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Appalachian Festival Proposal

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Appalachian Culture Committee

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April 9, 2015

Columbus Mayor's Office
90 W Broad St
Columbus, OH, 43215

Dear Columbus City Council and Mayor Coleman,

The Appalachian Culture Committee is writing to express interest in having Columbus' own Goodale Park feature an Appalachian Culture Festival. The committee is comprised of a group of individuals who care deeply about the Appalachian culture that is rooted in the state of Ohio. As a committee, it believes that there are many incredible benefits to having this festival in Columbus, especially given the numerous cities in Southeastern Ohio that already have established Appalachian Festivals.

Enclosed in this document is a report regarding the specific details needed to establish a festival, the reasons why this committee believes it is a good cause for the city of Columbus to support, and the problems that it may be face. The beginning of the report has all of the reasons why the festival would be a good idea and some of the problems that need to be approached and solved. In the middle and end of the report, the committee will go in-depth about the parts of the festival they will be in charge of and what it would take to set them up. The committee will also include examples of the types of educational entertainment that will be provided during the course of the festival.

If this presentation is received well, the committee would like approval to move forward with the festival with the support from the Columbus City Council and a stipend for the start up costs of a festival. The Appalachian Culture Committee believes this to be an incredible cause and very beneficial for the city of Columbus and would like to express a sincere thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

President, Timothy Rainer

Vice President, Cassie Grate

Treasurer, Callen Thompson

Festival Coordinator, Amy Gadd

Appalachian Festival Proposal

The Appalachian Culture Committee
(Timothy Rainer, Cassie Grate, Amy Gadd, Cal Thompson)

April 9, 2015

Presented to The Columbus City Council and Mayor Coleman
90 W Broad Street,
Columbus, Ohio, 43215

The Appalachian Culture Committee is here to provide a way to increase the educational, social, and cultural awareness of the rich Appalachian history in Ohio with the purpose of supporting the families of Appalachian descent in Central Ohio. Most people do not realize the rich Appalachian history that lies within the city of Columbus. From the great white migration and general flow of Appalachian Americans from the southern states up to states of greater opportunity, a lot of culture was brought into Ohio specifically in Dayton, Cincinnati, and the more overlooked city, Columbus. The loss of Appalachian culture is a serious problem that has been occurring with the new generations of younger people in Central Ohio. The Appalachian Culture Committee from Otterbein University is addressing the need for an Appalachian Festival to spread knowledge and gain a better sense of community in Columbus, Ohio. With key elements to building a festival including logistics, budgeting, vendors, location and workshops, already addressed, all that is needed is approval and funding. This festival we are trying to bring into this city could bring in revenue and community engagement through a better education in Appalachian Culture that has not been embraced before. The report to follow describes the more specific aspects behind creating a festival tailored for raising awareness about the Appalachian roots of Ohio. It was written in order to provide not only context about how the Appalachian Culture Committee would set up the festival and complete several laborious tasks, but also to inform about what type of content the festival could have that would be both entertaining and educational.

Logistics

Logistics is a branch under a large umbrella of categories that beginning a festival entails. This category touches upon many different things, and has a role in every other part of the festival. It includes such things as renting stages for the performances, getting parking permits and lot closures, event permits, rental needs, park needs, anything in terms of liability or general busy work. One of the main logistical points that we would like to highlight is where we would like to have our festival. The festival would be best held at Goodale Park in Columbus, Ohio. It is believed to be one of, if not the best spot to hold a festival due to the rich history that encompasses it. Goodale Park is the oldest city park in Ohio and one of the oldest in the United States. Given the fact that it has such historic value, the Appalachian Culture Committee feels that it aligns incredibly well with the message that the festival would be providing to the community. Another part of logistics is ensuring the quality of the content provided. Everything that is going to enter the park in terms of programming, vendors, entertainment and workshops will need to have content that educates and also involves the population in a fun manner. It should be noted that if the committee were asked why any specific program was invited to the festival there would need to be a valid, educational and rewarding reason behind it. The logistics would also involve getting the radio and sound production ready for the event, compiling all of the needs for tables, tents, sidewalls, and so forth, and meeting with the park managers to cover the park clean-up process and needs.

