



CITY OF BEAUFORT
1911 Boundary Street
BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29902

Cultural District Advisory Board

January 17, 2019

1911 Boundary Street

City Hall, Executive Conference Room #2
2nd Floor

A. **Call to Order** – Bonnie Hargrove, Chair

2:00PM

B. **Review of Minutes**

A. November 15, 2018

C. **Old Business**

- A. Art Walk
- B. Bench Project
- C.

D. **New Business**

A. Introduction of Steve Rosenberg and overview of upcoming music event collaboration

A. **Adjournment**

NOTE: IF YOU HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS DUE TO A PHYSICAL CHALLENGE, PLEASE CALL IVETTE BURGESS 525-7070 FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF MEDIA NOTIFICATION

"In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all local media was duly notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting."

A meeting of the Cultural District Advisory Board (CDAB) was held on November 15, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. in the City Hall Executive Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Bonnie Hargrove, advisory board members Jacque Wedler, Carol Lauvray, and Mary Jane Martin, and Linda Roper and Rhonda Carey, city staff. Megan Meyer was absent.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d) as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hargrove called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

MINUTES

Ms. Martin made a motion, second by Chairman Hargrove, to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2018 CDAB meeting. The motion to approve the minutes as submitted passed unanimously.

ARTWALK REVIEW

Chairman Hargrove said she felt there was “a fair crowd” for ArtWalk. One gallery she stopped in said that they had some sales. Ms. Carey said a representative of that gallery said at the Downtown Beaufort Merchants Association meeting that they had a lot of foot traffic and sales.

No streets were closed for ArtWalk, but they were for the “Chalk the Streets” contest, Chairman Hargrove said. Ms. Martin said that event was “a disaster,” partly because it was not well-marketed. The board spent a lot of money on gift cards for prizes, but made “zip, zero - \$45?” she said, so she feels that they need to “change our strategy . . . and get sponsors to be behind” events like this or the cakewalk, on which she spent more money getting cakes than was raised by the cakewalk. Chairman Hargrove agreed.

Ms. Martin said she is discouraged, and “whatever I do here comes out of my pocket” because she is an at-large member of CDAB and does not represent an organization. She said she thought the board was “advisory” when she joined and didn't know there would be “fundraising and projects.” Therefore, she is rethinking her “role on this committee.”

Ms. Martin said she doesn't “like being part of things that don't work.” She felt they spent “a whole lot of money for very, very little return” on the chalking event. There were also issues with kids taking the contestants' chalk, Ms. Martin said, and she doesn't “think everybody was . . . happy with that part of it, too.” She asked for the \$20 gift certificate she bought, and Ms. Carey said she would drop it off at Ms. Martin's gallery.

Ms. Martin asked about the funds CDAB has, and Chairman Hargrove said there is some money from the city that was used for marketing the ArtWalk and “Chalk the Streets” in the *Beaufort Gazette*, *Lady’s Island News*, and *Lowcountry Weekly*. Ms. Martin said she thought the marketing was done too late.

Ms. Wedler said, “Manpower is a big problem” for the board’s events. There was general agreement with this.

Ms. Martin asked, “What is our role as an advisory board?” She said she’s not clear about CDAB’s direction. Ms. Carey said an advisory board often advises an active group or another body. She agreed that the problem boils down to a lack of manpower.

Chairman Hargrove said she was “the only person” at the “Chalk the Streets” contest, and she did all of the marketing for it. She feels that “it does come down to commitment from the board,” whether the board understands “what the commitment is,” and if the board is “doing that.” She was frustrated by the lack of interest in having “Chalk the Streets” downtown, including certain people telling her that closing streets would inconvenience them, so the event wasn’t well-supported, and then some participants in it “tried to take over the event.”

Ms. Martin said she understood that feeling and knows from having been a Main Street director in the past that “getting downtown merchants and downtown businesses to cooperate is tough” because they don’t like change. It’s slow downtown right now, she said, and instead of working together on that, they’re each worrying only about themselves. Chairman Hargrove said, “That’s what I heard a lot,” and it saddens her.

There was general discussion about this, and a suggestion that there needs to be a meeting so that everyone can “buy into” such events. There was a meeting, Ms. Martin said, “but the ones who were affected by the street closing weren’t at it.” Chairman Hargrove said no one “could help that,” and she doesn’t know who was at the merchants’ association meetings, but the events “came up several times.”

Ms. Carey said there were people at “the original planning meeting for ArtWalk” and the chalking contest “who were for it, but then decided” that it would “affect my flow of traffic” and switched their opinion of it. In regard to the manpower issue, she said an advisory board would ordinarily advise a group of people – in the case of the Cultural District, that would be the people from the organizations that comprise the “cultural arts” – but in this case, the board is “everybody . . . it is the group” because there is not a group for it to advise and support, so it ends up “talking to itself and doing all the work.”

Ms. Carey said the group that CDAB advises should be those who identify themselves as being part of the Cultural District, such as artists, gallery owners, and performers, those whose “business or . . . activity falls within this Cultural District” and who “want to be a

part of that.” Then CDAB would help and support that group with its initiatives, she said, but “we don’t have that.” The board should “guide . . . and shape” the efforts of the individuals who make up the district, Ms. Carey said, and use the board members’ expertise to help that group move its initiatives forward. She suggested that CDAB might need to work on “recruiting those people” who understand the Cultural District’s mission statement and “want to be a part of growing a Cultural District within the bounds of Beaufort.”

Ms. Martin said she has never seen a mission statement. Chairman Hargrove said she thought that Ms. Martin was sent that a year ago. Ms. Martin said she hadn’t seen it and would also like to see CDAB’s bylaws. Chairman Hargrove apologized that Ms. Martin had never gotten that information. Ms. Carey said she’d get it to her.

Chairman Hargrove said she feels that the board is experiencing “growing pains.” Ms. Lauvray said the group isn’t “really good fundraisers, at least yet.” Chairman Hargrove said she feels that the board “hasn’t had the right project yet,” and all of them are very busy and understaffed in their own endeavors. She wondered whether it might be a good idea to add more board members to get “more interest and possibly more participation.” Getting volunteers, in her experience, is project-specific, rather than just asking people to help. Also, to grow the organization, potential members need to know what it is and how being in it will benefit them, Chairman Hargrove said.

Ms. Martin said she joined the board because she thought the Cultural District would “benefit the community.” Ms. Wedler suggested researching other cultural districts to see how they have recruited. Ms. Martin said they could look at how the other South Carolina cultural districts operate. Chairman Hargrove shared what she knew about some cultural districts, including Bluffton, which is making “an arts village in downtown Bluffton.”

Ms. Roper read the “goals of the program” from the South Carolina Arts Commission. Ms. Martin said that some of what Ms. Roper had read has been achieved, such as through Beaufort Digital Corridor (BDC), which has a gallery now with a textile exhibit. Ms. Carey said in Atlanta, “it’s about a geographical space,” and the cultural arts happening within it, so maybe the Cultural District should be “about being a thing, instead of about doing a bunch of stuff.” They could still have projects, like the bench project, which is “public art within the Cultural District, supported by the board and tied in with other” entities.

Ms. Martin suggested the board members could give talks to different groups “explaining what we do,” and that they are trying to “create this cultural arts community” downtown and asking how those groups’ members could help. Economic development people could be asked how to get more “arts-related businesses” downtown. Ms. Carey said a project might be “building partnerships and coalitions of other folks who will say, ‘We’ll fundraise for you to help build and grow and maintain

and strengthen the Cultural District.” This would be a way to uncover new potential partners, she said, without the pressure of 5 or 6 board members having to be “the doers.”

Ms. Martin feels “a lot could be said for the importance of educating the community about what we are trying to achieve,” which would bring community support, volunteers, and partners. She wants CDAB to be very careful not to have its name associated with “things that fail,” like “Chalk the Streets.”

There was general agreement that the cakewalk was not the success that the board had hoped it would be, but “everybody loved it,” it made a lot of people happy, and it raised some money and fostered a good sense of community. Chairman Hargrove said it also supported First Fridays, so she doesn’t consider it a failure.

Ms. Martin said she doesn’t think “Chalk the Streets” was “a complete failure,” either, but having only 4 participants “didn’t have the energy that we would have wanted.” Ms. Wedler said having the other events going on the same day “really detracted,” especially “if you wanted to have the kids and their parents involved,” because they were at the trick or treat party in Waterfront Park. Ms. Carey said those at the party were “just little kids”; she asked, “Where were the artists?” because that is who the event was geared toward, but “they didn’t come out for whatever reason.”

