

**Village of Downers Grove
Community Grants Commission
MEETING MINUTES SUMMARY
Ante Room, Village Hall
May 9, 2005**

I. CALL TO ORDER

David Humphreys serving as Co-Chairman called the Community Grants Commission Meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

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

Absent: None

Staff: Susan Brassfield

Visitors: None.

II. NEW BUSINESS

**REVIEW AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS OF GRANT APPLICATIONS
SUBMITTED TO THE COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM**

The Community Grants Commission met on Saturday, April 30, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:10 p.m. in the Committee Room to hear presentations and have a question and answer session with 20 organizations that submitted grant applications. The following list as recommended by the Commission consists of projects that provide something for everyone.

The following grants are not in the order as discussed in the meeting; funding recommendations have been categorized by type of activity in order to present like items together.

Cultural Activity:

A.A.U.W. – 47th Annual Used Book Sale \$2,000

Assist with the cost of storage, book transport and table rental for the 47th Annual Used Book Sale to be held on June 9, 10, and 11 at Henry Puffer School. More than 40,000 books on every topic have been donated for the sale. This unique cultural event attracts many visitors from several states.

D.G. Choral Society – 2005-06 Concert Season & Outreach Program \$10,000

Assist with the cost of marketing initiatives for the core three-concert Oratorio Series, to provide partial compensation for venue fees involved in performing at the Tivoli Theatre, and to support the Outreach Program in healthcare/retirement facilities in Downers Grove for the 2005-06 Concert Series. This project will bring new singers and audience members into Downers Grove from surrounding communities. Moreover, this project contributes to a positive image of the Village of Downers Grove by presenting high-quality performances of the great choral masterworks.

D.G. Concert Association – 2005-06 Concert Series **\$10,000**

Assist with the cost of advertising for its 2005-06 concert series: Artists Showcase West. The 2005-06 series will feature the following artists: Czech Philharmonic (Chamber Orchestra), Salzburg Hyperion Ensemble, Chicago Chamber Musicians, The Silver Medalist from the Twelfth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, and Lyric Opera Center for American Artists. Live classical music performances of world renowned professionals enhance the image of the Village as an attractive and fulfilling place to live, visit, and conduct business. The purpose of this organization is to promote and encourage public interest in the performing arts and this is achieved by presenting to the public, at a reasonable cost, a program of professional artists of international stature.

**D.G.S.H.S. Mustang Band Boosters –
Marching Mustang Music Bowl** **\$2,100**

Assist with the cost of an announcer, advertising, judges, and trophies. The Marching Mustang Music Bowl is a marching band competition that will be hosted by Downers Grove South High School on October 1, 2005. This event will bring 12-15 high school marching bands from across the state to participate in the competition. This event will create a musical festival atmosphere that will be welcoming to all factions of the community and will draw many out-of-town visitors.

Grove Players – 2005-06 Season **\$4,100**

Assist with the cost of advertising and rental space for the 2005-06 Season. The Grove Players perform live stage productions three to four times a year, participate in community events including “Heritage Festival” and parades. Grove Players also provide actors for Village and Chamber of Commerce special events including “Midnight Madness” and the “Ice Festival.” All productions bring theatre-goers into the downtown area. This organization offers live theatre productions at a reasonable price to the residents of Downers Grove and the surrounding communities.

Midwest Ballet Theatre – Construction of a new set **\$6,200**

Assist in the costs associated with the design and construction of a new set for the *Nutcracker*. The current set is ten years old and is in need of replacement. Four performances of the *Nutcracker* are presented over two weekends in November of each year at the Tivoli Theatre. These performances have introduced the art of classical ballet to many children in our community and this organization is a vital part of the growing arts in the western suburbs.

New World Repertory Theatre – Chapter Two by Neil Simon **\$4,000**

Assist with marketing and publicity for the production entitled “Chapter Two” by Neil Simon, which will be presented in October and November, 2005 at the Masonic building on Curtiss. New World Repertory will present to the community contemporary and classic live theater for adults and shows performed by children. This project will provide the people of Downers Grove with a recreational, cultural, and artistic resource that will inspire community participation. New World Repertory will provide Downers Grove with low cost, high-quality live theater for adults, and offer creative opportunities for the children of the community. A theater will also bring people from the surrounding suburbs into downtown Downers Grove.

Our Town Productions - *Pinocchio* \$4,000

Assist with production costs for *Pinocchio*, the show is being produced in conjunction with the Fall Fine Arts Festival. Our Town Productions will offer this family production that will serve a broad age-range of residents and visitors to this community. The goals of Our Town Productions are to provide the community of Downers Grove with a professional performing arts company that reaches a multi-generation audience, contribute to the image of the Village of Downers Grove as a community that supports and celebrates the arts, and introduces new events to Downers Grove on a continual basis that serve not only the residents of Downers Grove but also attracts visitors to the community.