Budget

A major part of having a successful festival is having a solid budget of numbers and details pertaining to how much the festival is going to spend and how much it will bring in. Many festivals similar to this one start out by making little to no money but quickly climb over the years to become successful. When you look at the source of our festival's income, it will come from tickets, concessions, and parking. Our tickets are going to range from \$10 for adults, \$5 for seniors, and \$2 for kids. This income alone will cover the location, rent, and event permit we will need to host the festival. The next source of income will come from our concession stand within the festival. These concessions potentially will be provided with carbonated drinks, water, Gatorade, and juice along with a wide variety of food from the Appalachian culture. Concessions will be stocked by purchasing the items in bulk. When buying the food and drinks in bulk the price is cut significantly allowing the festival to price the food and drinks accordingly to form some sort of profit. Lastly, parking will generate a large source of revenue for the festival. Since the festival will be held at a park, it will have limited parking, thus a request to rent parking garages and street lots will be sent out.

A high expense will be the rental of Goodale park. The budget committee has figured out that it would cost roughly \$33,000 to rent a specific park for a weekend. Safety is one of our main concerns in planning a festival. Security will be at every gate to insure that there are no altercations throughout the weekend. Along with that, we would like to have 5 to 6 police officers walking around the festival to make sure there is strong protection. Another large expense is utilities because of the mass numbers of booths and vendors along with entertainment every night. Electricity will be heavily used because each booth will need an outlet to run their booth or trailer on, and along with that, water will be a necessity as well as gas. The vendors and booths will pay according to the bill the city of Columbus gives this committee for how much is used while at the festival. Another expense will be entertainment. This will be paid a flat rate depending on how long each musician or performer is featured. Most of the entertainment will be paid between \$1,000 to \$1,500 per-show or per night they play. Advertising is an expense that allows the word to travel, the idea of this festival to grow, and bring people to it. In the budget plan, we want to promote our festival with billboards, advertisements on buses, in magazines, TV, radio, and also the newspaper. We have decided that we will pay \$10,000 in advertising so that our festival will be seen by everyone. Along with these venues, we will promote the Appalachian Festival on our website, Facebook page, Twitter account, and Instagram. We intend to create a trending hashtag to keep the word passing around and call for contests to those who participate in using the hashtag. The license is another expense to handle. Making and selling food requires a permit under the initial license we get. The license will allow us to run the festival for three days along with making food and selling it. This will cost around \$1,100 due to the size of the festival. The budget committee believes that if the right advertising is set forth, this could be a popular event in Columbus and attract people outside of the city. This would allow people to explore not only our festival but the City of Columbus as well.

City Business and Fundraising

Since this festival will be at a community park, this gives the people attending time to walk around the downtown area of Columbus. This will give local restaurants an opportunity to bring in business and promote their business. Along with local restaurants, we encourage other businesses to come with things they would like to hand out, such as events that they might be hosting. Maybe a certain business wants to get their name out because they're small; we will allow these businesses to hand out information about their companies promoting what they do or sell.

Fundraising is a large part of how this committee intends to start paying for the expenses of the festival. The Appalachian Community Development Association works with organizations that want to teach the community and the greater population about the Appalachian culture. This festival committee intends to proceed with this idea and through The Appalachian Community Development Association; our committee can reach out for help in filling out one of their grant applications. This application will allow us to ask for volunteers, money to start up our Appalachian festival, and vendor help. The budget group requests help by asking for a grant with a fixed amount of starter money to begin. With a park rental fee of \$33,000 asking the association for money would be our best way of starting. To start up the festival, we estimate needing about \$50,000 to 60,000. More than half of that would be going to the renting of the park, food and drinks.

Location and Event Permits

The location decided upon would be in Columbus, Ohio at Goodale Park. As an organization, we saw that this is not only the biggest park in the Columbus area that would bring the most people to the Appalachian festival, but it also has the most history. Being the most historical park in Columbus was a big factor in picking where the event would be hosted. The location is also a thriving spot that will bring people of different cultures that may not really know about the Appalachian culture in general. To run a festival, a festival permit is needed. This is something that shows that the committee would have insurance on the festival itself. Another thing that this permit will provide is being able to fix anything that would go wrong along the way. The FDA plays a major role in getting this for the event. The committee would have to make sure that every vendor that will be working is cleaned after each use and washed at the end of every day. The food permit will cost about \$500 along with the FDA bringing a representative out to the specific location the day before it starts to make sure the vendors are running within the permits. Our Location permit will be determined by the City of Columbus; this permit would be valid only for the dates that our festival has rented the location. This permit will cost another \$1,000. After each of these permits is fulfilled, then the vendors and booths would be allowed into the park for their set up.

