



# Minutes of the Meeting

February 23, 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  
Julia Faraci (joined 7:10)

## Also in attendance

Kisha Michael  
(Arts Coordinator)

## Absent

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

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:00 PM

**2. Public Session:** None

**3. Approval of Minutes:** January 26, 2021 Meeting

\* Motion made by McCoid and seconded by Kirkpatrick. No discussion; passes unanimously.

**4. Approval of Agenda:**

\* Motion made by McCoid and seconded by Arafah to approve agenda. No discussion; passes unanimously.

## 5. Remarks from the Chair

The Chair announced that she had received an email from the City mandating LGBTQIA+ training for all city employees. Although the training was not mandated for commissioners, it was strongly recommended. Sessions will be conducted on March 7, 8, 9, at various hours during the day at city hall and on March 14 and 15 in the evening. The Chair strongly recommended that all MCA commissioners attend the training. The Chair also announced she and Michael met with the Mayor and the MCA grant recommendations were ready for council approval. The Chair reminded the commission the MCA Binder the commissioners received has everything we need to know about conflict of interests and it explains all of the policies and procedures. The Chair commented that "things are opening up" so that things can move forward (referring to the restrictions previously imposed by the pandemic.) We will have an executive meeting soon to get things in place to move forward. We have to move forward and change and adapt. She mentioned that the Mayor was very complimentary to MCA's progress thus far saying that we "have gone further than we have in years." Finally, the Chair closed by reminding every-one once again that the rules of public session do not allow for commission commentary and discussion and that we should confine ourselves to listening to the public during the public session part of our meeting. We are looking forward to some in person events.

## 6. Old Business –

### A. Staff Report



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The Risley wooden sculpture removed from City Hall has been returned and completely repaired. The wire sculpture was removed for repair. Michael will get plates for the art work and get suggestions for placement of the pieces within City Hall. The quote was for \$900 for repair.

Kids Arts will have a slow open registration with Facebook & Oddfellows accepting registrations beginning on March 4. Websites are populated with all information and we will begin receiving applications in the beginning of March.

The Arts Office applied with the Park and Rec department and the Library for an ARPA Grant which was well received by the ARPA Task Force reviewing presentations. The three departments offered to do joint pop up events throughout the city over the course of 3 years to get their services out to the community and bring community members back to city services. The Chair noted that funds are strictly regulated under federal guidelines for infrastructure; health; economic development. Middletown received \$20 million - \$2 - \$3 million will go to water and sewer projects noting that the Mayor was the Chair of Task Force and Pam Steele was vice chair with city attorney Brig Smith as secretary.

Kim O'Rourke City Recycling Coordinator and the MCA will also do pop up events. Kim has designed a Composting for Climate Contest for city youth. MCA will do publicity for the project.

Update on grants activities: *Ballet Under the Stars* will be held on Friday, July 22 at the Mansion.

Upcoming Events: 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks stakeholder members: Middlesex Chamber of Commerce; the Downtown Business District, Chair MCA, and Park and Rec agreed in conclusion to do best and what we always have done in a solid effort to make July 4, 2022 happen safely this year.

Summer Sounds Concerts series: Last year Trevor Davis was very helpful but this year for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, she envisioned doing food trucks on Court Street and using the Town Hall Green.

Suggested Themes for the year: Honoring City Youth and City Seniors through music. Middletuners and local bands and military musicians to perform at events with live performances throughout to honor our community for our community.

Balance of MCA Checkbook: \$23,604.16. Per Mayor's request, MCA submitted a flat budget request. That excludes increased fees that go up every year. Kids Arts went up and Oddfellows went up \$10,000 because they are returning to full status; full size production load bringing MCA budget up to \$314,950 with a wish list for extra funding for Kids Arts, grants and special programs. Budget request form will be attached and email with the explanatory memo to members. Special Programs will include the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events this year.

Grants: After March 7 & 9 meetings, a full slate was reviewed approved of \$47,950 as per spread sheet. They were brought to the Mayor and each was discussed. Regrets to bring other resources to grantees to further and help direct them where to find funding for their projects: WESU and Liam Murray

Next month Michael will submit an expenditure report to see where they are in relation to the requests.

She received a letter from a student from the Poetry and Prose magazine and had a wonderful idea. She will get them together with the poet laureate and his project is already hooked up to the Buttonwood Tree. It sounded



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very similar to Silent Sounds. He needed information on funding. Silent Sounds was an annual collection of writings in the school system and the graduate liberal arts section of Wesleyan.

## B. Committee reports

**Public Arts** –McCoid reported on public arts that Richard Bergan had been amazingly resourceful. They have a window and the bench will be the centerpiece if the doorway can be enlarged. Committee will meet potentially 8 AM Tuesday morning 3/1.

**Planning and projects** – Godburn will vote tonight for Arts Advocacy March 28, 29 & 30 group award to Coffee House Recording Studio recommended and for the individual person should be Lee McQuillan

\* Motion Made by Julie Faraci and seconded by McCoid to approve nominees as stated passed unanimously.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** Tabled until Executive Committee can meet.

## 7. New Business:

McCoid requested though the Chair that the MCA commission meets with city attorney regarding grants and conflicts of interests. Thereafter, the Chair read the conflict of interest policy from the MCA binder. The Chair replied that the city attorney can be an item on the agenda at the next meeting.

The Chair again requested that everyone attend the LGBTQIA+ training.

## 8. Announcements -

Connecticut Magazine had Middletown CT as one of the best cities in CT to retire.

St. Sebastian Festival is May 13-15; PRIDE parade is June 4; 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Car Cruise show is June 15, and Citizens Bank 5K Fun Run July 19; Second annual Juneteenth Festival June 18.

Community Center at the old Woodrow Wilson is asking for public art and public input.

Kathy Ahearn of the library is retiring on Friday.

## 10. Adjournment

\* Motion made by Thornton and seconded by Faraci to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Domeni que Thornton  
Secretary