

Warren County Port Authority

Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2008

Opening:

The special meeting of the Warren County Port Authority was called to order at 5:05 pm on April 21, 2008 in the Warren County Administration Building, Room 128 B by Board Chair Greg Sample.

Present:

Warren County Port Authority Board Members: Mr. Ficke, Mr. Gully, Mr. Hearsum, Mr. McNeil, Mr. Sample and Ms. Reindl-Johnson..

Warren County Economic Development Staff: Kimm Coyner and Martin Russell

Other Attendees:

Arthur Greenburg, Dan Cunningham, Larry Hollingshead, Larry Stone, Claudia Cornett, Tom Issacs, John Lazares, Joe Weiland, Tony Collins, Marcy Elter, Chris Millican, Commissioner Pat South, Don Gilmore, John Fonner, Liz Ludwig, Leslie Dye, Charles Cornett and Wayne Dunn

A. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Sample shared with the Port Board and audience that the agenda for the special meeting was to hear Phase 1 results of the Warren County Arts & Culture Center as conducted by Arthur Greenburg of AMS Research Group. Resources were distributed to the board for review and consideration without disapproval.

B. Approval of Minutes

No minutes were presented for approval at the Special Board Meeting

C. Introductions

At the request of Chairman Sample, the Port Board members and staff introduced themselves to those in attendance at the meeting. Additionally, Chairman Sample asked those in the audience to introduce themselves and list their affiliation with the Art Center; Board of Trustees, Advisory Council or interested citizen.

D. Presentation – Dan Cunningham (Chairman, Warren County Art and Culture Center Board of Trustees)

- Mr. Cunningham gave a brief presentation to the Port Board discussing the formation of the Advisory Council for the Art's Center. 62 application packets were received for consideration and 28 individuals were selected. The Board of Trustees is working on implementing teams for the Advisory Council members to work in and will interview Council members to determine their interest and expertise. Additionally, the Board of Trustees is working to create vision and mission statements for the Warren County Art and Culture Center. There will be a gathering of parties for a "get acquainted" evening on May 21, 2008 held at the Cunningham's residence. All Port Board, Board of Trustees and Advisory Council members are encouraged to attend the event.

E. Presentation – Arthur Greenburg (AMS Research Group)

- Mr. Greenburg presented his Phase 1 findings for the Warren County Arts and Culture Center's Feasibility Study (PowerPoint presentation attached). Mr. Greenburg stated that one of the first items his group looked at was the term "region" and how that would apply for a future facility in Warren County. Being located within the center of the Dayton and Cincinnati markets, there are rules within the art's community relating to performances and blackout zones. To look further at the region, Mr. Greenburg conducted numerous stakeholder interviews with arts, governmental and business leaders (Warren County, Cincinnati and Dayton) to understand their ideas if an Arts Center was feasible and what it should be to the local/regional community. Additionally, the feasibility study touched on the potential best location for such a venue if the concept moved forward. With Otterbein Homes funding the feasibility study, its location was discussed as well as other spots within Warren County that might have green space or existing building suitable for such a venture. After analyzing the responses given during the interview sessions (over 80), Mr. Greenburg and the AMS staff concluded that there were common themes uncovered amongst individuals' answers to questions. Many individuals did consider the Otterbein campus to be a neutral location that would meet the geographic needs for arts' communities. Additionally, areas in Mason, Lebanon and areas in proximity to Interstate 75 were considered viable options. Another theme that emerged was the projected size of a venue and its' scope of service. Many interviewees thought a smaller venue (350-450 seats) would be best for the area. It would not compete against the large Broadway productions done in the urban areas, but afford arts' organizations, local and regional, a place to perform regularly or collaborate on larger productions.
- Questions were posed to Mr. Greenburg about phasing and growth of a larger Arts Center. Mr. Greenburg discussed that growth would depend on the demographics of the community and their increased education of/involvement with the arts. A large scale venue of 1200 seats may occur down the road, but that demand was not evident in the current interviews collected and the demographic information analyzed. Another question posed pertained to the rehabilitation of current structures. Mr. Greenburg stated that he was not aware of any current buildings that might meet the perceived requirements, but that the concept was a viable option if the appropriate space was found.

- Mr. Greenburg stated that Phase 2 would be multi-faceted. Interviews would be conducted with residents of Warren County to determine their current/future engagement with the arts' community. An analysis of these interviews would allow AMS to validate or not the likelihood that any venue constructed would be used in its intended manner. Additionally, Phase 2 will build case studies of other Arts' Centers constructed with the region and/or nationally to learn from the processes used during their planning and discussion. Phase 2 is expected to take approximately four to six weeks to complete.
- A recommendation from the Warren County Arts and Culture Center's Board of Trustees was offered to the Port Authority Board to continue with the feasibility study and move forward with Phase 2. **A motion was offered by Doug McNeil and seconded by Cheryl Reindl-Johnson to accept the Warren County Arts and Culture Center's Board of Trustees recommendation to give Mr. Greenburg and AMS Research Group direction to conduct a phone survey to confirm or deny Phase 1 findings of a 350-450 seat performance space with phasing options and develop case studies around similar sized venues to flesh out ideas and/or create niche concepts. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.**

Adjournment:

At 6:53 pm, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Gully. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and passed by a unanimous voice vote. The next Warren County Port Authority meeting will be at 5:00 pm on May 5, 2008 in room 128 B, Warren County Administration Building.

Minutes submitted by: Martin Russell

Approved by: Kimm Coyner