

VICTORIA MUSIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE – Minutes June 11, 2020

11am to 12:30pm, Video Conference

In Attendance: *Kathryn Calder, Gary Preston, Christopher Butterfield, Gaby Marchese, Kim Persely Kozlowski, Dane Roberts, Vanessa Leong, Dylan Willows, Sarah Pocklington, Neil Cooke-Dallin, , Lindsay MacPherson, Jeff Day, David McConachie*

Regrets: *Jane Butler McGregor*

Review of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and approved, no new items were added.

Review of minutes

The minutes of the May 14 meeting were approved.

1. Sound Diplomacy

Update on continued engagement for the survey

- The draft economic report released by Sound Diplomacy hasn't been extensively reviewed yet. Nick at SD has been informed of this and that it hasn't been a priority at this stage. It is unlikely that this will be reviewed until later in the summer with a late fall presentation to council.
- The data sets used in this report are different to the data used for the Nordicity report 2017 on the BC music industry. Sound Diplomacy had access to newer data sets that were used in their report which accounts for the differences between the Nordicity and Sound Diplomacy economic reports. It is important not to place too much emphasis on the economic impact report, and Sound Diplomacy will instead focus on a report aimed at policy change, land use, and funding.
- Sarah to post the APTN Economic Impact Study of Indigenous music in Canada to the MAC Facebook page.

2. City of Victoria Events update

Festival Investment Grants (FIG)

- Jeff presented a FIG report to council which received approval for funding the 2020 year. All grants will be provided to the non-profit applicants as if their festivals and events were taking place.
- 41 organizations will be awarded FIG grants (total grants \$280,000+), which can be applied to artist fees and audience engagement.
- Grant recipients must demonstrate how they are engaging audiences – e.g. YouTube channel or other streaming platform , smaller distributed audience engagement etc.
- Organizations are not tied to their original planned event date, but must use the grant by the end of the year.
- Small organizations don't typically have a lot of overhead operating costs, but this has increased with a need for streaming equipment and storage costs. FIG grants can be applied to these types of expenses this year. If an organization folds and can't use the money, the grant can either be recovered or applied to a 2021 grant.

- First and foremost the grants are going towards artist fees and audience engagement.

Canada Day

- Victoria's Canada Day had previously been cancelled, however Heritage Canada came forward with a \$50K grant to program Canada Day.
- The RFP process for production of Victoria's Canada Day proceeded quickly given the short timeline. A commercial free TV broadcast will feature at 7pm on July 1 which the Mayor will announce tomorrow. The federal government are also about to announce a national broadcast on CBC soon and release their lineup and entertainment.
- The broadcast will feature some live and some prerecorded content. The RFP was awarded to a partnership between Roll Focus, Do250 and Chek TV, and will feature crowdsourced content with as much diversity as possible in the timeframe.

Everyday Creativity Grant

- City council is supporting the recovery of the Arts and Culture Sector by directing staff to shift funding allocated for the Cultural Infrastructure and Cultural Space Roadmap towards a one-time only \$125,000 Everyday Creativity Grant program during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Everyday Creativity has been developed by the Arts, Culture and Events office and the program gives artists the opportunity to perform at pop up locations downtown, giving artists income and exposure.
- There will be limited advertising of the pop ups to reduce the likelihood of large crowds forming. Musicians previously selected for the musician's roster will be given the opportunity to perform, and FIG applicants looking for avenues to pay artists would also qualify to apply for a grant.
- The program is not just for musicians, but artists as well and details of the program will roll out any day now.
- Staff will report back to council on the Everyday Creativity Grant program criteria and application process by the end of June 2020.
- Funding for the cultural spaces grant program and art spaces roadmap will be allocated as part of the 2021 budget.
- A lot of other initiatives have been brought to council and council have been supporting of these, including the allocation of new grant schemes. The City is positioned a lot stronger than some mainland municipalities that have ownership of venues.

Current Events permitting status

- The events office are fielding a lot of requests for events and public gatherings, with some being creative in the way they can maintain the guidelines from the PHO, while others have been very unconventional and face issues with implementing physical distancing and controlling attendance numbers.
- Event organizers are moving to online platforms where this is practical to do so.

Private Venues

- There was a discussion about how Toronto has been supporting private venues by providing a separate taxation category where private venues receive a 50 percent break. In BC, the BC Municipal Act / Community Charter prevent the City from underwriting private businesses.
- There was further discussion about the disconnect between insurance underwriters and the insurance companies' use of private venues. Insurance companies are threatening to double

insurance rates and the dependence on a limited number of insurance underwriters needs to be examined.

- Lindsay confirmed that the government is investing in the Amplify BC program again in 2020 and that funding can be allocated to venues, operating costs, rents/mortgages, utilities, wages for live music companies, artist fees, deposits, and any other costs required for reopening or pivoting to other platforms due to the pandemic. Insurance is also eligible through the program fund.
- There is concern that venues will struggle to survive as insurers are using Covid as a reason to increase rates. The BC Premier addressed insurance yesterday and advised that community sport organizations should not worry about insurance Covid clauses or to pay for them, as the Province will back up those NFP organizations.
- Given the government support that venues are receiving, access to venues for arts organizations should be taken into account, e.g. The Royal Theatre. While the City partly funds the Royal Theatre, the funding is part of a larger pot of funding from several channels.
- Many of the large companies that fill arts venues have investments in others sectors, and failure of the arts sector to recover won't necessarily cripple them.
- There was a discussion that the best use of the music advisory committee is to champion the impact of the music industry in the City of Victoria, and the continued requirement of funding from federal and provincial government to help music venues survive. It was also suggested that municipal governments could provide endorsements – e.g. a councilor motion on the City endorsing provincial and federal governments to support small arts venues. The Canadian Live Music Association is advocating for small venues that have been excluded from the federal \$500m support fund for culture, heritage and sport organizations.
- A support for Canadian venues website as well as an online petition have been established, links below;

Support for Canadian venues

<https://www.supportcanadianvenues.ca/>

Change.org petition

https://www.change.org/p/pour-accro%C3%A0tre-et-inclure-les-entreprises-culturelles-ind%C3%A9pendantes-au-fonds-d-urgence-pour-la-culture-le-patrimoine-et-les-sports?utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=custom_url&recruited_by_id=6ca2daa0-5b33-11e5-95bb-f5fc40e1ee1d

3. Event and Festival Status roundup

- A new Provincial class order with no end date on the 50 person maximum event attendance was released. The 50 person limit does not include staff and tech support personnel.
- The City's Events office have received many local enquiries for events, but not many can satisfy the requirements of the PHO.
- The Victoria Symphony won't be performing at full capacity until there is a Covid vaccine.
- Music BC has been tasked with developing health and safety guidelines to reopen the music sector. Lindsay is working with the BC Festivals Collective to develop a festivals and events reopening plan. Music BC staff are consulting with subsections and developing a draft document that will be forwarded to the Province.
- The City has a web page dedicated to listing websites providing support to artists during Covid; <https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/city/covid-19-response/arts--and-culture.html>

4. Roundtable and updates from the Committee

- Gary has been involved with IATSE addressing all aspects of the live music ecosystem.
- Kathryn shared Space Blanket Society's Throwing Light festival - a youth media festival in a van.
- Sarah will share the Coalition of Musicians on the committee's group Facebook page.
- Chris has received permission at UVIC to teach students face to face, while following protocols from UVIC and the PHO around social distancing.
- Reminder to share any music/arts initiatives on the committee's group Facebook page.

Meeting adjourned 12:30pm.

Next meeting Thursday July 9, 11am, online conference call.