

City of Brisbane

Agenda Report

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Stuart Schillinger, Administrative Services Director

Subject: Update on the Citizens' Historical Committee's Video and Digitization Projects

Date: October 4, 2018

Purpose:

Preserve and promote the unique history of Brisbane.

Recommendation:

Provide any additional direction to allow the Committee to begin its video history project.

Background:

The City Council adopted a budget for \$50,000 to be used by the Citizens' History Committee for its video and digitization projects. The City Council requested additional information regarding both projects prior to the Citizens' Committee spending City funds for these projects. At the time of the budget the anticipated breakdown of the budget was \$10,000 for equipment and services related to the Video Project, \$10,000 for digitization of archival material including the Brisbane Bee, and \$30,000 for staff support for the Video Project, City Archives, and History Room presentations.

Discussion:

The Citizens Committee has worked with film maker Keith Moreau concerning the video project. Keith has offered to loan the City the necessary video equipment for the project, as well as donate his time for filming and editing the interviews. Staff reached out to another film maker in town regarding this project who was willing to assist with the videoing of the project but was not able to volunteer time to edit the project. The only cost for equipment and services for the video project are the cost of green screens, potential sound proofing and incidentals needed for the room. The other cost will be creating searchable transcripts from the finished videos. The Historical Committee does not recommend multiple video people working on this project since it could create a conflict with the ownership of the underlying material and impact the willingness of film makers to work on the project. One of the attractions for Keith is to keep the original footage to allow him to use it for his own documentary projects while providing the City with the rights to use finished footage for its historical preservation project.

The digitization project is put on hold pending the outcome a project the County Library System is working on. The County Library System has hired a consultant firm to review all of their cities historical archives to determine preservation methods. Based on informal discussions with Library staff one of the recommendations will be for digitizing existing printed material. The Library is

determining what assistance can be provided to the members of the JPA in order to digitize everyone's archives efficiently and at lower costs than if cities needed to do it alone. For example the City was quoted approximately \$10,000 to digitize the Brisbane Bees. Digitizing printed material is not just creating a digital image from the printed material but having the digital image run through an OCR (Optical Character Recognition) program so the document can be searchable. Although there are on-line programs that can do this from digital photos the reliability is not as great as dedicated systems. Once the document is converted into a searchable document it needs to be proof read by an individual to change any errors made in translating the document. A typical OCR system has an accuracy rate of 98% which sounds fine except when applied to a real life example. If a document has 2,000 words 98% accuracy means 40 words would be wrong. Better OCR systems reduces this rate to about 6 – 8 words. The Brisbane Bee alone has millions of words on old lower contrast paper. The level of accuracy depends on the quality of the image, the contrast of the image, spacing of the words, stains, and layout of the document. The better the camera used to take the original digital picture, the better the software used for correcting the image, and the better the OCR software the less errors will occur. The less errors, the less time it would take to correct the digitized document and the more useful it will be for research and retrieval purposes. Therefore, we should wait for the Library's final report before the City moves forward with its own digitization process.

The final item City Council approved was for a part-time assistant to work with the Historical Committee on its video project, to work in the archive room to preserve our current material and properly record and make assessable any new material, and to begin the process of developing presentations which will be in the new History Room in the Library. It is anticipated for every hour of video product it will take approximately 5 hours of an assistant's time. This includes setting up the interview, doing research on the interviewee to ensure appropriate questions are asked, working with the interviewee to ensure any interesting photos or other tangible items are included in the video, and then reviewing the transcript of the interview to ensure the transcription software provided an accurate searchable transcript. Currently there are over 45 people on the list to be interviewed. The Committee hopes to be able to interview between 20 – 30 people a year. As, interviews are completed it is anticipated additionally people will be added to the list (the preliminary list is attached for Council review and comments). This would mean between 100 and 150 hours would be spent this project. It is possible that the person may spend an additional 400 – 500 during the year on the other aspects of the job (maintain the archive room, developing displays for the History Room, working with the school districts on City History projects, working on the digitization of the existing archives after we know what we are going to do). The City currently has a position on its salary schedule called Archive Assistant at a rate of \$31 - \$38 an hour. If the person spends about 600 – 700 hours in the job during the year it is anticipated the cost will be between \$19,000 and \$27,000. This position will be recruited by the City after a job description is drafted.

Based on what is known to date the City does not anticipate spending the full \$50,000 this year but instead closer to \$30,000 - \$40,000 depending on the digitization project.

The Committee is planning on moving forward and setting up interviews with individuals prior to the Archive Assistant being hired to capture some of our older residents.

Fiscal Impact:

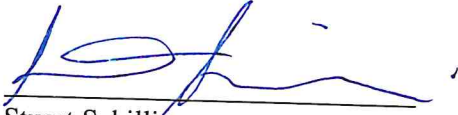
The money is already included in the budget so no additional funds are needed.

Measure of Success

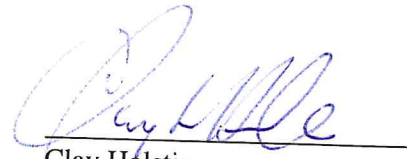
There is a robust Citizens Historical Committee which preserves and promotes the History of Brisbane.

Attachments:

List of potential interviewees for the Video Project.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Schillinger', written over a horizontal line.

Stuart Schillinger
Administrative Services Director/Deputy City Manager

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Clay Holstine', written over a horizontal line.

Clay Holstine
City Manager

Potential People and Topics for Video History Project

Classification	People
Resident	Beth Grossman
Resident	Bill Dettmer
Resident	Bob Dettmer
Resident	Bonnie Bologoff
Resident	Camille Salmon
Resident	Cris Hart
Resident	Dale Conway
Resident	Dee Ellison
Resident	Dolores Gomez
Resident	Ernie Kerling
Resident	Glendon Stacer
Resident	Jeri Sulley
Resident	Jim Martin
Resident	Joe Sulley
Resident	John C. Burr
Resident	Johnetta Richards
Resident	Johnny Arthurs
Resident	Leon Alemdend
Resident	Linda Dettmer (Montenegro)
Resident	Lisa Macias
Resident	Mark Salmon
Resident	Michele Salmon
Resident	Paul Schmidt
Railroad	Davey Dauchan
Railroad	Don Douglas
Railroad	Eddie Epps
Railroad	Greg Welker
Railroad	J Michael Hemmer
Railroad	Ralph Dominici
Railroad	S.B. Nugent
Railroad	Tim Mooney
San Bruno Mountain	Dave Schooley
Council	Anja Miller
Council	Clara Johnson
Council	Clarke Conway
Council	Fred Smith
Council	Jeannine Hodge
Council	Lee Panza
Council	Ray Miller
Council	Sepi Richardson
Council	Tony Attard
City	Albert Duro
City	Brad Kerwin
City	Carole Nelson
City	Robin Leiter
City	Tom Adams

Topics

Roundhouse
Railroad
Brisbane During WW II
Visitacion
Cozy Cove
23 Club
School