## Advocacy Committee, minutes June 7, 2018

Present: Alan Preston, Craig Nowicke, Paul Berg, Evelyn Bless

Chair & minutes: Evelyn. Called to order 12:05 pm.

**Preparing for advocacy**. We need to consolidate Center’s vision so Board members can incorporate elements in their ’30-second elevator speech’. How are we making a difference to this region?

* Articulating our mission and vision is difficult because we do so much (i.e., not just “art”, not just “theatre”) and because it involves the intersection of two concepts: community and arts/culture. It’s hard to state compellingly and clearly because no one else is doing it--which is a great advantage as well as a problem.
* Note on how we differ from other cultural centers in Tampa Bay. We are directly funded under Parks and Rec; the others go through Arts Council, which is the County’s arm to nonprofits. The New Tampa cultural center will be managed by Patel: the arrangement is unclear. Other cultural centers are the Firehouse in Ruskin and Center Place (Fine Arts and Civic Association) in Brandon.

**First step**. Initial thank-you’s to officials. We don’t need to wait for further action on strategic plan to do this. We should do it this month or next.

* ***Note****: public thank you was rejected by Board on 6/20/2018*.
* “Thank you” to Director of Parks and Recreation. Delivered in person with a ‘thank you’ and written note listing statistics? Should be a Board member the Director doesn’t yet know.  
  **ACTION**: firm up who, what, when next month.

**Next step**: Invite political figures to the Center.

* Current commissioners who have not been to Center are first; re-invite others.
* Invite other political figures who are running for office; we cannot show favoritism.
* **ACTION**: Evelyn: will research local and state politicians who may affect our interests, including their known opponents, for interests in the arts, and prepare a list for next month.

**Gather more information** about organizations that we interact with:

* Arts Council. They have recently done a strategic plan. They apportion money in grants to regional organizations; the Council recently asked them to examine formula for large vs small organizations and 70% now goes to smaller nonprofits. We need more information on workings of Arts Council.  
  **ACTION**: Paul will give talk on Arts Council to Board in June meeting.
* Florida Local Advocates for the Arts (FLAA), state advocacy agency that monitors what is going on in governments that affects nonprofit orgs., holds a monthly conference call that Paul receives. Agenda is sometimes delivered early. Paul can relay information; we could listen in on calls.

Adjourned: 1:10 pm. Next meeting: June 7 Thursday, 12 noon.