

City Committee Aims to Debunk Hip-Hop Myth

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The newly formed Madison Arts Commission Hip-Hop subcommittee held its inaugural meeting Wednesday, where it attempted to specify long-term goals, define the art of “hip-hop” and explore funding options as well as community-outreach initiatives.

Committee chair Anthony Brown II spearheaded the project, which aims to educate residents about various urban art forms and preserve Madison’s flourishing hip-hop culture.

Brown, who performs as Anthony Lamarr, said an increasingly negative attitude has surrounded hip-hop following several violent incidents that occurred at concerts, which inspired him to propose the committee. Most recently, a shooting at The Frequency caused the building landlord to ban hip-hop artists from performing there.

Brown said asking Mayor Paul Soglin to designate the subcommittee as a city commission, which would extend its current one-year term indefinitely, will be one of its first actions.

Committee member and Milwaukee’s Alcatraz Recording Studio founder Chris Taylor said another primary responsibility, if the subcommittee is to be successful in its mission to shed a positive light on hip-hop, will be education.

He said the committee needs to “open everyone up to the concept the music isn’t the bad entity here,” and that a few people involved in several isolated incidents gave the entire hip-hop culture a bad reputation.

Taylor also said defining and educating people about the difference between hip-hop and rap is important because he thinks hip-hop is being misinterpreted to only mean rap. According to Taylor, rap shows are typically the events having issues with violence, but “the term hip-hop defines the culture under which rapping is a part of.”

Taylor and his colleagues, who he referred to as the “gatekeepers of arts,” agreed an all-encompassing community dialogue will need to produce the definition of hip-hop if it is to be both accurate and applicable.

Brown supported the idea of publicizing meetings as open discussions and said his ideal hip-hop subcommittee would feature diversity, which is why he is looking for students to “jump on board” and contribute a youthful voice to the dialogue.

“College students, in particular, are just dominating in the hip-hop community,” he said.

The subcommittee will hold its next meeting May 8, after which, it will switch to a biweekly meeting schedule.

Read more: http://host.madison.com/daily-cardinal/news/city/city-committee-aims-to-debunk-hip-hop-myth/article_29ca05c2-a7ea-11e2-83cf-001a4bcf887a.html#ixzz2QvIzvcbd