



CULTURAL CORE
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, August 15, 2023

Committee Members in Attendance: Lia Summers, (Salt Lake County Representative) Durga Ekambaram (Salt Lake City Representative), Felicia Baca (Contract Manager, Salt Lake City Representative), Isaac Gonzalez (Salt Lake County Representative), Isaac Gonzalez (Salt Lake County Representative), Spencer Lawson (Salt Lake City Representative), Grace Lin (Salt Lake County Representative), Matthew Castillo (Contract Manager, Salt Lake County Representative)

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

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

Britney Helmers welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at **9:04 am**. **Britney Helmers** initiated the roll. **Lia Summers** made a motion to approve the minutes from June 2, 2023. **Durga Ekambaram** approved and **Lia Summers** seconded the motion.

Review of Public Comments

No public comments to review.

Current Business:

Britney Helmers welcomed Spencer Lawson to the Committee as the new Salt Lake City Representative.

Felicia Baca Lia Summers has graciously offered to step into the chair role for the committee. She has been with the cultural core since the program started and is a long time committee member. **Felicia Baca** made a motion to approve Lia Summers as the official chair of the committee. **Durga Ekambaram** approved and **Spencer Lawson** seconded the motion.

Felicia Baca we have two applications for representatives for Salt Lake City. The first application is from Kathryn Carlisle-Kesling and she is a partner with Holland and Hart. She is an attorney and specializes in their real estate group. So, she has a lot of experience with

property acquisitions, community and economic development, land use, zoning and permitting, etc.

The second application comes from Eva Rinaldo who is the Director of Public Programs and Audience Engagement for Sundance. She has a background in the entertainment industry which involved a lot of community partnerships and small and large scale event organization.

Dee Brewer is the intention to have the group meet these two before making a decision or just making a decision based on the resumes? **Felicia Baca** we have typically conducted interviews with the committee, but if you all want to do that prior, we can. We would be looking at doing that potentially in the next meeting. **Grace Lin** is there a recommendation between the two? Did somebody have the opportunity to assess the qualities of both candidates and maybe give an opinion off that? **Felicia Baca** yes, we did speak with Kathryn. I don't have a recommendation, I think they're both wonderful. What I think is interesting, we don't have somebody on the committee with a background in law, which is interesting. Eva, of course, has a really robust background in the arts community. **Grace Lin** I would like to hear from staff or committee members about what their vision is for the core and what their opinion of someone coming into this role looks like? What are they trying to achieve? **Britney Helmers** one thing that stands out to me for Kathryn is that she works downtown. She is here every single day and works for Holland and Hart just above the Daily. She would see the programming that we are working on. She would also see the promotion that we are doing. So, not only is she walking by the kiosks on a daily basis, she will also be a part of Open Streets on every Friday. I think it would be interesting for us to have that legal representation if we ever needed it in the future.

Felicia Baca do we feel prepared to take a vote or do we want to conduct any further interviews? Anybody opposed to taking a vote? **Lia Summers** I am not opposed to taking a vote. I think because we have two pretty phenomenal candidates. If we do take a vote today and we select one over the other, I'd really like to, if the other is amenable, keep them in mind for the next vacancy that opens. **Felicia Baca** Lia, will you facilitate that as a committee member? **Lia Summers** made a motion to bring Kate onto the budget committee. **Durga Ekambaram** approved **Spencer Lawson** seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously approved.

Blocks Brand Update

Britney Helmers we have been working on a brand refresher with Y Design at the moment. We have a couple of really great options that are on the table. However, we do not have a solidified design. I am hoping that we will have that solidified and complete to bring to you by November. Once that design has been selected, we will be sure to share that with everyone.

Blocks Media Buying RFP

Britney Helmers we have been working on our media buying. We put together an RFP and sent it out to a handful of agencies. With that, we have selected and renegotiated our contract

with Love Communications. The big reason for that was the overall fee structure that Love is now presenting and putting on the table to us. We went back to them and asked for their reporting to look at what their media buying has been and their costs. They are going to provide us with an additional \$15,000 for this upcoming year, taking our media buying to \$80,000 with zero retainer. So, instead of paying that monthly \$5,000 to Love Communications every single month, we have decided to go with no retainer and work on a quarterly basis with the \$80,000. We did not see any other agencies bring anything creative like this to us. We were looking for more of that partnership and Love definitely stepped up to the plate and provided the dollars for us. So, we are excited to continue this partnership with Love Communications. **Spencer Lawson** just for some background information, they're just doing media buying, correct? No kind of creative is happening from them? **Britney Helmers** correct. This will only be media buying. We will actually be doing all of our creative work in-house and then sharing it with them to do the media buying. **Grace Lin** so they gave us a credit from past years of \$10,000 and threw in another \$5,000 right? **Britney Helmers** they did. They will operate on the 15% agency fees. So, that \$15,000 does cover a lot of our agency fees over the next year.

