Cedar Rapids Municipal Band Commission Meeting for 18 January 2015 at Coe College.

Attending:
- Commission: Sadilek, Hills, Cummings, R Haney, Millar, Sams
- Staff: Klima, Davies, Shanley, Comer
- Others: Doug Anderson, Doreen Anderson

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Sadilek.

Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Minutes of 28 September 2014 approved unanimously.

Financial Report (for reference during discussions, not official)
- Saved $331 when R Haney questioned sales taxes on the bandshell invoice.
  - Parks has apparently been charging sales tax for each event. CRMB is a government entity, and thus exempt.
  - CRMB cannot recover sales taxes from previous fiscal years.
- Estimate of FY16 revenues calls for just over a $2,000 increase.
- Amount available in account to cover bandshell repair or replacement is $45,000 as of 14 January. Finance strongly recommends not spending that down – we can cover bandshell repair, but not replacement.

Old Business
- Equipment Trailer
  - The bidding process is as follows:
    - Items over $5000 must go out for formal bids from interested vendors. Because we had an estimate from Wright-Way for $5039, this process was mandated by City. The request for bids is out, and we should have information for next week's meeting.
    - Items from $1000-$5000 must have three estimates, but no bid required.
    - Anything under $1000, Commission can get what it wants without consequence.
  - This process will be in play if we replace the bandshell. I think we do not need to follow it if we find a non-city group willing to repair the shell, but that is not confirmed. The process concerns procurement of equipment more than repair of same.

New Business
- Bandshell
  - Logistics
    - We must obtain a truck – rent, borrow from Parks, whatever.
    - We must provide driver for truck.
    - Must provide our own road crew. Parks will not provide staff to assist.
  - Repair
    - Parks discussed some specifics on repair at a meeting with R Haney, Sternowski, and Sadilek on 14 January.
      - Repairs are possible, but not guaranteed, and will be good for only a few seasons.
      - Even if repaired, the bandshell must pass a DOT inspection. If it doesn't pass, then nobody can use it.
      - Parks no longer considers the unit safe. Even if we repair it and it passes inspection, they are very nervous about letting anyone use it.
      - They strongly feel the bandshell is not a viable option.
    - No information was available from Sternowski's private contractor. This may come
before next week’s meeting.

- Replace
  - R Haney did not get a direct quote (requires subjecting himself to a constant barrage of spam email), but per Parks, some internet research, and comments from other groups that use them, the replacement cost is on the order of $80,000.
    - This is roughly the cost of a mid-range motor home.
  - Newer bandshells (more often called “mobile stages” for those wanting to do their own research) have more features than the current shell.
    - They feature one-button deployment, which means that the shell can be, in theory, set up by just one person.
    - They have their own batteries, so we could set the shell up at locations with no electricity. (Note: this does NOT help with power for the sound system.)
    - They have lights pre-installed.
    - When taken down, the units are completely closed. The ends are not open as they are on the current shell. This means that some equipment can be hauled in the bandshell rather than in a separate equipment trailer.
  - CRMB does NOT have the money to replace the bandshell – this will require a capital campaign or a loan.
    - Band account currently has $45,000 available to spend. (This excludes the set-aside amount required by state law.)
    - It took us 64 seasons to build up that amount. If we spend all of it, it will take literally decades to get it back. This money is there for things like instruments and equipment trailers, not bandshell replacement.
    - Finance strongly recommends not spending more than half of it, and suggests spending less if possible.
  - Greater CR Community Foundation
    - R Haney met with GCRCF in December.
    - Discussed various funding available, including a grant from GCRCF (won't be more than $10k), applications to private trusts/companies/individuals (these are competitive and not guaranteed), and possibly conducting a public capital campaign.
    - Applications for GCRCF are due 13 February!
    - GCRCF suggests that any capital campaign start THIS YEAR, as this is our 65th season that that tends to be a “magic number” for these sorts of things.

- Alternatives to the shell
  - Parks and Angie from the city manager's office took it upon themselves to work with Venuworks to schedule us for the McGrath Amphitheater.
  - The Amphitheater will cost $100 per performance. For comparison, the bandshell cost us $460 per performance in 2014.
  - We could also pay ParkCR (which handles all downtown parking now) to reserve streetside spaces for disabled patrons. There is a parking lot nearby that the city would make available. This would likely still be less than the $460 per event.
  - Of the Wednesdays and Sundays we're likely to schedule, four are already booked (BBQ Roundup for two, then two private groups). Venuworks has, at the City's request, reserved ALL the remaining days for CRMB. We can use any of them we want. Parks has offered to be our contact so we never deal directly with Venuworks.
  - Short version: City STRONGLY encourages us to play that venue. If we do not, we will likely have to explain why to the Mayor or city manager directly. R Haney suggest we play there at least three times.
  - H Haney and R Haney scouted the location last weekend. The equipment truck (and
vans from Haney and Mackey if we need extra cargo hauled) can access the area from two entrances. They are blocked by bollards, but these are removable. The main entrance is designed to accommodate a semi-tractor trailer, so the CRMB equipment trailer should be no problem. The stage is large enough to handle the group.

- We may have to pay Venuworks an additional fee, but they can provide someone to assist with electrical or rigging (see next bullet).
- The Amphitheater is a very solid structure, designed to support rigging. There are local vendors that may provide a flexible, cloth-like backdrop to convert the facility to a more traditional bandshell.
- This leaves the problem of how to get the concerts going on other days. Things discussed:
  - Actual logistics. We'd be sitting directly on the ground at most parks. R Haney suggested using plywood or a thick covering on days when the ground is soft. (Actual comment from Parks: Oh, we're not worried if you put holes in the ground. Actual response: The flutes don't want to sink into the swamp.)
  - We'd likely have some adjustments to make to the sound equipment. R Haney is particularly concerned about the sound through the feed to KMRY. We have options to adjust for the park audience that don't carry to radio.
  - We might consider rotating through a shorter list of more reliable venues, say McGrath/Bever/Ellis/Noelridge. Each venue will be an acoustic experiment without the shell, and we may want to minimize the number of venues to make sure we continue to sound good. (This isn't a strong thought...we can try whatever we think will work.)
  - Parks said there are vendors who can provide a stage. This would, however, essentially be the stage we've used for Independence Day concerts in the past. Acoustically, it's no different from playing on the ground, and the band barely fits. It may not be worth the expense.

- Results of discussion on previous points:
  - The Commission feels that:
    - It's unlikely that we'll get the shell repaired this season, so the schedule (to be formally set next week) should accommodate that. Expectation is to rotate among several parks and the MA.
    - It is the Band's mission to bring music to the people, not the other way around. As such, we will seek a means of replacing the shell.
  - Questions that must be answered prior to next meeting:
    - Can we use the pavilions as a stage?
    - Can Parks set plywood out as a stage?
    - Can we rent a mobile stage for a year?
    - What electric circuits are available in the pavilions?
    - If we hire our own drivers and road crew, are they covered in any way under worker's comp?
  - Volunteers will check each park on our list for suitability for performance without a shell this summer.

Meeting closed 9:10 PM.