combine the two areas; have success in their \$10 million fitness facility. Wallace was impressed by the community and how they've included the businesses; the facility they've built is beautiful; a lot was included, but the presentation was good and the community was well represented. High was impressed with the town of Woodbine and mentioned board members met many businesses during the site visit; a really nice rec center; the drive to Willow Lake was long, but community leaders were present and the community was prepared. Determan appreciated how the business owners were involved. Berg noted they were planning for the future, and establishing organizations and assets in the community that will lead to the development of Woodbine. Schmitz shared that there is a theme with Main Street communities in this year's applications, but the focus of this one is the expansion of this Main Street area and getting more into the community; impressed by the leadership in this community.

Ames Redesignation

Berg shared that Burlington is going to wait until the next cycle to apply for redesignation. Ames did resubmit their redesignation application and had a site visit with Berg, Schmitz and Jackson. The focus was primarily on the Main Street area, but this community does still have a little way to go on prioritization and focus on the entire great place. Schmitz noted that this was a very focused Main Street application, and it doesn't feel that they are bringing all the community partners into the application; the site visit reinforced this.

Applicant	Average Combined Score	Staff Recommendation
Sweet Vale of Avoca	22	Not Recommended
City of Jefferson	27.66	Recommend
Mammothly Creative - Oskaloosa	23	Recommend
City of Washington	28.33	Recommend
Woodbine & Willow Lake	25.33	Recommend
Re-designation		
Downtown Ames re-application	NA	Not Recommended

All applicants recommended with the exception of Sweet Vale of Avoca and Downtown Ames. Determan opened the floor for discussion.

Burnett noted that the recommended and not recommended were only separated by one point. Schmitz answered the question and provided additional insight into the scoring process. Site visits were qualitative and not necessarily factored into scores in the recommendations table, but site visit feedback is factored into the staff recommendations. Berg echoed these comments. Jackson echoed the dissonance between application scores and site visits. Hagerty shared insight from his site visits and shared that some applicants will need assistance with grant writing for projects in the future; Washington has what they need, but the site visit presentation didn't include the appropriate priorities or specific projects. Jackson said that Oskaloosa appears to have everyone at the table and they have the resources for what they want to do, but Washington doesn't appear to be in that same place. McCoy would have liked to see projects up close rather than the bus tour that occurred; wanted a stronger sense of projects, but still had a strong application. Hrdlicka would like to see site visit factored into scoring to illustrate a stronger overall picture. Rahe shared that scoring might not be the full picture; site visits could be weighted differently in the score. Oskaloosa's successful site visit could mean more than the ability of a grant writer in an application situation. McCoy shared it would be helpful to go to the site visit first then look at the grant application; less challenges evaluating this way. Hagerty shared that there was some question about visiting all communities or not, so you do have to have some point of evaluation to manage site visit capacity; this could have left some stronger applicants out though. Kramer noted that communities are using this as a process to build upon what the community is already working on; the next steps involve the project from planning to funding; we need to consider all of this when determining distinction; broad-based community support is important. Determan noted that someone asked if this program is a catalyst or a cherry on top? Schmitz noted it can be both and we have examples for both; there should be a strong vision plan and that has been a constant year over year.

Motion #1: Jackson made a motion to designate the City of Jefferson as an Iowa Great Place. Hrdlicka seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion #2: Hrdlicka made a motion to designate the City of Oskaloosa as an Iowa Great Place. Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion #3: Hagerty made a motion to designate the City of Washington as an Iowa Great Place. Wallace seconded the motion. Burnett noted in discussion that the applicant should narrow focus and staff should follow up. The motion passed unanimously. Burnett, Determan, Hagert, High, Hrdlicka, Jackson, Kehm, McCoy, Rahe, and Wallace vote yea. Jackson vote nay. Motion passed.

Motion #4: McCoy made a motion to designate Woodbine & Willow Lake as an Iowa Great Place. High seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Burnett requested additional discussion on Ames. Schmitz shared that with no motion, staff will go back to the applicant and the Ames Chamber of Commerce and see if the chamber will bring forward an application. This may be a better fit; acknowledge that points about the relationship to the City of Ames. Berg shared that we were looking for a revised vision plan and that hasn't been officially adopted.

Great Places Project Endorsement Application Discussion

Berg shared a review of the Great Places project endorsement process. Last fall, the Iowa Great Places Board funded the Art is Refreshing project in Manning. Due to RIIF guidelines, we were only able to fund vertical infrastructure components. Manning has come back with an application to the board for an endorsement of the mural components and local artist involvement. This is all in conjunction with various community projects.

Determan opened the floor for discussion. No discussion

Burnett made a motion to endorse the Art is Refreshing project in Manning. Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Determan and Kramer shared insight from experiences in Manning.

Public Comment

Determan asked for public comment. No members of the public were present to comment.

Berg shared the next steps and noted that applicants will be notified about these decisions by June 30. The designation period is for ten years, through June 30, 2032. Project funding application will open on August 8, 2022, the pre-application deadline is September 16, 2022, and the full application deadline is November 1, 2022. The funding period is January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2025.

Berg shared an update on active projects. Currently we have 15 active Iowa Great Places project grants and are looking to close out at least two of those within the fiscal year. In the fall, we will have 24 communities eligible to apply for funding. Jackson asked a question about delays due to supply change, inflation, etc. Berg shared there have been some discussions about delays for these reasons, but this has been within the timeline of the grants thus far or staff has been pointing applicants in the direction of other resources. Kramer noted that extensions were given out. Schmitz shared additional context of Grinnell's project and cost overruns. Jackson noted that this should be considered for future applicants. Burnett shared that there are many funding opportunities out there right now.

Adjournment

Hrdlicka motioned to adjourn the meeting. Rahe seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.