



Minutes of Meeting

October 28, 2020, 7:00 pm

Middletown, CT

Via WebEx

Present:

Pamela Steel, Chair

Charlotte McCoid

Barbara Arafeh (arr 7:11 pm)

David Bauer (arr 7:14 pm)

Julia Faraci

Lee Godburn, Vice Chair

Joyce Kirkpatrick

Crystal Laffan

Also present:

Kisha Michael, Staff

Kerry Kincy, Free Center

Richard Hollant, Free Center (arr 7:21 pm)

Absent:

John Basinger

Ed McKeon, Common Council

Cheryl Hale, Poet Laureate

Ed Ford Jr., Common Councilman

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 7:03pm.

2. Public Session

Kerry Kincy spoke about the successful opening of Free Center. The OPENWALL exhibition includes work created by selected local artists since March. Free Center Middletown also supports a Men's Group, poet Keith Davis, Yoga, and other activities. She is happy with the community's support.

3. Minutes

a. September 23, 2020

Kirkpatrick moved to approve the minutes, McCoid seconded, approved unanimously.

4. Approval of Agenda

McCoid moved to approve the agenda, Godburn seconded, approved unanimously.

5. Remarks from the Chair

Steele met recently with Mayor Florsheim. She noted that Committees should meet at least every two months. The Arts Commission would be strengthened by the involvement of younger artists.

6. Old Business

a. Committee assignments

Nominating: Bauer, Faraci, Laffan

Public Art: Bauer, Kirkpatrick, McCoid

Poet Laureate: Basinger, Faraci, Godburn, Laffan

Grants Review: Godburn, Kirkpatrick, McCoid

Music: Arafeh (chair), Basinger, Faraci

Planning and Projects: all Commissioners

Bylaws review: will fall under Executive Committee

Faraci asked that Committees send invitations to all Commissioners. