

**VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE**  
**COMMUNITY GRANTS COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 5, 2003**  
**Village Hall Ante Room**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Dave Humphreys called the meeting of the Community Grants Commission to order at 10:07 A.M.

Members in attendance: Dave Humphreys, Edward Bunting, Grace Beggs, Kathleen Nybo, and Renata Allelujka

Member absent: Pat Winter and Peggy Barrett

Staff in attendance: Susan Brassfield

Visitors: None

**II. WELCOME NEW MEMBER**

Went around the table and everyone introduced themselves to our newest member, Renata Allelujka. The Village Council expanded our Commission to seven members; terms are being uniformly standardized to three years.

**III. APPROVAL OF MAY 5, 2003 MINUTES**

There being no additions or corrections the minutes were approved as read.

**IV. DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF THE OPEN MEETING ACT**

A handout of the *Open Meetings Act* was given to each member. Public business must be conducted in public; discussion out of the public view violates the spirit of the law. There being now seven members of the Community Grants Commission, a quorum constitutes 4 members. A majority of a quorum is required to pass or make recommendations. Thus, three members could be a majority and pass a motion. Therefore, three members can't meet for it will lead to suspicion of business being conducted outside public view; 2 members can talk, but 3 members may not talk or meet. If there needs to be general communication it should go through staff [Susan Brassfield]. Telephone conversation and email correspondence should be treated as face-to-face conversation.

Dave Humphreys suggested that our list of agenda items include a place for public comment. An invitation for comments should be near the beginning of the

meeting such as Village Council meetings; it is by choice of the committee to also include a place for comments at the end of the meeting.

## **V. REVIEW OF GRANT PAYMENTS AND EVALUATIONS**

Grants are paid on a reimbursement basis and any unspent money goes back into the General Fund. Under the current ordinance, money comes out of the General Fund but originates from the Hotel Motel Tax. The Commission doesn't know the final budget until it has been approved by Council, which is after the receipt of the applications.

## **VI. CORPORATE DONATION PROGRAM REVIEW**

Under the revised ordinance, the Village is allowed to solicit donations. Last year was the first year that a solicitation letter was mailed to select Downers Grove businesses. Ms. Brassfield stated that the solicitation letters were mailed about a month ago and to date for this year's campaign the Community Grants Program has received \$2,000 in donations.

## **VII. BUDGET FOR FY2004-05**

The budget process has already begun. Staff is responsible for the budget and we are part of the process. It was recommended that the Commission determine a percentage of the Hotel Motel Tax to support the Community Grants Program. Ms. Brassfield provided two handouts for budgetary discussion. The first handout showed the comparison of monthly revenue generated by the Hotel Use Tax for the fiscal period 1999-00 through 2003-04. The second handout showed the budget detail of the local grant account. Using Hotel Use Tax revenue figures generated from the last six months of FY02/03 and the first 6 months of FY03/04 or a total of \$775,629, staff presented the following percentages as a starting point for budgetary recommendations of the FY04/05 Community Grants budget.

5% = \$38,781

6% = \$46,538

7% = \$54,294

8% = \$62,050

Any donation revenue will be in addition to the stated percentages. Since the Community Grants Program has received \$2,000 in donations to be applied in FY04/05, staff recommended adding \$2,000 to the stated percentages. Dave Humphreys presented a handout detailing the history as to how we were spending our money for FY1998-99 through 2003-04. The spreadsheet was broken down by three categories: Cultural Arts, Community Events, and Other. The spreadsheet showed the percentage of the dollar amounts appropriated to the three categories. Dave Humphreys stated that the Cummings McNulty report recommends 8% of the Hotel Motel Tax be designated toward Community Grants. Every organization's budget was reduced last year; additionally, we had

one new organization, New World Theatre, apply to the Community Grants Program. We must keep in mind planning for the future. Most cultural arts groups can't fully support themselves. By consensus, the Community Grants Commission approved 7% of the annual Hotel Motel Tax Revenue plus donations or \$56,294 to be submitted as the FY04/05 budget.

## VIII. GRANT GUIDELINES

The members discussed and reviewed the Community Grants brochure. In the beginning groups appeared inexperienced in the granting process so to encourage organizations to apply multiple year grants funding was initiated. Nothing in our ordinance mentions multiple year grants; the ordinance states annually. The Community Grants program can't support fundraising however; it can support a community event to kick-off a fundraising program. The AAUW uses the book sale to raise money to fund scholarships however, the book sale is an event. Activities primarily religious or social service in nature can be referred to Barb Leiber, Director of Social and Health Services of the Village.

The following suggestions were requested in revising the 2004 brochure:

Add the two new members, Renata Allejuka and Peggy Barrett, to the list of Community Grants Commission Members

In the first paragraph under *How to apply*, the sentence should now read: Previous grant funding has ranged from **\$100** to \$10,000

In the bullet section, under *How to apply*, include as the first bullet: **Celebrate and contribute to the cultural arts in our community**

Maintain uniformity of light shading of bullet section, currently last bullet is obliterated due to darkness of shading

Correct typo in the word **fundraising** found in the second section under *Grants are not available to support*

Eliminate the section *Multiple Year Grants*

Discussion lead to the difficulty of organizations finding adequate facilities in Downers Grove and of booking difficulties especially theatre groups. The issue was raised of possibly eliminating an activity to tighten the ways of analyzing future funding. It was voiced that we shouldn't eliminate people up front before we receive all applications. The Commission should follow the established procedures and be realistic.

## IX. OLD BUSINESS

### **Commission's meeting calendar for FY 2004-05 Grant Cycle**

Saturday, April 24, 2004 from 9:00 A.M. –3:00 P.M. Presentations; Question and Answer Session to be held in the Village Hall Committee Room.

Monday, May 3, 2004 at 10:00 A.M. Commission evaluates applications and makes recommendations.

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

In response to our solicitation letter, Double Tree Guest Suites offered an “in-kind” donation of five complementary room nights good through the end of October 2004. A concern over impropriety was raised. Staff will contact organizations if they need a room to host an out of town performer or judge for the grant funded event.

**VIII. ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned at 1:10 P.M.