

Municipality of Chatham-Kent
Community Human Services
Arts and Culture Services
Information Report

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Heather Slater, Manager of Arts and Culture
Date: May 31, 2021
Subject: CK Arts and Culture Network

This report is for the information of Council.

Background

In 2008, Council approved the Municipality's first-ever Cultural Master Plan: *Culture, Economy, Community: A Cultural Plan for Chatham-Kent (2007)*. This plan addressed the need for a wide variety of arts, culture and creative opportunities for residents of Chatham-Kent, and highlighted the ways in which cultural organizations and facilities can contribute to economic stability and job creation.

The *Cultural Plan Implementation Project (2014)* recommended that the Municipality take the lead in establishing a community-run network to support cultural collaboration between the Municipality and its business and community partners. The goal was to transition from "Create CK," a volunteer committee which had assisted in the creation of the Cultural Plan, to an "incorporated, not-for-profit arms-length committee with standard bylaws, policies, format, structure and roles" – essentially, a community arts council for Chatham-Kent.

In 2014, the members of Create CK formed a transition committee, which became the steering committee for a new "Kent Cultural Network" (KCN). The KCN steering committee consulted community arts councils throughout Ontario to seek guidance on a suitable model for Chatham-Kent, and met regularly to work toward incorporation. Discussions continued intermittently between 2016 and 2018, and resumed on a regular basis in June 2020, under a new name: "CK Arts and Culture Network."

On January 18, 2021, Council approved administration's request to transfer the residual amount of \$17,561 from the Cultural Action Teams and Mapping reserve, as per the 2014 Cultural Plan Implementation Project. These funds are now in the process of being transferred to the CK Arts and Culture Network as seed funding; this will complete the

final action item in the Cultural Master Plan, and set the foundation for a new Municipal Arts and Culture plan in 2021-2022.

Comments

The CK Arts and Culture Network was incorporated as a not-for-profit on January 5, 2021, and held its first board meeting on March 16, 2021. Eight prospective members attended this meeting, and an executive committee was formed:

James Snyder*, Chair

Dan White, Vice-Chair

Eric Bristow, Secretary

Tom McCarthy*, Acting Treasurer**

*Former members of Create CK, Kent Cultural Network, CKACN Transition Committee

**Position currently vacant

The mandate of the CK Arts and Culture Network is to support cultural activities and build engagement in the arts throughout Chatham-Kent, in keeping with the following mission and vision statements:

Mission: The CK Arts and Culture Network (CKACN) is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization that supports arts and culture in Chatham-Kent. The CKACN nurtures, sustains and advocates for cultural activities, artists and arts organizations throughout Chatham-Kent, and endeavours to increase community connection to and engagement in the arts.

Vision: To cultivate a vibrant and sustainable arts and culture community throughout the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

This mandate will be realized through the following:

- Increasing opportunities for the creative community to learn, work, and thrive in Chatham-Kent;
- Growing connections and collaboration in the arts and between community sectors;
- Advocating for and supporting economic investment in the arts;
- Increasing the engagement of residents and visitors with Chatham-Kent's artists and arts programming; and
- Promoting an understanding of and respect for the diversity of creative practice in the region.

As per the recommendation in the Cultural Plan, the CKACN is an independent not-for-profit, which is currently in the process of applying for charitable status. While the CKACN operates independently from the Municipality, there will be close collaboration; following the model of many successful Community Arts Councils throughout Ontario, the Municipal Manager of Arts and Culture will act as an ex-officio, non-voting member. This will ensure open lines of communication between the Municipality and the arts

community on arts and culture priorities, directions and projects. It will also provide the opportunity to build new creative partnerships and collaborations, and will offer the Municipality the benefit of an engaged group of arts and culture stakeholders through which valuable input can be garnered. This input will help to shape the Municipal initiatives that are central to Chatham-Kent's cultural future, from legacy projects and public art, to community arts activities and signature arts events.

With its executive and several directors now in place (with the exception of the Treasurer position, which is currently vacant), a media release has been issued to inform the public that the CKACN is now accepting applications for the seven remaining available positions. The media release is attached as Appendix 1, and information about current board members can be found in Appendix 2.

Consultation

Financial Services has been advised of the approved transfer of \$17,561 from the Culture Action Teams and Mapping Reserve. This amount, less legal fees for CKACN incorporation and related start-up costs, will be transferred to CKACN by the end of May 2021.

The executive and current directors of the CKACN were consulted regarding the content of this report.

Financial Implications

There are no further financial requirements in the establishment of the CKACN.

