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2015 AUG 12 AM 7:02



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MUSEUMS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The City of El Paso Hispanic Cultural Center Subcommittee
Wednesday June 17, 2015 – 1:00 p.m.
City Hall, Main Conference Room

MINUTES

- 1. **Call to Order.** Meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m.
- 2. **Roll Call.**

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Rafael Adame	X	
Jesus "Cimi" Alvarado		X
Ruben Chavez	X	
Yolanda Clay		X
Luis Cortinas	X	
Fermin Dorado	X	
Jaime Esparza	X	
Rosa Guerrero	X	
Hector Gutierrez	X	
Carlos Hisa		X
Enrique Moreno	X	
Barbara Perez	X	
Cindy Ramos-Davidson		X
Gustavo Reveles	X	
Silvestre Reyes	X	
Belen Robles		X
Maya Sanchez	X	
Nestor Valencia	X	
Theresa Ware-Asbury	X	

Others present: Tracey Jerome, Ben Fyffe, Kristen Hamilton-Karam and Misty Monteros

- 3. **Public Comment.** None.
- 4. **Discussion and Action on Approval of Minutes for May 20, 2015.** Chair allowed members time to review the minutes before requesting a motion for approval. Hector Gutierrez moved to approve; Luis Cortinas seconded; all members voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously.
- 5. **Staff Report.** Ben Fyffe reminded members they had requested an overview of all the actions and discussions related to the Hispanic Cultural Center by the Bond Oversight Advisory Committee. He mentioned it should be noted that while the planning process was underway with the consultant, the BOAC agenda was posted in case enough members showed up to initiate a quorum. Many of the meetings were public meetings in which the consultants were presenting business related to the planning of the three signature facilities. The other item requested is a census of available cultural spaces in the Downtown Arts District to get an idea of what is already available so that we are not duplicating what is already in existence while being mindful of the budget. Ben additionally mentioned he is looking at municipally-owned facilities that might be underutilized that could also be possibilities to consider. Chair asked if the BOAC has met since this subcommittee was created; Gustavo Reveles replied there is a meeting today at 4:30pm. Enrique Moreno requested clarification on the relationship between the BOAC and this subcommittee. Ben explained that this group is a subcommittee of the BOAC, which oversees all bond initiated projects from the 2012 Quality of Life bond. This group will provide updates and recommendations to the BOAC, but City Council has ultimate approval. Enrique Moreno asked if the group's

recommendations would go first to BOAC, and Ben replied as a matter of form, they would go to BOAC first. Kristen Hamilton-Karam added that the resolution establishing the Hispanic Cultural Center Subcommittee (HCCS) does have the group reporting to City Council as well, and because the BOAC meetings are so spread out, there may be a time where a report needs to be made to Council and there is no BOAC meeting in that window of time, so the report would be made directly to Council. Luis Cortinas asked if it would be possible to receive information via email on happenings at BOAC meetings and Ben replied that an email could be sent out to the group once the minutes for each of those meetings has posted and Gustavo, in his capacity as BOAC liaison, would give updates to the group if there is pertinent information related to this project that needs to be relayed. Congressman Silvestre Reyes asked if the group, as a subcommittee of BOAC, was running parallel tracks with recommendations to BOAC and City Council; Kristen replied that the recommendations to City Council and BOAC would be aligned. Barbara Perez asked if there was an agenda for today's BOAC meeting and Kristen read the items off the agenda out loud to members. Hector Gutierrez asked if any substantive discussion regarding the Hispanic Cultural Center by BOAC besides updates on the 3 signature projects had taken place; Ben replied that the discussion for BOAC related to the Hispanic Cultural Center has been about rollout and usually on a much larger roster of all projects that are advancing. Most of the reporting on Hispanic Cultural Center has been on the planning process and discussion on the contract that went to HKS, but nothing as substantive related to this project as the discussion that happens within the subcommittee itself. Hector continued by mentioning an article he read in the El Paso times that suggested City Council would hire a consultant to come up with more specificity regarding the three signature projects; Bryan Crowe, Managing Director for Quality of Life, replied that none of that work is related to the HCC.

6. Report on Progress of Working Group #1 (Size). Nestor Valencia began by noting that his group is energetic, with a good amount of discussion and participation. He mentioned that a consensus was reached at their last group meeting about what they would present, but they will need to have one more meeting before coming before the subcommittee to report on their findings. Mayor Maya Sanchez added that a challenge they face as a group is difficulty in coordinating their individual schedules to make sure the whole team is on the same page and offered to adjust her own schedule as needed to accommodate others in the group. Chair inquired when their next group meeting would be, and Nestor replied it hadn't yet been scheduled. Rosa Guerrero commended Nestor for his efforts in visiting cultural centers located in other cities to compare and see the facilities. Chair asked if group members were considering the results from the Artist Needs Assessment Survey conducted by MCAD in regards to the types of programming respondents would be most interested in attending at the HCC; Nestor replied that the group's sense was not to dwell on specifics, but to state what is necessary to make the project happen and have an adequate center while leaving the door open for others to help put the package together. Mayor Maya Sanchez asked if the group should concentrate on the different areas that would require specialized training for the staff in their discussions of options, programs and amenities of the HCC; Ben replied that in terms of thinking about the facility itself, members could be making recommendations on expertise of staff and technical aspects. Mayor Sanchez next suggested each work group be assigned a date to provide preliminary findings so that each knows what the other is working on. Chair acknowledged her suggestion and also suggested that an item for naming recommendations be put on the next agenda for discussion.