There was a discussion about the efforts the board made to bring artists to “Chalk the Streets.” Chairman Hargrove feels that it “just was a very busy time.” If there were another “Chalk the Streets” event, she suggested it could be done at USCB; shutting down Washington Street wouldn’t hurt anyone “that I’m aware of,” she said, and then there could be more participation by college students. She said she also feels that there are a number of good partnerships happening with CDAB, and she “would never want to go downtown again” for an event because she “watched all these people go up the street where we were supposed to be” for the event but couldn’t be because of merchant complaints.

Chairman Hargrove said there are good photos from the past year and “some marketing pieces that we didn’t have before,” that CDAB could use, but it’s not her decision as to “whether we do it again.”

BENCH PROJECT SEP

Chairman Hargrove said this project is moving forward. She and Ms. Carey went to the Historic District Review Board, which thought the project is “really good,” though Historic Beaufort Foundation (HBF) has “some reservations” about it. It’s “a go” with the city as long as the project stays within the city’s codes, she said.

Chairman Hargrove said she has raised \$1,000 for the project. It would be used to pay for the benches, and “we’d pay the organization a small stipend,” she said, and would

“keep some money for the signs that need to go beside or on the bench.”

Ms. Wedler, who represents HBF, said it was “lucky” that HDRB supported the project, because according to the Milner guide – which has standards that are supposed to be followed for the Historic District – “it wouldn't have been allowed.” She believes that if the HDRB had “remembered” that Milner has a section on “street furniture,” they “probably would have shot it down.”

Ms. Carey said the project falls more under “public art” than street furniture. Chairman Hargrove said she’d like to look at the reference in Milner “to make sure we can accommodate it.” Ms. Wedler said the project had already gotten “their blessing” from the HDRB.

Chairman Hargrove said she’s excited about the bench project, and she would “take one for the team” if there is any “backlash” about it. There was discussion about the bench near The Arsenal; Chairman Hargrove said it could be “either in The Arsenal,” where there is already a bench, or it could be moved to the Reconstruction Era Monument office across the street from The Arsenal. “One of my donors” would like it to be “a Reconstruction bench,” she said. Ms. Wedler asked “the city’s view on putting a bench in that location.” Ms. Roper said that’s “already been approved through the permit process.”

There was a general discussion about determining the specs for the art on the benches. Chairman Hargrove said at the next CDAB meeting, they would “try to have something for you to approve,” so “the entities” can start finding artists, and the money can be given to Habitat for Humanity for the benches so that organization can “start the project.”

Chairman Hargrove said the benches would be made of a treated wood that “accepts paint.” Habitat for Humanity’s builder found a wood that is “all the things that we want: safe and sturdy,” etc., she said.

Ms. Lauvray asked if the artists would submit sketches for approval. Chairman Hargrove said yes. Ms. Carey said those have to be submitted to **Lauren Kelly** in the City of Beaufort Planning department for her approval as well.

Chairman Hargrove said there would need to be a CDAB meeting in December so the bench project can be moved along.

COUNCIL REQUEST TO FILL OPEN BOARD POSITION SEP

Ms. Roper said the ordinance change was approved Tuesday night, and she had gone to the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) board meeting today and informed them that they needed to recommend someone to serve on CDAB. **Robb Wells** is “supposed to make that happen somehow,” she said. This position would replace the Chamber of

Commerce representative's position, Ms. Roper said.

FUTURE PLANS

Chairman Hargrove said, in the past, the board had discussed "doing . . . a well-done arts festival." Mr. Wells had told her that the CVB was "very interested in partnering" on an arts festival, using "art in unusual places as a cornerstone" for it. Ms. Lauvray said Beaufort History Museum has a new board member who would be very qualified to "really help us with the arts."

Ms. Roper asked about the Beaufort Arts Council. Chairman Hargrove said she believes that group "is starting to get more momentum" and is headquartered at TCL, where they are "working on a mural" in the school's tunnel. She said she thinks "they have some energetic board members." The group couldn't have a CDAB representative because they are not located within the district any longer, Chairman Hargrove said, "but they could certainly attend" CDAB meetings. Ms. Roper suggested inviting the Arts Council to CDAB meetings, and said she thought they had a new director. Chairman Hargrove said she knows who the new Arts Council board president is, and he could be invited to come to a CDAB meeting. Ms. Carey suggested that would be a good step toward "building coalition members."

There being no further business to come before the board, Chairman Hargrove adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:50 p.m.