



Minutes of the Meeting
Middletown Commission on the Arts
Wednesday, May 26, 2021
7:00 p.m., Middletown, CT
Via WebEx

Present:

Lee Godburn (7:20 PM)
Pam Steele
Joyce Kirkpatrick
Julia Faraci
Charlotte McCoid – 7:30 PM
Barbara Arafah – 7:27 PM
Ed McKeon, Common Council – 7:18 PM
Kate Ten Eyck
David Wolfram
Dominique Thornton – 7:24 PM

Absent:

David Bauer
Ed Ford, Common Council

Also present, Kisha Michael, Staff

1. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order by Pam Steele at 7:04 p.m.
2. Public Session - No one from the public was present.
3. Approval of Minutes – April 28, 2021 Meeting
***The Minutes were unanimously approved, following a motion by L.Godburn seconded by C.McCoid.
4. Approval of Agenda -
***The agenda was unanimously approved, following a motion by Joyce Kirkpatrick, seconded by Lee Godburn
5. Remarks from the Chair –
 - a. Secretary – Joyce Kirkpatrick volunteered to act as secretary for the current meeting.
 - b. Chair, Pamela Steele, welcomed the new commissioners in attendance, Kate Ten Eyck and David Wolfram, (Dominique Thornton was having tech troubles signing in and joined later). Pam expressed great appreciation to them for joining the Commission at a busy time. She noted that the Arts have become very important in Middletown and that the MCA's 50th Anniversary in 2022 will demonstrate this importance and value to the City, citing examples of recent changes, support and promotion for artists, and connecting the arts and the business communities.
6. Old Business
 - a. Staff Report
 - i. Kisha Michael urged all to sign up for the MCA Arts newsletter through the Arts Facebook page.
 - ii. Summer **Sounds** concert series are being with planned for a diverse program with the help of music producer for the shows Trevor Davis Jr. of the Library Studio. The concert location has been moved from South Green to Spear Park, courtesy of the Middletown Housing Authority.
 - iii. **Oddfellows Playhouse Summer Shakespeare for Teens** received a special

grant from Accelerate CT Summer Enrichment Grant for which the Office of the Mayor/Office of the Arts & Culture will be the fiscal agent.

iv. Make **Music Day**, Monday, June 21, 2021 - Kisha is working with the Music Academy on Middletown's participation in this national observance for spontaneous, public celebrations of music open to all.

v. Middletown **Music Ambassador** - Kisha reminded the MCA Music Committee that a new Music Ambassador needs to be selected.

vi. "Sharing" and "Liking" official MCA emails is important, and Commissioners are urged to do so.

b. Committee Reports

i. Music Committee – Barbara Arafah reported that the Covid pandemic had adversely affected music, especially live concerts. She added that there are now performance groups at the Food Friday distributions at the YMCA. Pam Steele interjected appreciation for Barbara's and Joyce's attendance at the Arts Advocacy presentation to Ursel Shaffer.

ii. Planning & Projects Committee –

Lee Godburn reported on the **MCA Arts Advocacy** presentation. He also reported that Julie Shvetz had presented the **Middletown Commission on the Arts Annual Arts Award** (more commonly known as the **MCAAAA**) to Rochelle Roget, with an Honorable Mention presented to Joyce Huan.

Open Air Market (August 29, 2021) at the Wadsworth Mansion. MCA Commissioners are needed to help run the MCA booth. Plans will incorporate whatever Covid precautions are necessary at that time, and will feature 50th Anniversary plans. Please volunteer!

iii. Public Art – Charlotte McCoid reported progress on the Risley sculptures. Richard Bergan of Bergan Woodworking had assessed the damage done and is currently repairing the 6' wooden sculpture. Several welders are being vetted to make minor repairs to the bench and screens, now in the Municipal Building lobby. Kate Ten Eyck, who includes welding in her teaching at Wesleyan, expressed interest in being on the Public Art Committee. (New commissioners will be meeting with the MCA Chair soon to establish their committee memberships.) A short history of the City Art Collection, problems with maintenance of artworks and their secure display were offered for the benefit of the new commissioners. Kisha noted that a balance of \$400.75 remains in the Public Art budget until the City's fiscal year ends on June 30th.

7. New Business –

Pam Steele initiated a 50th Anniversary discussion by outlining some of her thoughts:

The celebration should last all of 2022. The MCA might invite Middletown's many arts groups to create a presentation that would be all or partially underwritten by the MCA. Complete plans of their event would be reviewed by the MCA that would appoint a small committee to work with each group. The MCA June meeting will be devoted to a full discussion of the 50th Anniversary. Barbara Arafah suggested that an exhibit be made presenting 50 years of the MCA's initiatives and accomplishments such as the Middletown Showcase annual festival, the Calendar, the Grants Program, etc. Joyce Kirkpatrick suggested that the MCA's first coordinator, Corinne Gill, be included in the planning. She noted the importance of the 30-year-old City Art Collection now enhancing the Municipal Building. Kate TenEyck suggested that a listing of the arts organizations be created.

ii. Charter Revision

Charlotte McCoid noted that there are changes in the Middletown Charter's revision that will affect the MCA, such as how long one can serve on a commission, and the number of allowable committees/commissions one person can serve on. Ed McKeon, Chair of the Charter Revision

Committee noted that there will be a public hearing in June, and that it is important to talk with members of the Common Council.

8. Announcements -

Middletown Arts Festival will be June 4 from 5-8 PM

Middletown PRIDE Month is in June – see the web page: middletownpride.org

Pam noted that Mayor Florsheim is hoping to appoint a young person to fill the remaining open slot.

9. Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Kirkpatrick, Secretary pro tem

cc: Town Clerk,
Mayor Benjamin D. Florsheim