

**Murray Arts Advisory Board  
Minutes for November 15, 2011**

Attendance: Mildred Horton, David Christensen, Shauna Hart, Scott Mooy, Brandon Beckstead, Jen Davies, Mary Ann Kirk (staff)  
Excused: Jenny Simmons

1. Minutes for October 18, 2011 were approved as written. Brandon Beckstead was welcomed as a new board member and brings a good background of marketing which we need. Jen Davies resigned because of many time conflicts but will continue to help us in other ways. A new board roster was distributed.
2. Mary Ann reported:
  - a. Winter season sales were only 19 including 1 family of 6, 1 adult, 10 seniors, and 2 student/child passes. This is much lower than past seasons. Mary Ann includes the season in the local newspaper, city announcements, Arts in the Park program, and flyers through schools. Board members suggested the economy has impacted these kinds of things.
  - b. Symphony attendance was 266 which is also lower but this was scheduled on UEA weekend. Concert band attendance was 210.
  - c. Halloween literary competition involved 8 of 12 schools, 156 entries, and 51 winners. About half the winners attended our program at the library. Mildred suggested we split the winners between ages and make the program short enough so parents stay for the whole program.
  - d. The art show involved 38 artists and 63 art entries. Mildred will help Mary Ann at the award reception. The People's Choice will be announced. Mary Ann suggested we purchase Art Pasker's oil painting if he is in the top vote getters for People's Choice Award and he is willing to sell. We may purchase an art piece from last year's student exhibit if there is money available.
  - e. Future schedule was reviewed.
3. The October meetings with art groups went well with 12 groups attending and 6 of those groups indicating they would be interested in using the proposed art facility as a "home" base. Board members supported the idea of making individual presentations to local arts councils in neighboring communities. Mary Ann will arrange this and invite a foundation representative to attend with her. Phyllis Hockett will be finishing up her fund raising feasibility study sometime in the next month. Mildred said it is important we coordinate with the school district if the facility doesn't look like it will happen because the new junior high bond election is moving forward. Mary Ann said the city already met with Mr. Tranter who is the construction supervisor. She has asked that the new facility include a good sized stage and band room that can accommodate large groups whether we have the new facility or not. She has also suggested they build a room that can accommodate dance and drama classes in the day and the community dance program after school. This room could also be used for theater rehearsals at night and in the summer.

4. A literary workshop has been held in the past, but was poorly attended. Mary Ann asked David if his new writer's group would be willing to plan a workshop in January or February that would be of interest to the broader public and have it at the library as part of their own meeting schedule. This would expose others to his newly formed organization. He will talk with his group in early December and Mary Ann can advertise it in the newsletter which will be going out in late December. He suggested they charge for the workshop and use the funds to help raise the cash award for the winners. Mary Ann said that the city budget process makes it difficult to provide higher awards based on earned income from workshops and entry fees. Her budget is not an enterprise fund. She has to estimate revenue and base her budget in advance. We can't spend more just because we raised more money unless the expense is already budgeted. Board members agreed that any fee needs to be low enough so it doesn't discourage people from participating but creates a value to the service and a commitment to attend.

The various competitions and awards were reviewed. Cash awards of \$50 are given to 1<sup>st</sup> place winners for arts, \$25 cash award for 1<sup>st</sup> place in music, and \$25 for 1<sup>st</sup> place in literary with \$10 given to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in literary only. Artwork is purchased up to \$1000 and a \$400 scholarship or \$100 cash award is provided for the grand prize winner in the literary contest. This scholarship no longer covers the full amount of the Writer's At Work Conference. The music winner is invited to share their composition in an appropriate venue. Mary Ann wondered if we should make the awards more consistent. David felt the amount of \$25 for literary wasn't enough of an incentive to enter and writers don't take it seriously. He also suggested having some way to highlight and provide publicity for the winners who actually publish their works. This is similar to how we buy and hang artwork up in City Hall. He showed a framed book cover that could be hung somewhere. Board members wondered if we could do something like that at the library and perhaps sell the book. Mary Ann said the library doesn't let you sell items. Mildred said she has attended presentations at the library that do. Mary Ann could talk to Dan Barr about these items. David also suggested hosting a talent night of past music winners which was a good possibility. Board members suggested we raise all of the first place winners to \$50 and eliminate cash awards for other places. The \$400 scholarship will remain at the same level but the winner may need to pay additional fees as costs for the various conferences change. Everyone did acknowledge that there is a wide range of effort, time, and materials between the various genres and mediums. Watercolor takes much less time than oils. A novel takes much more time than a one page poem. David said there is confusion if you can keep entering if you have published. Some people have stopped entering the literary competition because they are now publishing. Mary Ann said we allow both amateur and professionals in the art show. Maybe we could create two divisions in the literary for those who have published and those who have not but it might be difficult to choose a grand prize winner in that situation. Scott cautioned that anyone can self publish. We may need a different definition. David had a few other ideas for encouraging participation and will sit down with Mary Ann to discuss these ideas.

5. The 2012 meeting schedule was reviewed and finalized.

6. The grant application and criteria for local arts groups was passed out for review. Mary Ann suggested we will need to discuss how to handle grants once we open the arts facility because many more groups will qualify since they will be based in Murray. Scott said the application asks how the groups serve Murray residents. Mary Ann noted that our local groups are comprised of individuals throughout the whole valley but their seasons are focused in Murray. However, new “home groups” will also be focused in Murray because that is where they will rehearse and perform. So we may have to come up with additional criteria because we likely won’t have an expanded funding source for grants. Mildred suggested we discuss this when our grant applications are reviewed in a few months.
7. A potential 2012 Arts in the Park schedule was reviewed with a few musical theater options. Even though it is done a lot, board members liked *Joseph*. It brings in large crowds and involves a lot of kids. We will also do *Little Women* because *West Side Story* is not available. Board members were fine that Mary Ann uses the same directors who have done a good job. Scott said this is typical of other venues such as the Shakespeare Festival. Mary Ann said she allows others to submit resumes but she usually forwards them to the directors and they are sometimes used as assistant directors. Musical budgets were discussed. She hires a director as an independent contractor and gives them a budget which they in turn use to establish their own production staff and pay scale. She was a little worried about the different pay scales for the same type of positions. Mildred asked if anyone has complained. Mary Ann said no. Board members felt that the directors should still be allowed flexibility to determine the stipends for their own staff based on responsibilities. Last year Mary Ann gave a bonus to staff of one show based on ticket revenue and fund raising for items that cost more money. Board members felt that this could be done but both shows should be consistent with the same opportunity. Season ticket prices will be priced the same as the winter season which was raised by \$1 for adults and seniors. The Arts Council is likely raising their ticket prices to \$10 adults and \$8 for children and seniors. Board members wanted to keep the price for our shows at \$8 adults and \$6 children and seniors. Mildred stressed the need to keep the children shows shorter. Shauna suggested the intermissions be shorter. Mary Ann said that they usually wait for the lines at the bathrooms and concession stands to get smaller. We will work on this. Other concert ideas included Mountain Jubilee Chorus, Vocal Point and Noteworthy from BYU.
8. Mary Ann noted that the Murray Arts Council is doing a winter production in Holladay. They couldn’t find an affordable space in Murray.