

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
COMMUNITY GRANTS COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES
November 3, 2004
Village Hall Ante Room

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Stan Urban called the meeting of the Community Grants Commission to order at 10:10 A.M.

Members in attendance: Stan Urban, Dave Humphreys, Renata Allelujka, Peggy Barrett, Pat Winter, and Kathy Nybo

Members absent: Grace Beggs

Staff in attendance: Susan Brassfield

Invited Guest: Michael Busse, President Community Bank of Downers Grove

Visitors: None

II. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 6, 2004 & OCTOBER 20, 2004 MINUTES

Approve minutes as corrected.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Kathy Nybo has agreed to be reappointed to the Community Grants Commission and Pat Winter was reappointed at last night's Council Meeting.

Commissioner Urban asked staff to initiate paperwork for Kathy Nybo's reappointment to the Community Grants Commission.

Commission members and staff introduced themselves to invited guest Michael Busse, President, Community Bank of Downers Grove. As Bank President, Mr. Busse said he believes in giving back to the Community. His bank has the *Founders Program* whereby, individuals can donate \$10.00 to designated non-profit groups such as Downers Grove Library, West Suburban Humane Society, and FISH. This year his bank was instrumental in providing \$5,000 in donations.

Commissioner Urban provided Mr. Busse with an overview of the Community Grants Program. The Community Grants Commission is a formal Commission whose members are appointed by Council. This Commission is an offshoot of the Betty Cheever era whereby, dollars were put aside as cultural dollars to support the cultural climate of Downers Grove. In the first year of the program, we had to place an advertisement to get the word out regarding the grants program. Every year the program has been allocated in the range of \$40,000 - \$50,000, but grant requests have generally totaled around \$100,000. The current Ordinance contains language to solicit donations. There have been slight changes to two Commissions, Community Grants and Tourism & Events, because

these Commissions regulate money. Council felt that a Council member should Chair the Commission and would be more adept to handle the situation should a resident ever question distribution of money.

Members were asked to take the floor to provide highlights of the Community Grants Program:

The Cultural Arts are the heart and soul of the community; it is an important part of the infrastructure. Supporting the Arts goes beyond supporting the quality of life; there are tangible effects such as property values and its good for business. It is a two-way street. Over the years, the grants program has helped organizations with seed money. This program was not envisioned as supporting social service organizations.

This program supports a variety and wide range of events – something for everyone. People are pleasantly surprised that there is always something happening, always something to do.

Downers Grove has a strong cultural climate through such organizations as the Downers Grove Concert Association. The coming season will be the association's 58th concert season. The Association presents five concerts a year primarily classical, and of international stature.

The Halloween Window Painting has been sponsored by Rotary for over forty years. There were probably 1,000 kids that attended this recent event.

The Community Grants Program has supported the Downers Grove Historical Society in restoring Main Street Cemetery.

Many of the non-profit organizations that we support are professional organizations while others are community based volunteered. Many of our grant supported organizations are professionally managed. For instance, New World Repertory Theatre is a non-profit organization that is professionally managed.

The Commission has formulated procedures that are outlined in our brochure. For the last two years the Commission has solicited donations by letter however with mass mailings, you don't get a personal relationship. A donation to the grants program could provide more exposure for the donating organization such as their logo being printed on informational materials; acknowledgements could be made in the Village Newsletter, Cable, and the Village's mass e-mail system. There could be different sponsorship levels such as bronze, gold, and platinum.

For the next granting cycle, applications will be mailed out in mid-January and will be due April 1, 2005. This program is available for 501(C)(3) organizations and not individuals. The Commission would like to build a reserve with its donations. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 in donations for the next grant cycle.

Mr. Busse asked staff to send him a list of organizations that were awarded a grant in FY04/05.

The next meeting of the Community Grants Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, November 17, 2004 to discuss grant guidelines.

IV. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 A.M.