



CULTURAL CORE
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, April 6, 2023

Committee Members in Attendance: Lia Summers, (Salt Lake County Representative) Durga Ekambaram (Salt Lake City Representative), Eric Egenolf (Salt Lake city Representative), Felicia Baca (Salt Lake City Representative), Grace Lin (Salt Lake County Representative), Shaleane Gee (Salt Lake City Representative), Isaac Gonzalez (Salt Lake County Representative)

Committee Members Not in Attendance: Matthew Castillo (Salt Lake County Representative)

Cultural Core/Downtown Alliance Staff Present: Merinda Christensen, Britney Helmers, Josh Jones, Dee Brewer, Dan Brimhall, Jessica Thesing

Shaleane Gee welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at **11:01am**. **Shaleane Gee** initiated the roll. **Shaleane Gee** approved the minutes from February 8, 2023.

Review of Public Comments

No public comments to review.

Current Business:

Britney Helmers we have been on a learning tour to understand what THE BLOCKS is, how it's been represented in the past, who we want to be, how we want to provide ourselves to the community, and are we an organization or a location. With that, we have put the overall BLOCKS brand on hold and are moving forward with the existing brand (THE BLOCKS). What we hope to do in the future is put a refresh on our website, logo, and figure how we can actually create this as an organization and location. **Felicia Baca** so we're keeping the brand, but better defining what it is. **Britney Helmers** arts and culture can be quite vague, how can we improve and build upon that. THE BLOCKS is a strong brand, but it can be improved through a logo and website refresher. **Grace Lin** in June, you will be bringing to this committee what types of insights and dollars will be put into this. **Felicia Baca** do you know who you intend to work with for the brand refresh? **Britney Helmers** we have been looking at potentially doing a RFP for a brand and logo refresh. We have had two conversations with Love Communications and I have been reviewing the original contract with them to ensure we have been receiving all that we are

contracted for. **Shaleane Gee** we want to make sure we have contact or knowledge of all the different physical entities that are in the boundaries (business owners, developers, etc.) so they know they exist within THE BLOCKS. **Felicia Baca** we can assist with that list. **Lia Summers** it's my understanding that we worked with Love Communications for both creating the branding and doing media buys. I don't know if that was one RFP or two separate RFP's and if those will be a joint RFP or separate moving forward? **Dee Brewer** we don't use Love Communications for a lot of creative work. It is primarily media buying. I see the RFP very centered on media buying, because that is where we see value.

Britney Helmers we would like to potentially change the next meeting date for June. There have also been some other conversations of meeting at a different location. I would like to see if Friday, June 2 at 10am or Monday, June 5 at 1pm or 2pm is an available date for the committee. **Felicia Baca** is the purpose to learn about another organization or entity? **Britney Helmers** correct. **Lia Summers** is the idea to have the meeting somewhere different each time or just bounce around to a couple of places. **Britney Helmers** we could do either. **Dee Brewer** Matthew Castillo isn't here but we could meet at each of the county buildings on a rotating basis. **Lia Summers** we could also add the library or galleries in that rotation.

Plan Implementation Manager Report

Financial Statement of Activities

Dan Brimhall presented the financial statement of activities. The revenue is basically done for the year from the city and county. The personal and office administrative expenses are predictable and have added those in for the remaining quarter. Program marketing and program production hasn't moved a lot. The \$113,00 can be carried over in the next programming year or this year. **Shaleane Gee** Rocky Mountain Power, what's their relationship with us? **Britney Helmers** they provided dollars for the Locally Made Locally Played event. **Shaleane Gee** and then the State of Utah grant, how is that used? **Jessica Thesing** that was a grant used for Open Streets. **Shaleane Gee** there's not another entity that's allocating funds on a regular basis, correct? **Dee Brewer** correct. **Lia Summers** is there quite a bit of graffiti on murals that need to be cleaned regularly? **Britney Helmers** they are supposed to be cleaned every couple months and so we reach out and they do specific murals. **Lia Summers** how often does graffiti become a problem? I'd love us to encourage other big entities to regularly clean their murals as well as keep a metric on how often they get cleaned. **Eric Egenolf** so your available budget for this year is \$514,000 but we're only projecting to spend 80% of that. What's the vision to spend that extra \$100,000? **Britney Helmers** one of the things we have been understanding is we haven't been deploying dollars at the moment for activations. We are understanding how we can better this program and better this as an organization. So with that, we were expecting to use those dollars with the brand. With that not happening, we are hoping to employ those dollars to other activations around the city. **Grace Lin** so there will be more dollars applied to production and not as much to marketing? **Britney Helmers** correct. **Grace Lin** there should be a perspective of what the ratios should be on spending going forward into the fiscal year? **Eric Egenolf** I've never seen a long term placemaking vision for THE BLOCKS, which I think is why