Budget Updates

Britney Helmers we have two documents that we want to bring to the board to have a conversation about to show you what we have been working on in the past month and a half. In July and part of August, we have utilized 15% of our overall budget and 52% of our marketing budget. We have spent about \$6,000 on hiring performers in the downtown core. We have hired about 95 artists this quarter in just a month and a half. We have created 32 partnerships and have brought an additional \$47,500 into the cultural core. We have had five legacy arts promotions and almost 400,300 reaches on social media and 7,000 people checking out our website this quarter. With that, we've based this off of our key performance indicators on promotion, placemaking, programming, and partnerships.

We are curating what goes under placemaking and programming and what needs to go under additional partnerships. We are looking at those KPI's and understanding how we start to track and provide information back to the board on a quarterly basis in a more ideal format. Understanding our promotion and marketing, we are looking at social media impressions, other media such as radio and print impressions, website, audience, legacy arts, social media, promotions and articles written about legacy arts. Do those sound like what we would be looking for in a dashboard? **Grace Lin** what's the significance of having legacy arts social media promotions as opposed to anybody else? **Britney Helmers** I think we want to ensure that we are truly promoting all of the legacy arts downtown and we really want to showcase to them what our output is for them on a quarterly basis. **Dee Brewer** the cultural core concept was created to support legacy arts organizations in addition to making this the general core of arts and culture. But, we felt it was important to specifically report what we're doing on behalf of those legacy arts organizations so they understand that we're not just cheating activation on the streets. **Grace Lin** so, it's balancing out the activations and legacy arts. And, I see that you have two metrics that are tied to legacy. One is the social media promotion of legacy and then articles written about them, correct? Would you say that is a good balance? If I were to look at these

KPI's, would we have a full 360 view of both types of initiatives? **Britney Helmers** that would be our goal. And with that, Grace, to tie this back to our budget, we are working on a partnership with the Tribute to simply elevate all legacy arts in downtown. We are also working with them to do takeovers with our legacy arts on all of our social media platforms and promoting all of their events that they have going on downtown. **Felicia Baca** I think this looks really great based on what came out of that retreat last year. And, I think it's important to say that the dashboard tracks high level things, but it's not to indicate that other things aren't being done or that we can't gather that data in the future. The only thing I would add is the equity initiatives or diverse communities served. **Matthew Castillo** one thing I would add would be something that speaks to the number of tickets sold or the number of people attending events in the core. I see under placemaking and programming you have attendance at programs. I assume that means for programs that are produced by the Blocks or is that meant to be all programs that happen downtown? **Britney Helmers** correct. It was based off of programs in the Blocks or that the Blocks are producing, but do you think it should also be based off of the county building and facilities? **Matthew Castillo** yeah, I think the county facilities could be good. Obviously that's not a complete picture, but it provides a large cross section. I'm happy to pull my team together to help work on a dashboard to easily access ticketing information. One thing that's really hard about ticketing information is if you just look at raw total numbers of tickets sold, it doesn't take into account things like the actual number of events that are taking place and so forth. You could also look at capacity, so the number of tickets sold relative to how many tickets are available. I think that would be a really good indicator as well. Another idea, and I don't have an easy solution for this, but I think geographic equity is really important. We talk a lot about how we know there are areas of the county and even within the 75 mile drive radius that are pretty significantly underrepresented when you look at the total population relative to how much of the population is coming downtown to events of the cultural core. And again, I think that a piece where we can dig into that data a little bit more. Ticket data has a lot of information available. Not sure if Place.ai does well, but I think that would be really important to demonstrate those from the 75 mile radius coming to the core. **Lia Summers** a couple points to add, especially when we're talking about reaching some of these underrepresented communities or communities that don't seem to be visiting the Blocks. I would love to see us target three to five zip codes and set a goal for some kind of engagement. Maybe target them on social media just so we can see how the tools that we have might be able to move the needle. I'd also like us to set some goals for some of these other things so that we can see our progress and we can see when we make an adjustment. I'd love to see the budget committee work together to adjust the goals or talk about whether or not we're using resources in the right way if the impact we're trying to have just isn't coming. **Spencer Lawson** the dashboard is really nice and is going to be a great tool. We do need to be tracking these things, but I would recommend adjusting and including tracking earned media as well as paid media. It'd be a great way to see how effective Love is being. Nowadays, people are spending millions and millions of dollars on social media budgets so you have to be super strategic to understand what they're doing with that paid media. Social media impressions are good, but I think impressions aren't necessary. I would say just change that into just social media metrics. Just to understand social media metrics over a long period of time would be really good. **Britney Helmers** great. Any other things that you all are seeing on this for us to add into here? I love the idea of targeting three to five areas and

