

March 1, 2010
Budget Committee Deputations

Claire Hopkinson, Executive Director, Toronto Arts Council
Ron Lalonde, Sr. Executive VP, CIBC and Chair, Canadian Stage Company

Karen Tisch, President, Toronto Arts Council
Tracey Sandilands, Executive Director, Pride Toronto

CLAIRE: Thanks to Budget Chief Shelley Carroll and the Budget Committee for giving us the opportunity to speak to you today. I am joined by Ron Lalonde, Chair of Canadian Stage and Sr. Executive Vice President of CIBC.

First of all, I want to say a word about the value of arts programming in Toronto. I don't expect that anyone in Council Chambers, or anyone on your committee would deny that the arts at every level, discipline and location bring value to all our lives. As a community we are healthier and happier if there are many opportunities for artistic expression. Further, it is obvious that a strong, vibrant arts community makes for a strong, vibrant city in which more people are engaged in their neighbourhoods and active in their streets. Despite the fact that all of us and every one of you accept this as true – the unfortunate reality is that in difficult economic times arts funding frequently is not a priority.

Secondly, I would like to emphasize that we truly understand the financial constraints under which the city is operating. We recognize the enormous financial liabilities of the city, the shortfall in provincial funding and the challenges that the City currently faces in meeting its residents' needs. In general, we support City Council's overarching priorities and the budget vision and we have appreciated your committees' leadership in its support of the arts community.

Toronto Arts Council and the city's arts community have two specific recommendations for the 2010 budget to put forward this evening:

- 1) That Budget Committee honour its commitment to provide an annual 2% cost of living increase for the community partnership and investment program (including TAC) that was first instated in 2009;
- 2) That Budget Committee find a mechanism to ensure that billboard tax revenue be fully directed towards arts programming as soon as possible and no later than 2011

I will now turn the mike to Ron who will speak a bit about arts funding from a business perspective.

RON:

It's a pleasure to join you here this evening.

In addition to Claire's excellent points, and on the understanding that I volunteer significant time to Toronto's arts community and truly value the contribution of arts programming to the city, I want to speak from a financial perspective this evening.

- My first point is that city services delivered through community organizations like Toronto Arts Council cost less – way less.
- City services are delivered in two ways: either through direct service delivery provided by city staff or through community based service delivery groups such as Toronto Arts Council.
- Unlike direct city services, community based service delivery funds are multiplied many times over by revenues from other sources.
- For example, every additional dollar TAC is able to invest in the city's arts organizations injects at least \$15 into the economy from private sector sponsorships and donations, from ticket sales, and from federal and provincial grants.
- This is true to varying degrees of all community based groups.
- This is another reason why reinstating the 2% annual increase makes great economic sense as well as ensuring delivery of important city services.
- Or, to look at it another way: given the economic situation, the city's spending restraint is laudable. However, if I had to trim my own personal expenditures, I would sooner cut back on how much I spend for lunch, than what I invest in my RRSP or my child's college investment account. Expenditures and investments are two quite different things. Community based organizations are an important city investment.

My second point is to emphasize that Toronto's arts community is not asking for anything that City Council has not already committed:

- In addition to last year's commitment to an annual 2% cost of living increase;
- The 2003 Culture Plan endorsed by City Council recommends a total of \$25 per Torontonian in arts and culture support (current level is less than \$18); this is a substantial unfulfilled commitment

Finally

- It is worth noting that Toronto continues to lag major North American Centres in arts funding (compare Toronto's \$18 per capita to Montreal's \$32, Vancouver's \$26 and US cities at 3 times Toronto's rate. These cities are Toronto's international competitors. Arts funding matters to Toronto business.

TRACY SANDILANDS

I am Tracey Sandilands, Executive Director of PRIDE Toronto and I am here today representing Toronto's major cultural institutions:

- o Art Gallery of Ontario
- o Canadian Opera Company
- o Caribana
- o Gardiner Museum
- o National Ballet of Canada
- o National Ballet School
- o PRIDE Toronto
- o Toronto International Film Festival
- o Toronto Symphony Orchestra

I want to thank Karen Tisch for sharing her deputation time with me. I believe it reinforces the fact that the Toronto arts community is indeed a "Community" that includes large organizations, small organizations and individual artists. We face challenges together and we thrive together.

