



# Minutes of the Meeting

October 27, 2021

Room 208, Municipal Bldg. Middletown, CT

In person Meeting

## In attendance

Pam Steele  
Lee Godburn  
Barbara Arafeh  
Julia Faraci  
Kate Ten Eyck  
Charlotte McCoid  
Domenique Thornton  
David Wolfram

## Also in attendance

## Absent

Joyce Kirkpatrick  
Ed McKeon (Common Council)  
Ed Ford (Common Council)  
Cheryl Hale (Poet Laureate)  
Kisha Michael  
(Arts Coordinator)

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order 7:07 PM

**2. Public Session:** None

### 3. Approval of Minutes:

September 22, 2021 Meeting

\* Motion made Godburn and seconded by McCoid to approve minutes. No discussion, passed unanimously.

### 4. Approval of Agenda -

\* Motion made by McCoid and seconded by Faraci to approve the agenda as written. No discussion, passed unanimously.

### 5. Remarks from the Chair

The Chair began by reminding the MCA that they are an appointed City of Middletown Commission and that we collectively represent the City of Middletown. Our Assistant General Counsel had come before us in the public session at the last meeting to request our support for the combined LGBTQIA+ and Middletown Pride project whose concept was to have a Pride month event at city hall featuring LGBTQIA+ artists for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MCA and was met with insensitive commentary from certain commissioners. The project entitled: "City Hall Take Over" was approved by the commission as a whole in unanimous support but not before it was marred by demeaning comments made from certain members for which the presenter felt personally insulted and disrespected to such a degree that he officially complained to the Mayor's office the next morning for the homophobic and transphobic statements made during that meeting.

The Mayor was justifiably upset and wrote a letter to the Chair of the MCA which she read into the record relative to those offensive remarks and emphasized that Middletown Pride is as much a part of the City of Middletown as the MCA and deserving of the same respect. Fortunately the Chair had



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already called the Assistant General Counsel and left a message on his phone that apologized on behalf of the MCA which was accepted. The Chair reminded all commissioners that we have to conduct ourselves with sensitivity and respect to all parties because we are representatives of the City and this type of commentary is never acceptable.

\* A motion was made by Ten Eyck and Seconded by Godburn to draft a sincere letter of apology which passed unanimously. The Chair requested the Secretary draft the letter as soon as possible.

The Chair also reported that she was grateful to the Mayor that he allowed her to address this issue with the MCA before sending his letter to them.

The Chair then went on to make remarks about the need for the Public Arts Committee to come up with projects for the public not simply add to its city art collection. There is \$1,775.32 in the public arts line item that has not been spent and it is time to come up with new projects, she declared. Art needs to be retired or recycled and they should to come up with new ideas for public art. Businesses in the downtown are clamoring for more art and have started a project to paint the sides of at least six (6) buildings to beautify downtown. She requested that the Public Arts subcommittee come up with new ideas by next month.

**6. Old Business** – No report

**7. Announcements** – Arts Advocacy Awards were mentioned with enthusiasm. The Mood Studios in the Trolley Barn will open at 725 North Main Street. All agreed that we must put action behind the talk and cultivate young artists.

**8. Adjournment**

\* Motion made by Commissioner Godburn to adjourn and Commissioner Wolfram seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Domenique Thornton  
Secretary