Prepared by:

Heather Slater
Manager, Arts and Culture

Reviewed by:

April Rietdyk, RN, BScN, MHS, PHD PUBH
General Manager
Community Human Services

Consulted and confirmed the content of the consultation section of the report by:

Mike St. Denis, Financial Analyst I - Corporate Accounting
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Attachments: Appendix 1: Media release
Appendix 2: Board member bios

C: Mike St. Denis, Financial Analyst I- Corporate Accounting,
Municipality of Chatham-Kent
James Snyder, Create CK, Kent Cultural Network, CKACN Transition Committee
Laurie Rayner Langford, Artist
Chris Ford and Sue Rumball, Art and Heirloom Shoppe
Christie Coatsworth, Musician/Artist
Dan White, Wallaceburg Arts Council, Wallaceburg Concert Band
Eric Bristow, Past President Theatre Kent
Lisa Lester, Four Diamond Events
Peter Garapick, Mary Webb Centre
Rocky Gaudrault, CEO Juntura Inc

P:\RTC\Community Human Services\2021\Arts And Culture\May 31\Report To Council
CK Arts And Culture Network.Docx

APPENDIX I: Media Release

Media Release**May 31, 2021****Introducing the CK Arts and Culture Network – a Community Arts Council for Chatham-Kent**

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce a new arts and culture support organization for Chatham-Kent.

The **CK Arts and Culture Network (CKACN)** is a volunteer-based, membership-driven charitable organization that advocates for and sustains the arts in our community, by helping to support cultural activities and building community engagement in the arts. The CKACN was founded on the principle that our arts and artists in all disciplines – from visual arts and theatre, to dance, design, literary arts and beyond – provide a critical creative dialogue essential to the social and economic health of our community.

The goals of the CKACN are:

- To increase opportunities for the creative community to learn, work and thrive in Chatham-Kent
- To grow connections and collaboration in the arts and between community sectors
- To advocate for and support economic investment in the arts
- To increase the engagement of residents and visitors with Chatham-Kent's artists and arts programming
- To promote understanding and respect for the diversity of creative practice
- To ensure that a vibrant and sustainable arts and culture sector is developed and maintained throughout the municipality of Chatham-Kent.

The members of the CKACN share the following values:

- A belief in the power of the arts to transform individuals and communities
- A desire to unite our diverse creative community
- An understanding of the role creative collaboration can play in enriching a community

History

In 2015, a small group of arts, culture and heritage-minded individuals came together with the aim of establishing a community-based network to promote and support arts and culture activities within Chatham-Kent. Their work laid the framework for the CKACN.

In April 2019, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent launched a new Arts and Culture section, bringing the operations of the Chatham Capitol Theatre and the Chatham Cultural Centre under

joint management. This created the potential for new opportunities for community-based arts and culture activities, promotions and events, anchored by the municipal theatres, galleries and museums. With a desire to unite arts and culture stakeholders around the development of a local cultural economy, to ensure community representation in municipal programming, and to grow a stable and engaged audience base – particularly as we head into a post-COVID future – discussions around the CKACN resumed in June 2020.

The organization was incorporated on January 5, 2021 and an initial/founding Board of Directors was approved on March 16, 2021.

CALL FOR NEW MEMBERS

- ✓ **Are you passionate about Arts and Culture?**
- ✓ **Do you share our values regarding the role of Arts and Culture in our community?**
- ✓ **Do you want to make a difference?**

The CK Arts and Culture Network is currently inviting applications for new members to join its Board of Directors. We are seeking individuals who represent a diverse range of backgrounds, business sectors and perspectives, and who feel they can make a meaningful contribution to the Arts and Culture scene in Chatham-Kent.

To request an information package and application, please contact:

ckartsandculturenetwork@gmail.com

APPENDIX 2: CKACN board member bios

**CK Arts and Culture Network Board of Directors
(as of May 31, 2021)****James Snyder, Chair**

James Snyder has served in numerous leadership roles in the areas of community development, non-profit housing, social planning, strategic planning, sustainable cultural, recreational and community building/facility development, and governance. He has developed proposals for development/expansion for multiple agencies, boards, non-profit and private corporations, and, as a volunteer, he has formed and chaired more than 30 non-profit organizations since 1975. A resident of downtown Chatham, James Snyder is currently semi-retired.

Dan White, Vice-Chair

Born and raised in Sarnia-Lambton, Dan White has resided in Wallaceburg since 2017. Dan studied music at Western University, and subsequently taught music and dramatic arts in Sarnia for 31 years. He has been involved in more than 100 theatrical productions with Theatre Sarnia, Petrolia Community Players and his secondary school program at Sarnia Collegiate where, among other shows, he directed and produced the annual SCITS Revue for 19 years. Dan has performed with Theatre Kent, directed several shows in Wallaceburg, and is a member of both the Wallaceburg Concert Band and Wallaceburg Brass Quintet. In March 2021, Dan joined a few like-minded artists in the creation of the Chatham-Kent Arthouse Project to further foster creativity in the area. Dan has previously served on the board of directors of the Huron House Boys' Home and Theatre Sarnia, and is a member of the Wallaceburg and District Arts Council and the Alliance of Arts Councils of Ontario.

