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Tappahannock VA 22560  
September 22, 2005

Ms Linda Lumpkin  
Assistant County Administrator  
PO Box 1079  
Tappahannock VA 22560

Dear Linda:

The attached proposal is a more detailed follow-up to the Ad Hoc Committee's oral request to the Essex County Board of Supervisors on July 12, 2005 for an Arts Center to be established in a portion of Beale Memorial Church.

We are aware that the County will not take possession of the property for two years. This two-year period will give the Committee time to draw up the organization's bylaws, which will then be submitted to the Supervisors for approval and recommendations. It will also allow time to obtain a tax-exempt 501-C3 status, which is not available to the County government. Time is also needed to select the Board, organize overall operations, and recruit volunteers.

The Arts Center mission will be to service all Essex County citizens. To accomplish this obligation, space will be needed for simultaneous activities. The Center would be available to all civic and religious organizations at no cost.

We are requesting the sanctuary and rooms immediately behind and possibly above the older portions of the complex as well as use of the dining/kitchen basement area and parking area across the street. In addition we request the County be responsible for the maintenance, janitorial, utilities and insurance expenses as they are for the Essex Public Library. The Arts Center's governing board will be responsible for generating income through activities to support personnel, printing, and other operational costs. There is no interest in the church's newer Sunday school wing. We also wish to emphasize that the integrity of the historic portion of the building will be honored.

Much of the information regarding the organization and community impact is extracted from the Daw Theatre Evaluation and Feasibility Study, which was addressed to Mr. Gary Allen on October 21, 2002. Attached are approximately 300 signatures in support of this proposal. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ad Hoc Committee

# **Proposal for a Center for the Arts at Beale Memorial Church**

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NOTE: Most of these recommendations and information for this proposal is extracted directly from the Daw Theatre Evaluation & Feasibility Study, dated October 21, 2002 by the TAF Group.

Mission Statement

The Essex County Arts Commission's responsibility is to create an arts awareness in Essex County for all citizens, including youth, adults, and seniors; to program and schedule cultural, civic, graphic and performing arts events, both commercial and cultural; to educate all segments of our population through workshops, classes, seminars, and public forums; to promote the County, aid in economic development, and increase revenue through these events.

## I Governing Bodies

- A. The Board of Directors would consist of members of each civic organization in the County. Each civic organization would appoint one interested member of their group to serve on the Board. Included on the Board would be a representative from the School Board, County Board of Supervisors, Town Council, and the Sheriff's Department. The Board would meet quarterly and have the responsibility of governing the Arts Commission.
- B. The Administrative Board would consist of members of the various arts disciplines, such as dance, drama, music, crafts, photography, literature, and art. The committee would meet on a regular basis and would be responsible for creating all events such as workshops, classes, educational, and special programs both cultural and special-arts related commercial activities. The committee would also be responsible for the budget and making regular reports and recommendations to the Board of Directors. They would have the additional responsibility of employing instructors, setting fees, and collecting revenue that would support instructors and events.
- C. The Review Committee would consist of three members, one from the Board of Directors, one from the Administrative Board, and another chosen from the Administrative Committee who is knowledgeable in the discipline of the proposed event. Their mission is to ensure that any material to be presented to the general

public is not obscene, offensive, or objectionable. They would also have the responsibility of reviewing and selecting material, such as crafts, art, or antiques to insure the quality of a commercial event.

- D. The Membership Committee would be responsible for membership in the Essex County Arts Commission. Membership would be open to all Essex County citizens and the surrounding areas. The Committee would consist of five members, two chosen from the Board of Directors and two chosen from the Administrative Committee. The fifth member would be the Art Director. They would set membership fees that would cover the cost of a quarterly newsletter and brochures designed to review past events and advise members of upcoming events and activities. Membership will give a discount for all events including classes and workshops and would in no way restrict participation in any event. The committee would also be involved in soliciting corporate memberships.