Vendors

The vendors that would be invited to the Appalachian Festival would be only those that can contribute a quality educational experience. The committee would like to invite those vendors that speak to the older 'mom and pop' shop that so many generations of people have memories and history in. We would entertain the idea of promoting authentic Appalachian vendors such as Bluegrass Kettle Corn or Johnson's Country Ham. The vendors would be able to get a wide range of exposure from an incredibly diverse population and they would also be a source of revenue for the festival itself.

Programs & Workshops

Fort Wayne, Indiana, has discovered a way to connect two cities and two cultures through its annual Cherry Blossom Festival. This festival brings the culture of Fort Wayne's sister city, Takaoka, Japan to the people of Indiana. The city has a local connection with Takaoka and the Cherry Blossom Festival introduces Japanese dance, music, food, and more to citizens of Fort Wayne. The festival has grown in popularity over the years and served as a source that unites the cultures and people of Fort Wayne, Indiana and Takaoka, Japan.

Townsville, Australia began a 10-day arts and culture festival. The committee hopes to promote culture while showcasing local talent. The Community and Culture Committee has identified a problem in their community, the dying art culture that was once thriving. They hope to reintroduce the public to this art and culture through interactive workshops, theatrical performances, and short-story readings, just to name a few. The Committee believes that this festival can bring awareness back to the rich art and culture that has been overlooked in Townsville, Australia. The Community and Culture Committee hopes to not only reinvigorate interest in art and culture, but also bring new interest to their city. Townsville has a lot of local talent and the arts and culture festival will showcase this. Those working to organize this festival have high hopes that it will grow into an internationally recognized festival that will revive the local industry.

Extensive research and the ability to look at what has worked for other culture festivals have allowed us to plan what we feel will be a successful Appalachian culture festival. Our festival will include many hands-on workshops that will invite the community to engage with the Appalachian culture first hand. First, we will have a marketplace where artisans can sell arts, crafts, and baked goods. Festivalgoers will be able to browse and purchase hand-made items and connect with the creators of these goods. This marketplace will be an optimal place for those attending our festival to ask questions and get to know individuals within the Appalachian culture. We anticipate that this marketplace atmosphere will provide cultural educational opportunities and foster personal connections.

Programs will be a second aspect of our festival. Programs will include music, dance, storytelling, and film screenings. Festival attendees will be observers at these events. People will be free to come and go as they please, as the programs will be less participant demanding. A stage will be set up for live bands to play throughout the day.

We will have a table set up for the musicians' merchandise; musicians will rotate between the stage and this table where they will be available to share experiences with the general public and answer any questions. People can just listen and enjoy the music, or they can take a more active part and get one-on-one attention and tailored interaction with performers who work to preserve the Appalachian culture. Programs will also include traditional Appalachian dance groups, like Big Bend Cloggers out of Pomeroy, Ohio. Attendees of the festival will be able to observe this style of dance with strong Appalachian roots and also receive information for how they too can get involved in a clogging class to actively maintain the culture. Film screenings, including the PBS documentary *The Appalachians* will take place in the evenings, which will provide background on the Appalachian culture. Attendees will be educated while they are being entertained. Storytelling sessions will not only give the festival attendees first hand experience with a common pastime in the Appalachian culture, they will also be introduced to stories that have been passed down from generation to generation within Appalachia. All of these programs are more observation-based with the intent to introduce the public to the origins and continuation of Appalachian culture.

The third and final aspect of the activities at this festival is interactive workshops. Tents or areas, depending on the activity, will be set up and times will be scheduled for workshops. Festivalgoers can attend workshops where they learn skills that perhaps their ancestors used to practice, including quilting, woodworking, and pottery. The public will be able to make their own 'ugly face jug' and learn the history behind these unique pieces of pottery. Workshops will also include lessons in playing the spoons, bluegrass and folk music, and square dancing. A round-robin storytelling workshop will give people an opportunity to try their hand at storytelling like they may have observed at the storytelling program. The interactive and relaxed atmosphere will help engage attendees. Workshops will be set up for making crafts where children can make their own ball-in-cup games, as well as gardening instruction that will teach participants how to work with the environment, and cooking workshops where they can get tips on how to create a delicious meal with the food they could grow in their garden. A coal mining photo exhibit will allow people a glimpse into the everyday lives of many Appalachians, both past and present. Whether they are aware of it or not, many people have Appalachian roots and many of those people have ancestors that worked in the coalmines. This exhibit will serve as a window to the past and the lives of their ancestors. We have examined many successful Appalachian cultures in other cities and determined their most successful workshops. We feel these workshops will be a great way to get festivalgoers actively engaged in Appalachian culture while proactively educating about Appalachian culture.