cores and bringing them into the core. We will take this back as our goal to bring this to the board for our November meeting with Q1 filled and Q2 on the way. **Matthew Castillo** feel free to reach out and I can schedule some time with the team on the Artix data so we can do a work session to figure out how we can work on tracking that in a simple way. **Britney Helmers** how much do you attest the Blocks work contributing to those ticket sales? **Matthew Castillo** we don't have a way to show whether a ticket sold is attributable to the Blocks or something else. **Josh Jones** Ballet West and Utah Symphony's marketing budget is much larger than our entire budget. So there is to say, I spend a significant amount of time during the season promoting legacy arts programming. And, we probably, with our 250,000 followers, are reaching a new audience for them.

Britney Helmers we sent out the budget document to everyone yesterday providing all of the backup for the dollars that were spent for Q1, but this is just the overall large one. So, looking at our personnel expenses we spent about \$26,500, in office and admin \$7,000, and programming and event expenses are sitting around \$59,000. One of the main numbers that I really want to focus on here is the work that we have been doing to bring additional dollars into the cultural core. So far, we have brought in \$47,500. We are working on Open Streets and have curated a VSL partnership and raised about \$3,000 within that partnership for hiring buskers everytime there's a convention downtown. We received \$1,500 from PEG companies at a recognition at the opening of the paper box lofts. We have also curated a City Creek partnership for Open Streets. City Creek will be sponsoring \$3,000 for open streets for what we're calling our yoga on main experience every Saturday. We have also worked through partnership with Struck Communications to do a new campaign for our GLOW activation starting in November. Struck is actually doing an in-kind donation to the Blocks for \$20,000 to promote and create a new campaign. Although it's only been a month and half, we are definitely celebrating our success right there.

Plan Implementation Manager Report

Report on Programs and Activations

Josh Jones the Steppin' on Main events have been really successful. At each one of our events we've had about 300 people show up per Friday night. That does not include the people that are just walking up and down Main Street. These are people that are coming and actually staying at each of the events. On August 1st we held 801 Day which is a celebration of our area code. This was a first of its kind celebration that we had. We programmed five buskers during noon, which you don't get often in downtown Salt lake. There were a lot of people, a lot of energy, and it was a lot of fun. **Britney Helmers** the Fashion Show we held inside the Eccles lobby was one of the most amazing events I have been to downtown. If any of you had the opportunity to go, it was one of the most culturally diverse events in downtown. They averaged about 840 people. There were Tribune articles written and interviews on X96. **Dee Brewer** there was a question earlier about measuring diversity, which can be very difficult. This was a fantastically diverse program, which the diversity of our Blocks programming we over index for diversity compared to the diversity of the community. And, we should be very proud of that. The

other thing, with all of this programming, we are creating patterns for new audiences. When we get people comfortable to come downtown, they feel that downtown is theirs. **Matthew Castillo** this was a really magical event. There was a feeling in the air of excitement and people wanted to be a part of it. This is kind of a case study to fully realize the goals and vision of activating spaces that traditionally are used in a very different way but can be used in a new and creative way. The crowd represented a new type of crowd for Eccles theater. Huge congratulations to everyone that was involved in it. **Felicia Baca** you all do such a great job with photographic and video documentation and that's a great way to demonstrate diverse communities. **Josh Jones** while Vishwa and his team came to us, this was a year and a half in the making and it was working with Matt and his team and bringing these creatives together with government entities and trying to figure out how to do it. And it just wouldn't have happened without Britney and Merinda guiding the creatives. **Britney Helmers** we followed up with the team at Eccles and the team at Alleyways Amplified and they are excited for the next main Street fashion show. Josh, you have been doing a phenomenal job at promoting our legacy arts. Anything you would like to talk about?