West Towns Chorus – 2005 Season \$2,229

Assist with rental and printing costs for the Spring and Christmas Show. West Town Chorus produces a Spring Show every other year in June at the Tivoli. The show will also include both Jazz and Dixieland Bands. Three Christmas shows are staged in one weekend at the Tivoli Theatre. These shows bring high quality, professional entertainment to downtown Downers Grove while at the same time using local talent such as the First Congregational Church Bell Choir, Trinity Irish Dancers, Affinity String and Brass Ensemble, and Singers from DG Choral Society.

Senior Suburban Orchestra (NEW) – 2005-06 Season \$2,000

Assist with sheet music rental/purchase and conductor fees for four concerts at Downers Grove residential retirement facilities during the 2005-2006 season. Funds are also being requested to help defray the cost of presenting two workshop/concerts in Downers Grove elementary schools. The Senior Suburban Orchestra was founded in September of 2000 at the suggestion of the Senior Citizens' Coordinator at the Community House of Hinsdale. This organization has 40 members and operates out of Fairview Village. The orchestra is under the musical direction of a paid professional conductor to ensure quality support to those playing in the orchestra and quality performances to the communities served.

Recreational Activity:

D.G. Kiwanis Club – Easter Egg Hunt \$600

Assist with the cost of candy and balloons for the annual Easter Egg Hunt. The event will be held in Fishel Park, which will draw people to Downtown Downers Grove.

D.G. Rotary Club – Halloween Window Painting \$1,000

Assist with the cost of refreshments, printing, supplies, and post-event window cleaning for the Halloween Window Painting Event. The Downers Grove Rotary Club has sponsored the Halloween Window Painting event for 38 years. Over 800 children (K through 6th grade) participated in the 2004 event. In addition to providing a forum for family involvement and bringing families downtown, the Club requests voluntary contributions of canned food items which are given to F.I.S.H.

Squires of Downers Grove – Bob Nelson Jr. Golf Tournament **\$400**

Assist in the cost of green fees for the Bob Nelson Jr. Golf Tournament to be held on June 20, 2005 at the Downers Grove Park District Golf Course. The Squires have a players field of 96 participants (24 foursomes) between the ages of 10 to 16. Each foursome is accompanied by a senior golfer acting as a rules official and instructor. The senior golfer does not teach the mechanics of golf rather, instruction is given in golf safety, golf etiquette, sportsmanship, course care, rules, and fair play. This event will attract local youth to play golf at the Downers Grove Park District Golf Course.

West Suburban Humane Society – “Barkapalooza” Pet Expo & Walk **\$2,000**

Assist in the cost of advertising for the 12th Annual Barkapalooza Pet Expo & Walk (formally known as STEPS FOR STRAYS). The event will be held at Patriot Park on September 25, 2005 and starts with a blessing for the animals and then the Masters of Ceremony will kick off the Expo and lead the walkers. The objectives of this event are to make it more of a Downers Grove community event, and to have greater involvement of children and families.

YMCA – 8th Annual Y-Games **\$1,200**

Assist with the cost of advertising, brochures, and t-shirts for all participants. The event will take place September 24, 2005. The objective of this project is to provide a minimum of 85 youths ages 8-17 the opportunity to showcase their skating and rock climbing skills. With the addition of new ramps and resurfacing of the blacktop, it will serve to attract a larger number of competitors to the 2005 competition. Y-Games delivers an energetic, fun-filled outlet for skaters and climbers alike, fulfilling the mission of the Grants Program to provide recreational, community-oriented activities for Village residents. There are limited competitions for teens in these particular sports and Y-Games provides an exciting competition judged by expert skaters.

YMCA – 5K Run **\$900**

Assist with the cost of advertising, brochures, t-shirts for all participants, trophies, and official race timing. The event will be held on Sunday, June 12, 2005. The race starts/ends at the Indian Boundary YMCA, winding through the Village of Downers Grove and introducing out-of-towners to the beauty of our Village. Last year’s 5K Run, drew nearly 160 runners/walkers. Participants have the option to run or walk, and this event is open to all age groups- from tots to seniors.

Parades:

**DG Downtown Management-
Hospitality Sunday Santa Parade** **\$3,000**

Assist with the cost of advertising and entertainment for the 30th annual Hospitality Sunday /Santa Parade, a one-day event held annually on the Sunday following Thanksgiving. The highlight of the day is the Santa Parade, which brings Santa and Mrs. Claus to town for the season. Children are invited to ride on the float with Santa and Mrs. Claus. This civic event is an opportunity for our community to come together in a celebration to begin the holiday season.