I also want to thank City Council for the leadership they have shown over the past 7 years in building support for arts and culture in Toronto. With this sustained support, look at what we have been able to achieve:

- Our city has an opera company, a ballet company and a symphony orchestra that rival any in the world with their talent and programming.
- We have museums and other cultural attractions that draw visitors from around the world to see their exhibitions and their architecture.
- Nuit Blanche - just 5 years old this coming October, attracts more than one million participants in a 12 hour period (between 7pm 7am, no less).
- The popular Toronto International Film Festival is launching the country's first film centre, Bell Lightbox in Fall 2010, transforming TIFF into a year-round cultural attraction.
- Caribana and PRIDE Toronto are known internationally and attract thousands of visitors to our City.

The arts sector plays a central role in the health and vitality of this city. And the investment that you make in the arts comes back to the City multifold:

- we draw visitors from around the world
- We attract businesses to establish themselves here instead of the 905 area because of our active arts scene.
- We draw skilled professionals to move here because of our diverse and excellent cultural offerings.
- We provide opportunities for young children in priority neighbourhoods to grow and discover their true potential in after school programs and summer camps.
- We give youth a safe after school activity and destination. And we provide seniors with social interaction and stimulation.

We need your sustained investment in order to continue growing and developing Toronto as a truly creative city of international calibre. And we have many reasons to continue this important momentum. The eyes of the world will be on Toronto in the upcoming years:

2010 - G20 summit this coming June
2011 - International Indian Film Awards
2014 - World Pride Festival
2015 - Pan Am Games

Thank you for believing in this City's cultural resources as a unique asset to protect and grow.

KAREN TISCH

Thank you for your attention this evening and also for your understanding of the importance of furthering the creative potential of Toronto. I would like to end our presentation by pointing out a few more extremely important points:

Toronto is one of the world's most culturally diverse cities. This has been recognized by economists and community leaders alike as a huge asset. The city's artists and arts organizations reflect the diversity of the city; offering both traditional cultural programming and inspiring cross-cultural programming where old world mixes with new, cultural traditions from afar combine with contemporary Canadian ideas to create transformative new work. The arts allow Toronto to capitalize on all of its cultures; to bring together communities; to reflect our stories to each other and to allow creative genius to flourish.

I would also like to take a few seconds to highlight a current TAC priority that combines support for artists with neighbourhood development. With the January launch of the Neighbourhood Arts Network after several years of planning, TAC is focusing on increasing the impact of arts programming in Toronto's inner suburbs and priority neighbourhoods. The Network promises to further:

- Engage Toronto residents from all parts of the city including youth, newcomers and seniors in arts programming
- Create links between community engaged artists working in underserved neighbourhoods and city resources and institutions
- Inform the public about the subsidized arts programs available to them in all city neighbourhoods

Finally, and I would say most importantly:

in the past two years, a large number of artists, particularly young artists, have worked in partnership with the city to help champion and deliver new revenue programs, including both the land transfer tax and the 3rd party sign tax. It has been inspiring to see these young people out at city hall defending the city's need for increased revenue and working with councillors to support a civic vision. As

Budget Committee I believe you have a responsibility to respond to these artists and recognize their contribution. This committee should be able to find a way to demonstrate to these engaged artists that public participation and civic engagement is valued. It is important that Toronto not lose its young artists – and if they are disillusioned or not supported adequately they will leave Toronto for the many other leading cities in the world that would welcome their creativity and commitment.

So, once again, let me reiterate our recommendations, ones that we think are extremely reasonable and critically important to the success of the city:

- 3) That Budget Committee honour its commitment to provide an annual 2% cost of living increase for the CPIP program (including TAC) that was first instated in 2009;
- 4) That Budget Committee find a mechanism to ensure that billboard tax revenue be fully directed towards arts programming as soon as possible and no later than 2011

Thank you again.