Report on Recent Programs and Activations & Marketing and Promotion for Legacy Arts

Josh Jones we've done a couple of posts recently and we'll be doing more. Summer is slow for legacy arts organizations so we've really just started to tap into showcasing what they're going to do in the coming season and trying to help them sell tickets. You'll be seeing a lot more of that on our social platforms in September and October. **Britney Helmers** this being Ballet West's 68th year and RDT's 58th year, we have been having conversation ongoing with both of these organizations and seeing how we can continue to promote them in a much bigger way.

Upcoming Productions

Britney Helmers we currently have two calls for artists out at the moment. We will have three and potentially four in the next short moment. We have created a partnership with Hines where the old Utah Theater was to curate a call for artists and put a new mural on the site to really brighten up Main Street. We've also created a partnership with Internet Properties to put a mural south of the David Keith building to curate an event for Open Streets that we're calling selfie day. Both of these murals have the potential to be there for two or three years until the developers decide to develop the actual property. We are also working with Maverick to get a large mural on the back of the parking garage behind Beer Bar. **Durga Ekambaram** is there any way our newsletters could reach arts councils within the 75 mile radius? I know a lot of mural artists in Daybreak, South Jordan, and even Sandy who would like an opportunity like this. Is there a way you can know for sure that it has reached all those areas? **Britney Helmers** yes, that is a great idea. We could start communicating with all of the arts councils and have them posting it and sharing it with their neighborhoods and their communities. **Felicia Baca** if you need any help getting connected with any of the arts councils, we do a lot of work with all of them and so happy to help coordinate any of that. **Britney Helmers** we have had quite a few contestants and participants send in applications. I would like to share those with you all at some point just so you can see the breadth of art we are receiving through these calls. Looking

at Open Streets, what we have planned for this year and how it has come about. Josh, do you want to start with how Open Streets came about again this year? **Josh Jones** this will be our fourth year producing Open Streets with the City. It started out of the pandemic, but the city is now doing a feasibility study on whether or not to close Main Street and what that might look like in the future when and if they do this. Open Streets this year is unusual because we are doing it in September and October which is exciting for us and our activators because we hope that that means better weather and more people downtown. **Britney Helmers** we have solidified the dates just yesterday. It will be produced from September 15th to October 28th. We will have new murals being painted, an urban golf course, selfie day, scavenger hunt. Every Saturday throughout the duration of Open Streets, we will be featuring a DJ alongside Lumiere Wellness for Yoga on Main Street. We have buskers and are developing and designing a pop-up park that will be sitting outside KUTV news to amplify our message. We are now calling it Basecamp. We have silent discos that we are curating every Friday night in partnerships with Bandah and Volume Utah. Once we have our events calendar, I'd love to share it with you and hopefully you all can make it down for an entire weekend between September and October. Then, rounding out our meeting, I want to showcase some of the things that are happening in the next few weeks, specifically in the next month on what is going on. As Josh mentioned, we have Steppin on Main. We are working with the Mixtape at Rose Wagner which is formerly Rose Exposed. We have also been working with Samantha Smith from Mind the Gap Festival that is happening at the Gateway. We have been producing and programming with Stephen Brown from Curbside Theater and SB Dance for our rooftop parking garage experience on September 6. We have had a lot going on and have not stopped. We are super excited for everything happening in the next couple months here.

Other Art + Culture Updates

Felicia Baca we have been adopting a new financial software called Workday. It's been a very long and slow road to have a new contract put in place where we finally have signatures for an increased \$50,000 from Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County from funds that were in the early days of the culture core in a holding account. So each entity will now be contributing \$300,000 rather than the \$250,000 and payment will be on the way. **Matthew Castillo** we love the continued partnership with the Blocks on programming at Eccles and that has been a really great success for us. We are so pleased and honored to have that there and have that free programming every Friday night. The Blocks and some of the Downtown Alliance staff have participated in some master planning that we're doing at Abravanel Hall and UMOCA and some facility planning at the Salt Palace eConvention Center. So, lots of really exciting conversations are happening there about some pretty significant facility upgrades.

The next Cultural Core Budget Committee meeting will be Tuesday, November 14 at 9am.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at **10:16 am**.