D.G. Friends of the Library – 7th Annual Storybook Character Parade \$500

Assist with the cost of prizes and a marching band for the 7th Annual Storybook Character Parade that will be held to coincide with the Fine Arts Festival in September, 2005. The Storybook Character Parade is an activity to encourage children to read and then dress up as a book character and parade through a designated route.

D.G. Junior Woman's Club – 4th of July Parade Float \$400

Assist with the cost of supplies in the construction of a float for the 4th of July parade. By supporting the construction of a float, it will allow the Downers Grove 4th of July parade to continue as one of the best parades in the western suburbs. This organization hopes to make women of Downers Grove aware of their services and philanthropic donations which contribute to the quality of life in Downers Grove.

Maple Hill Recreation Corporation – 4th of July Float \$400

Assist with trailer rental and the cost of supplies in constructing a float for the 4th of July parade. The float will add value to the event by showing additional participation and support for our community. The parade float is intended to raise awareness of Maple Hill as an available alternative for families seeking a pool in Downers Grove.

One grant request was determined as not meeting the criteria or scope of the Downers Grove Community Grants Program.

The grant requests submitted totaled \$91,613; however, to stay within the grants budget of \$57,029 the Commission had to reduce funding requests. Staff recommended \$590 of budgeted grant dollars to be appropriated for administrative expenses.

Martin Tully met with the Village Manager regarding funding of the consultant study for the Performing Arts Center; it was suggested that the Community Grants Commission shouldn't reserve any funds toward the consultant study because funding will come from other sources.

Council has set aside \$5,000 of Community Grant funds to support Prairie State Games. Prairie State Games is a good tourism event. Years ago, there were two granting programs; Tourism Grants and Community Grants. Tourism grants were geared to bring tourists to Downers Grove whereas, Community Grants are inward looking, directed toward events in the community. The tourism grant program no longer exists; consideration should be given to re-establishing it as a part of the tourism/economic development function. Funding of Prairie State Games changes the structure of the Community Grants Program.

This year we are seeing the results of austerity, of funding being really tight and organizations requesting funding are holding back. Sara Lee moving to Downers Grove will help the Hotel/Motel tax revenue.

Staff received a letter from the American Association of University Women (AAUW) informing the Community Grants Commission that AAUW linked the tourism website to the book sale website as suggested by the Commission at the Saturday presentation meeting.

In a future meeting we need to discuss whether the \$10,000 informal ceiling is valid. The \$10,000 maximum funding level was determined because it originally coincided with the approval level of the Village Manager. Now, the Village Manager has approval for purchases under \$14,999. If it is decided that the restriction should be removed, the Grants Commission will need to inform organizations that apply for future funding of this action.

The Village Manager will schedule a meeting between Council and the Community Grants Commission to provide us with clear direction. A meeting will probably be scheduled within the next 30 days; sometimes these meetings are held on Saturday following *Coffee with Council*. Following the joint meeting with Council, the Commission may want to reword and clarify the guidelines for grant applications as listed in our brochure.

Recommendations made by the Community Grants Commission will be on the May 24th Workshop Agenda; this item will then be placed on the June 7th Village Council Active Agenda. In previous years, the Chairman would give a five minute presentation. Dave Humphreys was designated as Co-Chairman to present before Council the recommendations made by the Grants Commission. Since Council has one new Commissioner, it was decided that Mr. Humphreys should give an overview of the Community Grants Commission.

Details will need to be worked out if Council wants to stop supporting floats through the Community Grants Program. The Grants Commission only started funding floats because the 4th of July parade didn't have any floats. The Grants Commission never had more than seven organizations applying for grants to support the construction of a 4th of July float and these seven organizations never applied at the same time.

Staff to obtain clearance from Legal to provide Council a spreadsheet detailing recommendations made by the Community Grants Commission. This spreadsheet will allow Council to view the recommendations prior to receipt of the Workshop Packet.

The Grants Commission discussed the Open Meetings Act; often times the results of grant awards are in the paper before the official award letter is received by the grantee.

The Grants Commission will need to fill one position. Staff to provide the Community Grants Chairman with the file of applicants requesting to serve on the Community Grants Commission. Staff to initiate the paperwork for the reappointments of Renata Allelujka and Peggy Barrett.

III. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 17, 2004 MINUTES

Pat Winter moved to approve the minutes of November 17, 2004. Stan Urban seconded the motion. Minutes approved as read.

IV. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM

