



## Minutes of the Meeting

January 26, 2022

Room 208, Municipal Bldg. Middletown, CT

Hybrid Meeting

### In attendance

Pam Steele  
Joyce Kirkpatrick  
Ed McKeon (Common Council)  
Barbara Arafah  
Kate Ten Eyck  
Domenique Thornton  
Lee Godburn  
Charlotte McCoid (joined 7:15)

### Also in attendance

Kisha Michael  
(Arts Coordinator)

### Absent

David Wolfram  
Julia Faraci  
Ed Ford (Common Council)  
Cheryl Hale (Poet Laureate)

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:01 PM

**2. Public Session:** None

**3. Approval of Minutes:** December 15, 2021 Meeting

\* Motion made by Godburn and seconded by Kirkpatrick with a correction of the spelling of the name Risley. No further discussion; passed unanimously as corrected.

**4. Approval of Agenda -**

\* Motion made by Godburn and seconded by Kirkpatrick agenda as written. No discussion, passed unanimously.

**5. Remarks from the Chair**

The Chair announced she had a meeting with the Mayor a couple of weeks ago because they had not touched based since early November. There was an article in the Middletown Press regarding the September meeting. The Chair felt that the issue had been dealt with and put behind them but she felt that by the way she answered the questions and her tone, the article was appropriate. The issue was dealt with at the time and was put to bed. The Mayor was also contacted by the press on his honeymoon but there were no further developments. The Chair further advised the Commission that when we have a public session, it is just for the public to say what they have to say and leave. There will be no questions or discussions from the commissioners in the public session. If there is any follow up, we will be given contact information and we can follow up individually not as a commission. It is not open for a discussion. It is for that member of the public to speak – not for discussion. The Mayor also advised that there is to be no communication going out without the Mayor's approval. We are a city commission and should not issue statements or press releases without the Mayor's approval. The only reason the Chair spoke to the press on this occasion was because the Mayor already knew about it and he was on his honeymoon. There will be a policy change coming out from the Mayor's office regarding



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anything coming out from the city. Anything has to go out, must come through the Chair or Michael as a gateway.

The Chair reminded the Commission that Michael is staff to the commission; she is not there to do the commissions' work. She has work to do for the Mayor that has nothing to do with the MCA. She helps the MCA with grant intakes and is a liaison to the Mayor. However, we are a standalone commission; that is why we have an executive committee. Michael makes sure the grants are complete, but anything that has to do with the commission should go through the Chair whoever the Chair of the commission is at the time.

The Chair also reminded the commission that no one who has any conflict of interest can serve in the grants process in any way. If your organization is applying for a grant, you cannot serve on the grants panel, just for appearances to make sure we are dealing above board so no one can question anything we do.

The Chair also announced that the Chair and Michael will have a meeting with the Mayor and Joe Samolis regarding the Fireworks. The Chair also expressed her hope that we can tie that into the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The Mayor expressed that he was pleased with the direction of the MCA and the work we have been doing. At the end the meeting Mayor said the MCA had come a long way.

### **6. Old Business –**

**A.** Liv Cox Fall 2021 photo project proposed an amendment and request to modify the project Voices of Middletown. Motion made by Godburn and seconded by seconded by McCoid passed unanimously.

### **7. New Business**

**A.** Michael represented that the grant applications were numerous and will be mailed out and that there were many new incoming grants that were close out. Old reports are available online. New grant applications that have come in with 13 applicants totaled \$89,700 with available funds of \$47,950. The MCA has received more than \$40,000 in grant applications than funding available. The Chair pointed out with approval that this was our goal: to get more people and more new people and organizations to apply. This was the goal that the mayor had asked to get more grant applications. The Chair pointed out that Kate Ten Eyck did not have a conflict this cycle because her husband was not slated to receive any award this cycle. We have a panel of three for the new PDG grants and then the full commission reviews the POS grant applications and then we have to vote on it. If there is any conflict then the commissioner will not be able to vote, discuss but just sit as a member of the public with no input. Although a commissioner could be a presenter, but they could not vote or involved in the discussion.

**B.** The MCA brochure that David Wolfram had been working on which is attached to the agenda. Godburn brought up discussion regarding who are the Middletown presenters whether for profit or non-profit. Also tagline "What's Ur Art?" part of the logo. The UR is visually goes against the rules of



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grammar and Michael reported that she had not received a good reaction to that part of the logo. Discussion centered on whether UR Art would be appropriate of the city arts organization. Commission decided to let David review the suggestions. The commission decided that while UR is fun but it might not be the most appropriate for a city document. Change to Your and have it changed above What's Art. And the Commission will give David Wolfram credit for all his work. Commission further decided to take those for profit organizations off presenters and put them together with Middletown businesses.

Michael has a proposal for a press release.

### 8. Committee reports

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** Godburn announced that we had our Arts Advocate award request in the minutes to email himself or copy us on suggested names for the Arts Advocate in February. Stresses what is important is their accomplishments to promote art in the community

The Chair announced that the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was delayed because of COVID we will use January to advertise. Godburn added that the executive committee met regarding the suggestions we have so far to discuss those who have expressed interest. We hope to present what we have so far next month.

**Public Arts** – Kirkpatrick announced that they have permission to use the education window on Main Street for a year. They are planning to do a similar sound dome on the street outside the window

Grant applications received 13 applications: GOS general operating and 7 PSG project support grants. The commission plans to do all GOS on one night and all PSG on another. Chair assigned herself and Ten Eyck. The Chair explains that the grant cycle goes for a full year and a person who has an interest in a grants cycle, they cannot serve on the grants process per the Mayor even though it has been done in the past. Going forward we have to do things right because of the conflict of interest. The grant cycle is September and January if there is a vested interest in September if you are going to apply in January because there is an appearance of conflict of interest. Wolfram was assigned to the panel and Godburn offered to be an alternate with Thornton. Needed dates are for second week of February 7, Monday for PSG and Wednesday, February 9 for GOS from 5 PM to 8:30 pm.

**9. Announcements** - Ten Eyck announced that "Back to the River" online considering performance revues on the river. Middletown needs a large performing arts space.

### 10. Adjournment

\* Motion made by Godburn to adjourn and Ten Eyck seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Domenique Thornton  
Secretary