The marketplace, programs, and workshops will all serve to create personal, memorable, and lasting connections between those attending this Appalachian culture festival and the Appalachian community. By taking these three different approaches, we hope to encompass all learning and experience preferences. Our activities are designed to engage all ages and backgrounds. Whether a person is aware of their Appalachian heritage or have none to speak of, each individual can leave our festival with a better understanding of Appalachian culture and a custom experience to create connections within the culture.

Featured Guests

For our event, a large number of musicians and artists will be attending to present their works for the community. Anndrena Belcher has been invited as our featured guest to discuss her relations with the Appalachian culture, to teach dances, and to perform her music. She has been a large source of inspiration for the planning of this festival. The film, "A Long Journey Home," directed by Elizabeth Barrett, shows young Anndrena walking through the city of Chicago speaking of her youth and growing up in Appalachia. Since moving to Chicago she decided to bring her culture along with her. She is a music teacher, dancer and performer. She will have an event for all three of the festival days. Visual artists that have been invited are Carol Griffith, Frank Hobbs, and Petra Kralickova. Griffith is a professor at the Columbus College of Art and Design and there she teaches Fine Art. She has had many of her works featured in exhibits in Illinois, Pittsburg, and Alabama. Frank Hobbs teaches painting, figure drawing, drawing, and 2D design at Ohio Wesleyan University. Petra Kralickova has been the director of exhibitions at Ohio University Galleries since 2004. She is also the head curator of the Kennedy Museum of Art since 2009. Many of her other projects have been sculptural installations, and ceramics. This festival will hold workshops with these artists as they have work on display and there will be discussions with the artists during each day. Sylvia Miller will be holding a unique spoon music workshop. Festival goers will have the opportunity to interact with her and learn the art of playing the spoons. This new interaction will be educational for the younger crowds. Joanne Laessig will be presenting a history lesson on folk music from spiritual to bluegrass music. Everyone is welcome to come sit upon the lawn or bring chairs to listen and ask questions. Live poet readings from George Ella Lyon will also be a feature of the weekend. Lyon is a poet from Lexington, Kentucky. She has taught writing at Centre College and was a writer-in-residence twice in Transylvania University and the University of Kentucky. She has also attended Master of Fine Arts programs as a visiting writer in locations such as Appalachian State University. She visits up to 30 to 40 schools each year to lead workshops and inspire young writers. We have many musicians and bands to perform throughout the days including the bluegrass band, Loosely Strung from Columbus Ohio, American folk band, The Whiskey Riders from Louisville, Kentucky, Blue Wheel Drive from Asheville North Carolina, Leipers Fork Bluegrass and Bobby Cool from Nashville Tennessee, The Rigney's from Normandy, Tennessee, and many more.

Executive Summary

Appalachian culture is dying in Columbus, Ohio and a festival in Goodale Park could increase historic respect for and value of one of the different ancestries hidden within the city. Through the use of logistics, budgeting, vendors, locations and workshops, the Appalachian Culture Committee has provided all of the structure to implement an incredible festival in central Columbus. Not only would the festival promote an otherwise under-respected culture, but it could also bring revenue and a historic integrity that would not typically be celebrated. This festival would serve as a means of breaking stereotypes of Appalachian people, increasing awareness of how many people are affected by an Appalachian heritage, and showing the population how many different facets of Appalachian culture there really are. The fact is that there are many

Appalachian festivals in southern Ohio and the surrounding metropolitan area, but there are none around central Ohio. Considering the fact that 32 of 88 counties in Ohio are considered Appalachian, that means that a huge piece of recognized culture is missing in the central and northeastern part of the state. With the Foundation of Appalachian Ohio raising just over 3.4million dollars in relief funds for Appalachian families and needs this past November, 2014, the time to create a festival that will bring awareness is now. The Appalachian Culture Committee would like the City of Columbus to stand behind our proposal to bring life to an unrecognized culture and allow us the opportunity to move forward with a festival that would benefit all of Columbus and its surrounding areas. Through general approval for the festival and event permits, or through grants from the city, the Appalachian Culture Committee can make this proposal a reality.

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