

**Stakeholder Meeting: Arts and Culture Master Plan, Mayor's Vibrancy Initiative**  
**Monday, December 14, 2015 - 11:30 a.m.**  
**Grand Forks Herald Community Room**  
**Minutes**

**City Council Members Present:** Doug Christensen, Ken Vein, Bret Weber  
Stakeholders from various other community groups working on this initiative were also present.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Korrie Wenzel, editor of Grand Forks Herald, welcomed all in attendance and made comments regarding his appreciation to be a part of this discussion, that is exciting to see the vision and coordinated efforts that have come about in our community to continue its growth and development and is inspired by developments that may have started as a part of flood recovery and are still growing.

Stakeholders introduced themselves and the organization that they represent.

**2. A Vibrant Grand Forks**

Mayor Brown thanked all present for their participation both to the stakeholders and to the community members here to learn about the information gathered from the community. He also recognized the large amount of work that has gone into this process so far by many volunteers, city staff, businesses, and organizations in the community and that it is just another example of what has been occurring in the community for years.

**3. Community Partnerships and Today's Focus**

Todd Feland, City Administrator, explained that there would be a short presentation of information gathered in the recent public forums and by the consultant, then will receive feedback, with a report back to City Council in 2016 for further discussion.

**4. A Home for the Arts**

Laurel Reuter, Director of ND Museum of Art, provided a brief history of the project and coordinated arts program in the community, that it is good to see there is a desire for long-term, programs of excellence and collaboration, in the area of arts in the community.

She introduced the consultant Jack Becker, with Forecast Public Art, who has been leading the arts discussion in our community.

**5. Arts + Culture Master Plan Presentation**

Becker stated that the information to be presented is the result of 10 months of work within the community gathering information from citizens and organizations, as well as research gathering information on the community and existing public art installations and facilities.

Becker shared a presentation which included information gathered and their recommendations for next steps in the community in four areas: 1) establishment of a Greater Grand Forks Arts Council; 2) Adoption of a Grand Loop for public art installation; 3) UND-Downtown areas; and 4) Public/private partnership opportunities. His recommendations included possible structures that could be used and governmental entities/organizations that may be the best fit to staff that part of the effort; decisions that would be needed at various levels for a plan to be put in place and future discussions and continued input opportunities for citizens and organizations as the plan continues development.

He noted that this is an initial report on the information and encouraged members to provide feedback as to and changes or other information that they would like to see in the final report. He also invited all to attend the Going Grand event scheduled for this evening at the Empire Arts Center, which will include more information and discussion on a way forward for the community.

**6. Mayor's Vibrancy Initiative –**

### **Arts & Events Committee**

Julie Rygg, Co-Chair of Arts & Events Committee, gave a brief recap of the work their committee has done to look at how arts are supported in the community including the Special Events and Arts Regranting Programs. Listening sessions were held with arts organizations and artists and that information has been shared for inclusion in the report. Similar meetings with event organizers are also planned.

### **Downtown Committee**

Jonathon Holth, Co-Chair of the Downtown Committee, provided information on the work of their committee, meetings that have occurred including other destinations visited, that they don't view themselves as "downtown" only, but rather as GF as a whole, that discussions have included discussion of a need for a "co-working space" for new businesses to utilize as they start up, pocket parks, Town Square, and design standards for businesses. He noted that the co-working space is currently in the process of being developed.

Comments from attendees:

Council Member Weber commented that the study was completed as a result of a partnership between the City and Public Arts Commission (PAC) and has provided good information to review. He commented that there were only three artists in attendance and stressed the need to have them as well as arts organizations at the table as we continue discussions on this program. Becker replied that they have had a variety of meetings and targeted some to the visual and performing arts groups, but they expressed that they are already working collaboratively and felt comfortable with the process so far. Rygg added that they do realize the importance of input from all the arts groups and will continue to work to include them as the process goes forward. Other stakeholders also expressed agreement with continuing to reach out to all the groups in the community to keep them informed and solicit their input.

Council Member Christensen commented that appreciates receiving the information today, that it shows the diversity in the community and not sure if there is a way to establish one centralized governance, but is good to explore that and encouraged them to be as inclusive with getting input as possible so that when something is brought forward for action is can be successful, as we are looking for something to be a long term solution for the community and not just for one event in time.

Hal Gershman, past Council Member, stated that the information presented shows that there already is some collaboration going on between groups in the community and these efforts are seeking to expand on that. He noted that the funding sources for arts are limited so continuing to look at collaboration could benefit all in that it would spread available funds further rather than having them competing against each other for the same dollars. He noted that having a board of 15 members seems rather large and typically smaller groups seem to work better.

Kristi Mishler, Executive Director of Community Foundation GF, EGF, & Region, agreed that we need to continue to listen to artists/organizations, and if they feel they don't need any governance, then ok. We want something to enhance not compete with what they have. She noted that having citizen led efforts can help make initiatives more successful.

Wenzel closed the meeting by thanking all for their participation and comments today and throughout the process. He encouraged all to come to the event tonight and continue to be involved and provide input in the process.

**Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sherie Lundmark  
Admin Specialist Sr.