



Minutes of the Meeting

July 28, 2021

Room 208, Municipal Bldg. Middletown, CT

In attendance

Pam Steele
Lee Godburn
Barbara Arafeh
Julia Faraci
Kate Ten Eyck
David Wolfram
Charlotte McCoid (arr 7:09pm)
Domenique Thornton (arr 7:09pm)
Joyce Kirkpatrick (arr 7:30)

Also in attendance

Kisha Michael
(Arts Coordinator)

Absent

David Bauer
Ed Ford (Common Council)
Ed McKeon (Common Council)
Cheryl Hale (Poet Laureate)

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order 7:08pm.

2. Public Session: No members of the public present, so no public session.

3. Approval of Minutes:

June 23, 2021 Meeting

Godburn moved to approved the minutes of the June 23 meeting, Wolfram seconded.

4. Approval of Agenda -

McCoid moved to approve the agenda as written, Godburn seconded.

5. Remarks from the Chair

Steele noted that it was “wonderful” to see everyone in person. There was no mandate to wear masks at the time of the meeting but the Commissioners were told they were welcome to do so. There will be no MCA meeting in August. The Chair hopes to be “off to running start” planning 50th anniversary celebration in September.

Julia Faraci agreed to take the minutes for this meeting.

6. Old Business

A. Staff Report

Michael reported that the End of Year expense report is available for review online.

1. Poet Laureate

Michael reported that the Poet Laureate, Cheryl Hale is recovering from surgery for a broken hip. Hale offered to step down. There is still a year left on her term. Options are to dismiss the



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Poet Laureate or to allow her term to continue. McCoid proposed, and the Commission agreed, that Hale continue on as Poet Laureate in view of her body of work and the works that she has produced for City events.

Godburn will reach out to Hale in her capacity as Poet Laureate for the 50th anniversary celebration.

2. Fireworks

The Fireworks event will now take place September 4, with a rain date of September 5 (Labor Day weekend).

3. Farmers Market

The Farmers Market hopes to attract needed foot traffic with performers, funded by the MCA, who perform from 11am to 1pm.

4. Children's Circus

The Children's Circus will be on Friday, August 6, at 5pm, with rain date of August 7.

5. Summer Sounds

Spear Park has been proving well suited to the Summer Sounds performances. The next Summer Sounds concert will be Carribean Vibe Steel Drum Band on Thursday, August 5.

6. Fall Grants Deadline

Michael noted that the Fall grants deadline is September 15. One application has been received, and others are starting to make their way into the Arts Office. She encouraged the Commission to reach out to share information about applying with new grantees.

7. Arts Summer Intern

The Arts Coordinator commented that her intern through the youth summer work program assisted her in completing a number of projects this summer. Student worker Julia Martinez, a rising senior at MHS, worked on digitally preserving historical MCA items and binding archival works.

Jewel Lucien, an MCA grantee, showed her classes' art work at the Juneteenth Festival. Her work was described by McCoid as "eloquent and emotional." Lucien has graduated from MHS and is attending college this fall.

8. Amistad



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Mayor Florsheim's office received a call from the Amistad asking for the City to host the ship. The Middletown Historical Society will coordinate with the Amistad for its visit in October. The ship will dock for a day in Middletown, where visitors will be able to tour the ship before it continues on its voyage. The Historical Society will be holding the 3rd annual port marker ceremony on this same date at the docking location with the ship. The Arts Coordinator will report further at the September meeting.

B. Committee Reports

1. Nominating Committee

Faraci reported on the Nominating Committee's meeting on June 23. The current Chair and Vice Chair agreed to continue to serve. Dominique Thornton was approached to serve as Secretary.

The Nominating Committee is looking for a candidate to fill the remaining vacant commissioner position. Mayor Florsheim has asked for the nomination of a younger person in the Republican party.

2. Music Committee

Arafeh noted the Summer Sound concerts in Spear Park have been well received. She noted that the sound at the market needs improvement.

The Music Subcommittee will meet again around August 9 or 10 to discuss nominations for the Music Ambassador.

Arafeh will send announcements of upcoming meetings to the Commissioners.

3. Planning and Projects

a. MCAAAA

Godburn returned 2020 MCAAAA art to Middletown High, and picked up one of the 2021 art pieces. He will make arrangements to pick up the other piece. Michael will write notes on the artists.

b. 50th Anniversary

Discussion of publicity and activities planned to announce the upcoming 50th anniversary of the MCA. Publicity will start at the Open Air Market.

c. Open Air Market – August 29, 2021

Children's activity - Children will be given a sealed bag with a Mardi Gras type mask project to take home, with printed material about arts organizations in Middletown.



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The Arts Coordinator will be available at the Open Air Market to answer questions about grants and applications.

4. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee solicits input on the planning of the celebration of the MCA's 50th anniversary, "Middletown Celebrates Supporting the Arts for 50 Years". The anniversary will run from January 2022 to January 2023, with activities directed toward encouraging conversation, connecting with new artists, and engaging youth. The Middletown community will be asked "What's Your Art?" and given the opportunity to share through media of all types. Partnerships with arts organizations and the business community will be encouraged.

7. New Business

Faraci stated that at their July 23 meeting, the Nominating Committee nominated the slate of Pamela Steele, Lee Godburn, and Dominique Thornton, for the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary, respectively.

McCoid moved to accept the nominations of Steele and Godburn to continue in their positions as proposed by the Nominating Committee. Faraci moved to accept the nomination of Dominique Thornton for the position of Secretary. Kirkpatrick seconded. No discussion, passed unanimously.

The new Commissioners, Ten Eyck, Thornton, and Wolfram, were asked to join at least one committee. Michaels will distribute Committee Assignments list.

Godburn proposed that the Commission address what we can do to encourage young people in the arts, and what the Commission can do to promote the many different forms of art.

8. Announcements

Some of the Commissioners attended the beginning of Connecticut Ballet's performance at the "magnificent backdrop" of the Wadsworth Mansion tonight. The diverse program, which included modern, ballet, and African dance, was presented by director Brett Raphael and enjoyed by an audience of over 500 people, including many children.

9. Adjournment

Godburn made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Julia Faraci
Commissioner