Eric Bristow, Secretary

A member of the Chatham-Kent theatre community since 2012, Eric Bristow served as Chair of the Board of Directors of Theatre Kent for two years, and previously acted as Publicity Director. He has also served on the board of the Merlin and Area Kinsmen, acting as President for two years and previously as Secretary. Outside of his theatre pursuits, Eric works as a Communication Specialist for Kelcom, a role he has held since 2008. In this role, he works closely with public safety organizations, large industry and manufacturing, and municipal governments such as the Town of Oakville and York Regional Police. Eric has been a resident of Tilbury since 2009. He loves his town, and is very excited to be a part of the CKACN, bringing the arts, theatre and culture together in Chatham-Kent.

Christie Coatsworth

Christie Coatsworth resides near Blenheim, in farm country. She began her career in music in grade six, when her cousin asked her to play organ for a family wedding. Decades later, Christie is still assembling "volun-told" choirs in that little country church outside Port Alma, and she was the piano teacher for kids in the community. Christie enjoyed her time as a storyteller and as an organizer of parents fighting to preserve small schools. She has a day job in social work, where it is her privilege to support those facing their final days. Board experience with the CK Public Library and CK Women's Centre were assets that she brought to her work with Create CK, visioning for our region's cultural future. She believes in this place.

Chris Ford

Chris Ford has established several art galleries throughout Southwestern Ontario over the past 30 years, making artist-promotion her life's work. She also developed and ran eight seasons of Art in the Park in Morpeth and Ridgetown, as well as one season in Chatham. She has served on several arts and culture boards and was a contributor to the municipal strategic plan for Arts and Culture. Chris loves to work with youth, instilling in them a love for the arts. Her art these days consists of photosculpting and writing, having published two fast-selling books of poetry. The Art and Heirloom Shoppe, where she partners with Sue Rumball, is home to fifty local and regional artists, many of them emerging and looking for direction. Chris looks forward to her work on the CKACN board as an opportunity to continue her passion for promoting local art and artists.

Peter Garapick

Captivated from an early age by songs on the radio, Peter Garapick has always relished presenting music, whether at informal and formal gatherings, from DJ-ing in Halifax bars while earning his BSc and MBA from Dalhousie University, to presenting house concerts at his home in the countryside near Palmyra. In 2010, Peter was one of twelve founding members who envisioned an old church in the small town of Highgate becoming The Mary Webb Cultural and Community Centre. He has been the Music Director ever since, bringing in a wide variety of artists, including several Juno winners, to this rural gem of a concert hall. Currently Chair of the Board of Directors, he, along with a dedicated group of volunteers, has seen the MWC become a beacon for patrons, artists and performers alike in Southwestern Ontario. Being able to offer a stage with full lights and sound to top-notch musicians, and to fill the acoustically outstanding hall with 250 rapt audience members, makes Peter a very happy music-lover. He looks forward to helping the wide spectrum of arts and culture flourish in Chatham-Kent through his participation in the CKACN.

Rocky Gaudrault

A 20-plus-year veteran in businesses spanning from high-growth to social/online and regulated markets, Rocky Gaudrault has been an active contributor to the Chatham-Kent community. Rocky brings private-sector leadership to the CKACN, with a focus on customer relations and strategic planning. With a strong belief in corporate social responsibility, as has been seen in his various roles and contributions (YMCA, Kent Minor Hockey, CK Treatment Centre, CK Hospice, etc.), Rocky looks forward to helping the CKACN thrive!

Laurie Langford

Writer and exhibiting artist Laurie Langford has been actively involved with arts and culture since moving to Chatham-Kent in 1996. Her background is in marketing, communications, graphic design and project management. Laurie has served as Chair of the Historic Downtown Committee, the Thames Art Gallery Advisory Committee, and the ARTspace Advisory Board. Laurie has worked with and for the Municipality on various arts and culture projects over the past 25 years.

Lisa Lester

Lisa Lester has owned and operated her own dance companies in Chatham-Kent, including All That Jazz Dance Co., for more than 25 years. Through her many productions over the years, she has always used the art of dance to send positive messages out into the world. Lisa has also decorated weddings all over Southwestern Ontario for 25 years and took over as Event Specialist at the historic Chatham Armoury in the fall of 2019. Since taking on the Armoury role, Lisa has expanded its use to include public events such as The Chatham Armoury Christmas Market (2019) and The Armoury in Lights (2019 & 2020 COVID version). Lisa looks forward to creatively bringing more artistic productions and art festivals to Chatham-Kent.

Sue Rumball

Sue Rumball is a retired teacher of 34 years and co-owner, with Chris Ford, of the Art and Heirloom Shoppe in Chatham. As a young child living on the shores of Lake Erie, she enjoyed exploring and collecting pretty stones, spraying them with her mother's hairspray to bring out the shine. She continued to be intrigued by the beauty of stones and precious glass, moving into jewellery making using these materials. Sue's true passion is travelling – and of course, collecting rare stones on her travels. "Life comes full circle sometimes...still collecting rocks, as my dad would have said."