



MINUTES OF MEETING
Middletown Commission on the Arts
PLANNING AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE
May 16, 2023
5:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting by WebEx

PLANNING AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting

In attendance: Anthony Pandolfe (Chair), David Wolfram, Dominique Thornton, Sari Rosenblatt
Staff: Kisha Michael, Arts Coordinator; Julia Faraci, Admin Sec'y
Absent: Lee Godburn

1. Call to order: meeting started at 5:03 p.m.
2. Public session: no one from the public was present.
3. Secretary assigned: Faraci was assigned to take minutes; in the future Administrative Secretary staff will be taking minutes for all Commission/Committee meetings.
4. Approval of Agenda: No discussion, approved unanimously.
5. Approval of Minutes from April 18, 2023: No discussion, approved unanimously.
6. Remarks from the Chair: The Committee Chair welcomed Sari Rosenblatt to the Commission and to this meeting. The Chair also praised the new mural at the Rec Center that was created by the young participants with Artolution; he has taken his young daughter to see the artwork and enjoys seeing it in his neighborhood.
7. Old Business:
 - A. Year at a Glance: Michael reviewed the Year at a Glance as an effective tool to update progress on action items.
 - i. Poet Laureate / Artist Laureate - Arts Coordinator noted that the Poet Laureate is an established position, and that the Commission should determine the responsibilities of the Laureate and set up programming. Previous Poet Laureates independently planned their own events and programs; participants commented that in particular, Susan Allison was already performing the role of a Poet Laureate before she was appointed.

Arts Administrative Secretary Faraci found that in several towns whose programs she researched, the Library selected the Poet Laureate and administered the programming. Discussion ensued on possible collaboration with Russell Library, and expansion of the scope of the position to include focus on youth literacy. Rosenblatt offered to reach out to the editor at Wesleyan University Press, who may be familiar with poets who live in Middletown.

Discussion continues on an alternative Artist Laureate position. Programming and public engagement is critical as the caliber of the artist's work. Discussion of an honorarium.

Pandolfe offered to draft a position description of the Artist Laureate, using guidelines from research by Faraci, which are attached to these minutes.
 - ii. Music Ambassador – no report.
 - iii. Wadsworth Mansion Open Air Market (August 27th) – no report.
 - iv. Middletown PRIDE (June 3rd) - Michael shared her punch list and reviewed task assignments for the parade and the booth. She is finalizing arrangements with the band, The Funky Dawgz. The big push is for participants; the Arts Office and the Commissioners need to recruit marchers. An email will be sent to past and new marchers.



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The booth will feature two makeup artists and will be decorated with a mural. An easel will be available for people to create self-directed art and haikus.

- v. Arts Advocacy – The timeline of the Awards to Anne-Marie Cannata McEwan and the Middlesex Music Academy will be amended; celebration will be scheduled for around October. Matt LeFebvre, the owner of the Middlesex Music Academy, would like the ceremony to be held at the Academy so that he can open for demonstrations and to feature his teaching staff. Discussion tabled until June Planning and Projects meeting.
8. New Business
- a. Youth Involvement – Arts Coordinator and Commission will use connections in the Middletown Public School system to recruit young people. Middletown High is already involved in Youth in Government, and the Arts Office can recommend students to the Mayor for appointment. The Arts Office will onboard them properly, provide mentorship, and conduct due diligence to steward youth members of the Arts Commission.
 - b. Inspirational grant – Pandolfe mentioned a website that is a resource for grants for artist projects of “risk, growth, and change”. He will forward the information for discussion at the June meeting.
9. Other
- a. Pandolfe will forward proposed dates for future Planning and Projects meetings; most will be on the third Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m.
10. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia O’Halloran Faraci
Admin. Secretary III,
Arts & Culture Office

Att: [Connecticut Poets Laureate Research](#)

cc: Mayor’s Office