

# OWENSBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

## Work Session

April 9, 2019 12:00 PM

Owensboro City Hall  
101 E. 4th Street  
Owensboro, Kentucky

### 1. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Tom Watson

#### Present:

Mayor Tom Watson  
Commissioner Larry Maglinger  
Commissioner Pam Smith-Wright  
Commissioner Larry Conder  
Commissioner Jeff Sanford

**2. AGENCY FUNDING REQUESTS** – Mayor Watson stated he had asked the three (3) most important art agencies to present the future of their agencies. Jeff Ebelhar (1500 Griffith Avenue), Chair of RiverPark Center (RPC) Board of Directors introduced attending board members and staff. Mr. Ebelhar stated the RPC funding request for FY19-20 is \$182,539, bringing their funding level back to where it was two (2) years ago (presentation attached). The City's funding represents seven percent (7%) of the RPC's overall income. The RPC provides, at no cost, Cannon Hall and the patio to Friday After 5 for their sixteen (16) weeks of programming. RPC has engaged Gulfstream as a leasing agent for the former International Bluegrass Music Museum space (now referred to as Turley Building). They have a capital campaign (last one was in 2008) kicking off "Entertain the Future Campaign"; they hope to raise \$750,000 - \$500,000 for Turley Building improvements; \$150,000 to expand the women's restrooms; and \$100,000 for new lobby carpet. To date, \$227,000 has been raised plus there is \$195,000 in escrow with the City for the Turley improvements. Roxi Witt, Executive Director of RPC, will retire this year and the Board hopes to have a new Executive Director in place by September 2019. Mayor Watson pointed out that the City has funded the RPC since its existence at a total of \$3,417,000. At the end of their fiscal year (8/31/18), their pension liability was \$1.1 million. Mayor Watson explained that the City does not want to take over the RPC, but rather see it succeed. There was discussion regarding recent board member resignations, fundraisers, naming rights for the Turley Building and programming. There is an opportunity for a naming right to the facility for \$5 Million (negotiable). Commissioner Smith-Wright asked about the future of Woodward's (restaurant area). It is available to rent with the Turley Building or as a standalone, for the right tenant. Commissioner Conder asked if any other government agencies donate and he talked about the possibility of selling "corporate boxes" on the mezzanine level; Mr. Ebelhar responded that the County gave \$12,500 last year and they received \$28,000 in Kentucky Endowment for the Arts. Mr. Jeff Danhauer, Board Member, said there are discussions about creating a "Balcony Group" with concessions. The RPC is in the Opportunity Zone.



Owensboro Museum of Fine Arts (OMFA): Board Member, Dr. Wathen Medley (1220 Frederica Street) kicked off their presentation with a four (4) minute video. Jim Naas, Board Member (4735 Loftwood) detailed the services OMFA (second largest museum in Kentucky) provides to the community to include important education value. The Museum collection is valued at \$3.6 Million, program sponsorships have increased and out of town visitors have increased substantially. Mayor Pro Tem Maglinger asked if the local school systems help fund the educational programs. Ms. Mary Bryan Hood, Executive Director of OMFA, replied the school systems do not support in terms of block grants but they do pay for school-guided tours. They do host a variety of fundraisers (approximately 6-8) through the Museum's Foundation. Admission is free to the Museum; however, donation boxes placed throughout the facility last year collected \$8,000. The Board has considered charging admission for years; however, one of the Museum's missions is to provide arts for everyone, despite ability to pay. Mayor Pro Tem Maglinger asked about the 18-19 projected loss of \$100,374 and \$107,992 in 19-20; and asked what the plan is to reverse the pattern to sustain long-term viability. Ms. Hood explained the projections were based on what would happen if they maintained the same revenue going forward as in the past fiscal year. The new development program will address some of these issues. Mayor Pro Tem Maglinger explained that last year, the City donated \$865,594 to the Arts program compared to \$424,082 given to all other non-profits combined. Commissioner Conder asked approximately how many of the visitors are city residents. Ms. Hood estimates about 15% are from out of town. Commissioner Conder mentioned the possibility of adding an interactive Lego exhibit to the Museum, along with other programming geared toward children. Mr. Naas replied some Board members have visited the children's museum in Greenville, SC and brought back ideas. Mayor Watson asked why the fundraising line was blank on the agency funding application. Ms. Hood explained the application is completed by the Museum however, it is the Foundation that does their fundraising. Last year the fundraising netted approximately \$215,000. The Foundation's audited financials are attached with the Museum's application.

Kathy Olson, Executive Director for Owensboro Museum of Science and History (OMSH), gave a brief overview of the exhibits and galleries within the Museum. Most galleries have been funded by donations. Commissioner Conder mentioned the concern of the current cash on hand balance (unrestricted) of \$26,000 and the building needing substantial repair. Ms. Olson said two (2) fundraisers were not conducted last year due to illness and board member transitions; however, they are scheduled for the upcoming year. They increased admission price and it has helped with the financial situation. Membership charges have not been raised yet. They do not have a foundation and last year Daviess County Fiscal Court gave \$12,500, Owensboro Public Schools gave \$9,600 and Daviess County Public Schools changed to a pay-as-you-go policy. Ms. Olson explained that a partnership project is in the planning stages with a Kimberly-Clark (KC). Phase I would include \$500,000 for new interactive exhibits telling the KC story; Phase II would include professional development workshops for teachers (creating a revenue stream for OMSH) and additional exhibits, and Phase III would include a history gallery of their project and their community involvement as it relates to the environment. They have also proposed installing new smart bathrooms on floors one (1) and two (2). The idea is when KC rents the Museum and brings in out of town clients for a meeting/meal, they would be showcasing the smart bathrooms and the one-



of-a-kind exhibits. They have also committed to their own volunteer workforce. Mayor Watson asked if OMSH needed all 90,000 sq. ft. in the current building. Ms. Olson explained that for each exhibit, there is additional space that is needed for prep, storage, etc. and they do need all the space but could potentially give up 10,000-15,000 sq. ft. Additionally, some of the exhibits are custom built to the space and cannot be moved. With the expansion of Voices of Elmwood, hosting the fundraisers and finishing their exhibits, Ms. Olson stated the financial situation would improve. Last year, the art agencies each received 9-10% back, however, Ms. Olson did not realize she had to make the request. Therefore, the funding request this year includes that amount.

### **3. CITY PROJECT LIST**

Mayor Watson requested an update on the Greenbelt East Trail and the dog park. Mr. Kevin Collignon, City Engineer, explained that work on the Greenbelt should start mid-May and the project is fully funded. Mrs. Rogers, Parks Director, estimates the dog park will open mid-May. Commissioner Conder asked if new bus shelters were being installed. Mr. Wayne Shelton, Public Works Director, explained that through FTA grants, new shelters have been purchased and locations are being determined for installation (based on ridership).

### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned by acclimation at 1:49 p.m.

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Thomas H. Watson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Beth Cecil, City Clerk