II The Art Director has the charge of developing programs and events. The Art Director needs to actively pursue new opportunities to promote the Arts Center to create a level of excitement. It is important that activities and events be developed to attract and satisfy the needs of the whole community, using diverse programs to appeal to all age groups. The more uses of the facility, the greater the success, the outcome, and service to the community, which will justify the County's purchase and support of the facility. The

Director will be responsible to both the Administrative Board and the Board of Directors. He will need to make annual reports to and work closely with the Administrative Committee in setting the budget. He will also be responsible for hiring instructors and supervising volunteers. The Director must submit all events to the Review Committee for acceptance. He will be responsible for press releases and general public relations. This position will need to be performed by a volunteer in the beginning. When sufficient funds have been raised, it will become a paid position, coming from revenue generated by the various events and grants. The Art Director will relieve the County Supervisors and the Administrator's office the burden of scheduling and programming events and activities in the Art Center.

III Programming As stated previously, the activities need to be diversified so the programming will have a broad appeal to all groups. The programs and activities need to be broken down in four categories:

- A. Cultural—Stage performances such as drama, music, or dance
- B. Educational—Classes in dance, crafts, art, yoga, writers' workshops, remedial reading, cooking classes, or flower arranging
- C. Civic—Organizational meetings, seminars, hearings, debates, forums, clubs, garden week
- D. Commercial—Crafts, antiques, flower shows, book fairs, job fairs, receptions, weddings, private parties, family reunions

IV Volunteers are an important support factor in the success of any civic operation. They not only provide a vital work force, they will also act as ambassadors, liaisons, and bridge to the community in promoting the Arts Center. There are many retired persons in our County with an abundance of expertise in business, the arts, and civic organization who will provide a wealth of knowledge as volunteers to the Arts Center. These volunteers will also be of great assistance in securing grants.

V Space Usage The number of activities will be determined by the space made available to the Arts Commission. Maximizing the number of functions per year should be the goal. Classes, workshops, and meetings should be conducted simultaneously. For full utilization of the facility, sufficient rooms and space need to be made available to accommodate the following:

- A. Office for the Arts Director and temporary box office
- B. Art Gallery for local artists. The artwork would be for sale with a small percentage of the sale going to support the Center.
- C. Classrooms for classes, workshops, seminars and meetings.
- D. Dining and Kitchen Areas for fundraising, receptions, reunions, cooking classes
- E. Dressing Rooms Two small rooms (male and female) for productions
- F. Performance and Exhibit Area The main body of the church for productions with moveable seating so open space will be available for craft, antique, flower shows and theatre in the round.

Note: The portions of the building that would become the Center for the Arts would hopefully include the area directly behind and above the sanctuary. These areas are not handicapped accessible and therefore not desirable for the County's use. The Center is not asking for the use of any the newer Sunday School addition to the building.

VI Renovation and Equipment In the future it may be necessary to establish two new restrooms in the main body of the church. The 2002 Daw Theatre Evaluation and Feasibility Study estimated the cost the two restrooms at \$19,200, and the cost of a portable stage at \$5,000, as well as other improvements. The Commission is willing to undertake the raising of the money for these improvements since architects and contractors will be able to do the work for less if contracted by the Commission because of the proposed 501-C-3 tax status which they will obtain. Equipment cost can be cut by purchasing refurbished items. The County has at its disposal the State and Federal Warehouse in Richmond. The Commission would also raise the money to purchase equipment, relieving the County of this cost.

VII Benefits to the Community The Arts Council would have the responsibility of raising the funds for the renovation and any salaries that would be incurred. The Art Director would have the responsibility of securing events. This would relieve the Administrator's office of the time-consuming scheduling of events. The Director would be actively seeking activities for the Center. All activities and events would be available to all Essex



County citizens. All civic, religious, and general public groups would be able to schedule events. There will, of course, be a small fee for the use of any space, which will support all activities such as printing and advertising, as well as covering the cost of events. This income would make it possible for workshops and classes to have a minimal cost to all citizens.

VIII Fundraising The Arts Council will have a very aggressive grant-writing program.

Businesses and organizations would be solicited for financial support.

