

Columbia Gorge Arts & Culture Alliance (CGACA)

Organizational Meeting Minutes, 9-17-10, 10-11:30 a.m, The Dalles Art Center,

Attending: Joanie Thomsen (Columbia Arts), Lloyd DeKay (White Salmon Arts Council), Jennifer Tenbrink (The Dalles Arts Center), Mary Rollins (gorgeartists.org), Jessica Metta (Mid Columbia Economic Development District), Lee Weinstein (LWA PR), Jane Duncombe (Columbia Arts), Carolyn Purcell (Columbia Gorge Discovery Center), Pat Bozanich (Gorge Artists), Eloisa Townsend (Vancouver Travel), Catherine Butler (Columbia Arts), Mike Cannon (Klickitat Economic Development)

Meeting began with a discussion around the purpose of forming an alliance:

- Share interests as a coalition/alliance
- Meeting all together
- Doesn't mean we have to incorporate
- Alliance is a good term for it
- Need to define what want to do as an alliance -- where coordinate/prioritize
- Need to be sure the economy/economic development is included as a focus -- not just to be creative or historical. Artists are businesses as well; as artists we deserve to earn a living if. As nonprofits we are corporations: We employ people, buy from vendors.
- Sustainability is a good word to include. It refers to the economy AND keeping culture and the arts viable

Mission

CGA&CA will promote the Columbia Gorge as an arts and culture region and destination: A magnet that will draw local residents and visitors and benefit our economy.

Vision:

We will focus on the **economic** benefit of making the region recognizable as an **arts and culture region**: if we promote it they (visitors, artists, culture makers) will come.

We want culture and arts organizations and individuals to be recognized as being **economically vital** to the region.

We will **focus** on key strategies and tasks that are **executable wins** that will **build momentum**. Once accomplished we will focus on further activities and foster new ideas.

We will help make culture and arts in the Columbia Gorge **renewable and sustainable**.

We want all people in the Gorge to find arts and culture **attractive, involving and accessible**.*

*We want the area to be recognized for that. This is much like Paducah, Kentucky (<http://www.paducah.travel/>); Sante Fe, New Mexico (<http://www.santafe.org/>); Nelson, New Zealand (<http://www.nelsonartists.co.nz/>) and more. We want arts and culture to be seen as a way of life in the Columbia Gorge -- as much as outdoor recreation and agriculture. Culture and arts aren't an afterthought or a 'nice to have'. They are a vital to have. We are a community of artists and culture mavens -- attracting more of our kind and open to everyone.

2010-11 Focus:

- Capacity Grants (Apply grants to build capacity from WA/OR Arts, Travel OR, Travel WA, Wasco Cty Arts & Cult, HR Cult Trust and others)
- Develop umbrella Brand/Logo and tagline that all culture and arts alliance members can use to co-brand
- Website and Facebook page
- Big Bang: May Arts & Culture in the Gorge month
- Cooperate in events
- Get chambers to use our messaging in marketing the region
- Cooperative advertising

Free-form Ideas and Discussion

Wine and food industry, as well as hoteliers and others are key **partners** but not part of our first tier messaging.

We need to support our Chambers and they will support us.

Visitors council in HR -- budget is \$200K. We are marketing arm meant for tourism... they support culture and arts but not as much as recreation but it's starting...

PORTLAND MONTHLY just did a co-op ad for chamber groups...We could do the same for culture and arts in

the future.

Businesses lots of times don't see arts as business... remind them this is part of the economy. Maybe the Maryhill April Chamber meeting we as a group do something much more aggressive.

Having all the travel people at the last meeting was fantastic; helped me with their perceptions.

Question: who can be our fiscal agent? Do they have to be an arts org? Can MCED? Consensus we will go forward with MCED as our fiscal agent if they approve.

Some grants will require match. Would be nice if Oregon would match WA. We may need to raise some cash to match, which is preferable.

We'd want to get recreationalists to expand their horizons...

May want to do arts & culture month in spring and fall

If we had big rollout in May but project it through the big tourist season: IMPORTANT POINT Be prepared with any materials going on... maybe another spike in the fall...

Gorge open artists tour guide... Discussion about packaging overall culture and arts as part.

Mike: one of the aims of arts and tourism - promote weekends in the Gorge so tourists benefit the entire range of artists, restaurants, boutique B&Bs...very strong part of tourism in Europe where they go out for weekend and don't intend to come back until Sunday night or Monday. That would benefit all as they might do 2-3 things...

"Art and artists" -- we need to always be careful in our language to include culture and heritage. We want heritage people at table with us and part of the alliance. Heritage groups are co equal.

Maybe coupons from hotels and things

Colleen mentioned that Eastern WA/Spokane has a fantastic Facebook page we should all look at -- they do a very good job promoting their local events (see <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Spokane-Eastern-Washington-Travel-Examiner/140916309280295>)

Travel Oregon applica due Jan 1?

How do we leverage other funds -- what can each of us cash wise bring or do in-kind?

Grant makers like idea that we have a lot of partnerships -- do they have skin in the game... even a small pledge would be great... like the idea of a pledge as opportunity for a member or volunteer to contribute in own way..

Content management website that all people can put things on....

What is the focus of our grant applications?

- Build capacity of the org
- Part-time staffer 4-5 hours per week through MCED
- Develop brand for gorge destination/thriving and culture
- May Campaign or over course of year? May is good as that's Open Studios... if really hit it hard the first year we'd get name recognition. Would be great to wow people and have a BOOM. Measurable success. ABC is project based. they wouldn't want to see something on-going...

TO DO: IMMEDIATE

- Fiscal agent? - MCED - Jessica will check
- Grant info - Colleen will do quick round up of grants and get us info. We need to let grantors know we will be making application
- Grant app - Jessica, Joanie, Pat will draft grant requests
- Announcement - Lee will draft press release
- Facebook/URL/Vertical Response - Lee will set up
- Alert each other as to what's coming in May - Ask on Basecamp - start a list

TO DO: LONG-TERM

- May planning sub-group - Form next will take funding and exposure
- April Chamber group meeting at Maryhill
- Plan May arts and culture month - form subgroup and October meeting
- RFP for logo/tagline/advertising campaign
- Outreach to billboard company