

Cain Center for the Arts
Marketing Committee Meeting
Jan. 29, 2019
MINUTES

Attending: Denis Bilodeau, Allison Wilhelm, Regina Shea, David Stockwell, Kate Gaither, Justin Dionne, Allison Elrod, Anita Overcash

- I. Introduction - Denis welcomed the committee. Justin introduced the committee to Allison Elrod, the new Development Associate on staff since December.

- II. Marketing Plan - The committee reviewed some of the goals featured in the Marketing Plan. These included:
 - 1) Increase primary market exposure.
 - 2) Clarify and promote the brand. This includes distinguishing the Center as the place for visual and performing arts in the Lake Norman/North Mecklenburg area.
 - 3) Create marketing campaigns to help raise funds.
 - 4) Diversify marketing strategies. Primary strategies include:
 - 1) Concentrate on introducing/telling our story in primary markets.
 - 2) Distinguishing between the future Cornelius Arts Center and the existing PARC-run Cornelius Arts Center.
 - 3) Promoting the Center's emphasis on youth education.
 - 4) Promoting the Center's emphasis on performing arts.
 - 5) Implement a targeted capital campaign for both silent and public phases of fundraising.
 - 6) Become a source for the local art scene in primary markets.

We have been participating in community events. In December, we were at Christmas in Davidson. In January, we participated in ASC's Connect with Culture Days. In February, we are partnering with Bella Love for Cornelius Arts District Soiree, an event featuring music (Rusty Knox and HC Oakes Duo) food and drink, and new arts center swag. This event will be held on Feb. 21, from 6-9 p.m. at Brick Row at Oak Street Mill. We also began education outreach in January and have been taking free performances from partners (Children's Theatre of Charlotte, Charlotte Ballet, and Charlotte Symphony) into local schools. There may be the opportunity to schedule some shows at libraries, parks, and/or at Discovery Place Kids. Senator Natasha Marcus attended the education outreach show at Davidson Day School on Friday, Jan. 25.

- III. PR Consultant Recommendation - Allison presented about current ways that PR is done in house by staff and through GGMD design. GGMD does not specialize in PR or social media. **Action 1:** Kate to send Anita a mention on Cain Center that was featured in LakeSide Living. **Action 2:** Denis to send a copy of the article on the center that was featured in *Peninsula Navigator*.
- In an effort to create a strategic PR plan, it is being recommended by Campaign Committee that a PR firm be contracted for six months. The firm should have high level expertise and be able to create and execute PR materials as we move forward into a heavy year of campaigning. The strategic PR plan should include:
- 1) A component of internal PR, ensuring that key volunteers and stakeholders are in sync when it comes to our message and aware of what is taking place.
 - 2) A well-thought out plan for introducing Cain Center for the Arts to the public.
 - 3) A synchronized and consistent plan for communicating through social media, including newsletters, etc.
 - 4) Wicked up to date media contacts, and expertise on how to position stories.
 - 5) Resource for information and crisis management.
- Next steps include: 1) Staff and consultant create RFP and research local PR firms (complete), 2) Release RFP with response deadline of February 8, 2019. 3) Staff and consultant review responses and recommend top candidates, 4) Create Board and Staff Task Force to interview and review top responses., 5) Contract begins.
- Denis will head the Task Force. The committee agreed with plans to contract a PR firm for expertise and for the formation of a strategic PR plan. **Action 3:** Allison W. to send two suggestions for PR firms to Allison E.
- IV. Rebranded Materials - Justin presented pictures of the new branded materials, including letterhead, T-shirts, stickers, etc. These were well received by the committee. Other suggested materials included a sticker book, customized crayons, and a string strap bag. New website branding is coming soon. Regina suggested that there should be a deadline for donors to sign up for the Founders' Society instead of just the current "before breaking ground" verbiage. **Action 4:** Justin to discuss Founders' Society deadline with Penny.
- V. Adjournment - There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.