Membership fees would also be a portion of the fundraising. The small fees charged for events will also contribute to the overall income to operate the Center. As a 501C3 organization, the Arts Council would be able to apply for and obtain grants, which would not be available to the County otherwise. (See Grant list)

IX Grant Sources There are many grant programs available:

Ford Foundation  
Sara Lee Foundation  
Statewide Partnership Grants  
Virginia Commission for the Arts  
Rockefeller Brothers Fund  
Exxon-Mobile  
Southeastern Virginia Arts Association  
Class Acts  
Dominion Corporation  
Verizon  
VA Commission for Public Policy & Humanities  
Whitaker Foundation  
Blue Moon Fund, Inc.  
Freddie Mac Foundation  
Gannet Foundation, Inc.  
Community Foundation Serving Richmond & Central Virginia  
Norfolk Foundation  
Mustard Seed Foundation, Inc.  
Robins Foundation  
Doudera Family Foundation

Catherine Filene Shouse Foundation  
Robert G. Cabell III & Maude Morgan Cabell Foundation  
Jack Kent Cooke Foundation  
Sun Trust Foundation MidAtlantic  
Mary Morton Parsons Foundation  
Morino Foundation  
Massey Foundation  
Bryant Foundation  
Charles Smith Family Foundation  
Aimee & Frank Batten Foundation  
Beazley Foundation  
Norfolk Southern Foundation  
Edward W & Betty Knight Scripps Foundation  
Claude Moore Charitable Foundation  
Circuit City Foundation  
Theresa Thomas Memorial Foundation  
Horace G. Fralin Charitable Trust  
E Stuart James Grant Charitable Trust  
United Company Charitable Trust  
Landmakr Communications Foundation  
Allegheny Foundation  
Rice Family Foundation  
Patricia & Douglas Perry Foundation  
Riverside Foundation Charitable Trust  
Klaassen Family Private Foundation  
Batten Foundation  
T David Fitz-Gibbon Charitable Trust  
Jackson Foundation  
Richard S. Reynolds Foundation  
Eric & Marianne Billings Foundation, Inc.

X Parking We estimate the maximum seating in the body of the church will be 200 to 250. The Beale parking lot should be able to provide parking for most attendees. The major activities will be in the evening for performances. There is also additional parking along Cross and Prince Street. Safety for pedestrians crossing Queen Street will need to have a well-marked pedestrians crossing. It is also possible the VDOT might consider request for a flashing yellow traffic light or a push-button crosswalk light which could be

switched on for special events. Many events will be held evenings and weekends when parking will not be as much of a problem.

XI Economic Impact on the County As evidenced by Rivahfest, major activities such as craft and antique shows will attract participants from the Northern Neck and surrounding counties as well as from the city. These people will spend money in the County for food and lodging. Many of our surrounding counties have realized the importance of an art center and have complied with the wishes of their citizens. When a company or business considers locating in an area, they consider the workforce, available space, taxes, utilities, housing, schools, and available art facilities. Many communities have lost an important company locating their area because they had no activities. We are fortunate to have a new, well-stocked library, a County museum, and a State and Federal Historic District. What is missing is an Art Center with a wide variety of activities. A portion of the Beale complex is an opportunity to fill this void. Let us not miss the opportunity.

### Summary

The County government should be applauded for the decision to preserve Beale Memorial Church. As county taxes paid for this building, citizens should reap direct benefits from the expenditure in the form of a much needed Arts Center. Another benefit is the preservation of the original historic courthouse. Over-crowded County offices can now be relieved by the use of the church's Sunday school wing. The Arts Center operation will relieve the County Administrator's office of the responsibility of scheduling and overseeing the building.

Arts activities in the County will be a great aid in supporting economic development and make the county more attractive to potential businesses considering relocation. Major activities will generate additional revenue for both Town and County as evidenced by the successful RivahFest as well giving public relations value to the County. An active and productive Arts Center will attract a desirable, educated citizenry and will help to motivate the young people in the area. For example, there was a special Acts Project in New York City in the sixties which exposed underprivileged and under motivated school children to arts events and activities. As a result, these children had their imagination and creativity stimulated, and their grades improved remarkably due to this exposure.

When all the facts are considered, it is evident that an active Arts Center will be a win-win situation and can only benefit the County and its citizens.