7. Report on Progress of Working Group #2 (Budget). Fermin Dorado began by explaining his group came up with a preliminary cost for building the cultural center, using information from existing centers as a guide. Based on information they got from other facilities, the recommended size of the cultural center should be around 30,000 square feet. Fermin continued with a recommendation of two facilities that are City-owned for the cultural center location in an effort to avoid the initial cost of buying land; one being the Chamber of Commerce building next to the Abraham Chavez Theater and the other is the Downtown Public Library in the annex section at the rear of the library. He mentioned that most of the centers they researched were originally funded by the local government, and some of them have 100% support from the city, while some of them are funded partially by the city and partially by grants. He noted that the group's final recommendation would be based on the use of the facility and its size. Hector Gutierrez commended Ruben Chavez and his staff for the hours of work they put in and asked that he speak briefly about the binder he put together that has information regarding official reports made by their foundations or by the centers to the IRS. Ruben noted that the work they're doing is looking at the long-term liability because it's important to do this right for the long-term. Without knowing exactly what is needed, it's hard to put a budget together and his staff dove into trying to understand how a center operates and how they're able to sustain. They want to take all the good parts to make this a cultural center that everyone can look to and model after. Rafael Adame talked about the upside to using a City-owned property, which is the aspect of sustainability. If it's already owned by the City, then it's already being maintained by the City and on the City budget, so it would not be an additional cost to the City if the property is leased or gifted for the Cultural Center. Leveraging the \$5.7M for remodeling costs rather than land acquisition and construction should be a consideration. Tracey Jerome weighed in on the concept of 'world-class', noting that it's not about the architectural achievement, it's about what's going to happen there, and that is where the focus on being the model and being 'world-class' needs to be. If you build it and nothing happens there, then it's an architectural marvel and that's fantastic in its own right, but that is not what this is all about. We will be world-class because of the programming and everything that is going to happen there; we will not compromise on that. Hector Gutierrez

spoke briefly on his group's feeling that 'Mexican-American' needs to be in the name, not 'Hispanic', and suggested a name compromise by calling the center 'El Paso Culturas Center' or 'Cultura' for the singular. Ben committed to producing a report that shows the range of City-owned spaces available to the community at the next regularly scheduled HCCS meeting. Nestor Valencia noted that the location of the facility is paramount and noted it must have parking, a theater and a gallery.

8. Report on Progress of Working Group #3 (Fundraising). Barbara Perez began by saying the group is at a standstill because as of yet, there is no name, logo, location or mission statement and this prevents the group from raising funds. Chair noted that part of the problem is whether the goal of the fundraising group is to actually raise money, or is the goal to recommend to City Council the feasibility of having a true public/private partnership that would allow us to raise the money or create a foundation that would be charged with fundraising. Barbara agreed, noting that once City Council has bought in and they know which direction to head in, a foundation needs to be created. Congressman Silvestre Reyes added that if there is a presentation and a plan, the money is out there, but there are a number of things that have to click before fundraising begins. The infrastructure needs to be in place, and members must be organized to get the buy-in from the City and also use their contacts to make a presentation that will bring in fundraising dollars. Congressman Reyes added that going with the Abraham Chavez and the library locations will not bring in millions in terms of fundraising. He noted the group is underestimating their capability to raise money for a project like this. Ben Fyffe clarified that Council is asking the subcommittee to develop recommendations on the types of public/private partnerships to support activities at the center. The duty is to develop the vehicle for how we can fundraise, present it to Council and then Council will make a decision. Barbara added that the City has a responsibility as well to work with the subcommittee on the cultural center because it is for the community. Congressman Reyes said that the corporate entities would be asking that very question. Chair agreed that the City's \$5.7M is not enough and the City will have to contribute more, but, it is the subcommittee's charge to give the City the infrastructure that will be required for funding opportunities, public/private partnerships, and the means to fundraise.

9. Adjournment. Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Barbara Perez so moved; Gustavo Reveles seconded; all members voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 2:38pm. Next meeting scheduled for July 15, 2015.

Approved for content by:
Jaime Esparza, Chair

Respectfully submitted by:
Misty Monteros, Administrative Assistant
Museums & Cultural Affairs Department

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