it struggles with being a geographical place. **Shaleane Gee** it would be helpful to see in a budget what the placemaking activity is. **Felicia Baca** because of this underspend, you said there's funds from previous years. Are you saying in addition to what we're seeing? **Dan Brimhall** there is a little bit of a gap with this program But there is a \$50,00 to \$75,000 difference between what's in the balance sheet and what is presented today. **Felicia Baca** what do you mean by gap? **Dan Brimhall** if I take your checking account balance and add in your payables, receivable and acurales, it's not going to come to the \$113,00 exactly, there will be more because of past years rollover. If there's available equity, we will add this into this page moving forward. **Britney Helmers** there is no action needed, however this is an open conversion to mention that the county has signed off an additional \$50,00 for FY24 as well as the city approving an additional \$50,000 that will go to the Cultural Core. **Felicia Baca** the reason for that is when this project started, it started a little slow. There were fund balances that are not in the possession of Downtown SLC Presents and are just sitting there. So Matt and I wanted to expend those due to inflation costs increasing rapidly as well as not having budget increases at all. The intention is that those funds will be in place for next fiscal year. **Grace Lin** is the implication that this would be an additional \$100,00 each year thereafter? **Felicia Baca** until the funds are gone. **Eric Egenolf** so for FY2024, your actual budget is \$700,000? **Britney Helmers** correct. **Shaleane Gee** there's a significant opportunity at the upcoming meeting to talk about these budget issues and see it in a couple different lights. Which is why we want the full committee to be present. I would also like to talk with you all and have a larger conversation on how we are using the funds we have including potential increases to find matches and leverage from other contributors. **Dan Brimhall** a lot of that excess dollars is from two rounds of PPE.

Report on Arts Programming and Legacy Arts this Quarter

Josh Jones CENTRAL was a huge success. For that weekend, we had mentions in 23 media outlets, including a piece on HBO Max. It's important to note that we did not use any BLOCKS funding resources for this event. We did use BLOCKS resources for social media. We had 53M impressions. The top words listed from the impressions for the Downtown Alliance and THE BLOCKS were economic development, economic impact, and UTA and Trax Trains. We have become a key advisor for Axios as someone they look to for stories which is where we get a majority of impressions. We got 2.4 million in earned media, where on a regular month it's closer to 500,000. THE BLOCKS gained 2,000 new followers on social media just in that one weekend. In between all of what was going on during the NBA All-Star weekend, we continued to provide support and social media coverage of our legacy arts organizations. **Felicia Baca** tell us about attendance numbers. **Josh Jones** we got 13,500 attendees from Placer data in the two days for this specific event. **Felicia Baca** you said you didn't use resources from THE BLOCKS, is there a reason you didn't use those? **Dee Brewer** we found funding through the city and we knew we were going to brand everything with THE BLOCKS. **Merinda Christensen** but THE BLOCKS were heavily involved with the artists, programming, and personnel aspect of this event. **Eric Egenolf** is there a running list of artists you used to put on Trax or was there an application process? **Jessica Thesing** we had three activators that we partnered with that provided those activations (Alleyways Amplified, Joymob, and Bandah). If you're interested, I'm

sure I can get that list. There were between 50-60 individual performances, and some of those were duplicates.

Q4 and Q1 FY23/24 Activations and Promotions

Britney Helmers Merinda and I have been creating a process and budget for every single event we plan to spend dollars on. With each scope of work, we've included how it's attached to the overall Cultural Core initiative, how we communicate internally, and how this helps THE BLOCKS, as well as any additional sponsorships. One of the future things we are working on is the Green Loop Demonstration Project that is being put on by the Department of Transportation. We will be activating this on Wednesdays through our Locally Made Locally Played program. We will also be reusing the sculpture we used for CENTRAL at this event. The next big thing we've been working on is the USA Climbing World Cup. We want to see how we can gain recognition on the national level. During the climbing competition, there are different down times which is where we will have local artists and THE BLOCKS truck to be utilized as a community mural that will be painted on. A couple other things we are working on is Mind the Gap festival that will be at The Gateway, Brewstillery at Artspace, and Busker Fest. We are also understanding how we want to better utilize the Kiosks as a program.

Open Streets

Jessica Thesing many of you know that Open Streets has been an actual street closure for the last two full seasons that ran from Memorial to Labor day weekend. First season was 2020 and was more of an economic recovery pilot. And we are in continued discussions with Salt Lake City with what this event looks like but more importantly what the future means of Open Streets looks like. The city has released an RFP for a long term feasibility study of Main Street. Moving out of the pandemic, the event itself obviously has been busier and putting barricades in the street has become more of a conflict. So we are working through what some of those conflicts are with the City because this was a city partnership. So the future at this moment is uncertain, but one thing we are committed to both from the DTA and The Blocks side is the activation. The activation piece downtown is important and Britney Helmers has put together some ideas for how we activate downtown if we were able to get additional funding. But again, it is going to look different. One possibility if we are able to look at any street closure is later on in summer, but details are still being looked into. We are hoping to have more information as far as the directions from the city and our partnership on this event by the June meeting. **Lia Summers** does the feasibility mean closing down the street permanently? So that would include safety, cost, and rerouting cars? How long does a study like that take? **Jessica Thesing** yes, there are so many components that go into this. Main Street is different from a lot of streets you would normally close down because of UTA and how narrow it is as well as other factors. From an event perspective, the regulatory requirements to even close a street include temporary barricades and other management issues that make it really expensive to operate, especially for the duration. We are not taking any of this lightly, we are trying to be very responsible. What we don't want is to create a problem that conflicts with any long term visioning process.

Other Art + Culture Updates

Felicia Baca to let you all know, our Department of Economic Development has grants open from American Rescue Palln dollars for people that have Covid losses. So, part of that was really important to have those available for artists and individual artists that do not require a business license. The focus of these grants is primarily for small business but include artists and nonprofit organizations up to \$50,000. If you know individual artists that can document losses in their income during the pandemic, the first phase is just about to roll out.

Shaleane Gee the next meeting will be June 2, 2023 at 10:00am.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at **12:03pm**.