

Langley Arts Commission (LAC) Performing Arts Meeting at WICA, Thursday, November 12, 2015.

Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Stacie Burgua.

Sign-in sheets were passed around as well as copies of LAC's Langley Public Art Master Plan (LAMP). Each attendee introduced him/herself with a brief bio of their participation in the arts, particularly in performing arts organizations. More than 20 people were in attendance.

Brief explanation of need for this meeting: in the short time that the Langley Arts Commission has been in existence it has managed, among other things, to get the arts included in Langley's Comprehensive Plan. LAC's first major project was the establishment of the two sculpture pedestals with competitive sculpture pieces on Second Street. In LAC's recently proposed LAMP document, by far the majority of art projects mentioned represent the visual arts. Therefore, this meeting was called to discuss the public role of the performing arts. People were also reminded that final approval of any/all arts projects is made by the Langley City Council and Mayor upon recommendation by LAC.

As always with the arts, funding is an issue. If city building projects are going on the arts may receive 1% of the project costs. And some years there may be funds remaining in the city budget - but these scenarios are few and far between. The biggest source of tax income for cities comes from State B and O Taxes. The Langley Main Street Association is a main beneficiary of these funds, for example.

It was noted that some performing arts groups can, at least, charge for admittance. But most performing arts groups are heavily invested in seeking sponsors/patrons and fund raising. Thus it is hard for some groups to operate in a spirit of cooperation with each other when they are fighting for the same funds. Examples of performing arts groups/venues represented were WICA, OutCast Productions, Fairgrounds, Children's Theater, Island Dance Theater, Saratoga Orchestra, and Whidbey Life Magazine. It was also noted that somehow a bridge between arts organizations and the public schools must be provided.

Langley has some performing arts events that are great attractions to outside visitors. These would be Choochokum, Django Fest, Shakespeare Festival, Whidbey Island Area Fair and Mystery Weekend. A common theme of discussion was the lack of a Master Calendar to prevent double booking of dates - not only for the events themselves, but also for fund raising. It was suggested that more use be made of the City of Langley website and also of Whidbey Life Magazine. A downtown kiosk for the Integrated Master Calendar was proposed as well.

Networking among arts organizations, sharing fund raising ideas and donor lists, even developing a Foundation for the support of these organizations were other suggestions. A creative collaboration between event promoters and local businesses was mentioned as was establishing an annual 1-day performance arts conference/workshop. It was noted that the individual performing artists have not been included in discussions so far.

So the question for the evening was "How can the Langley Arts Commission help the performing arts groups that are already established?"

The answer was for LAC to sponsor small task forces, each one focused on a single issue, for example:

- a) Kiosk/Master Calendar
- b) Festival Banners/Poles
- c) Businesses/Arts Events Collaboration
- d) Annual Arts Conference/Workshops
- e) Fund Raising

WICA will produce an invitation to sign up for these task forces. Dates and times for meetings will follow.

An announcement was made that an opening exists for a seventh member of LAC.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:45.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Diane Divelbess, LAC Secretary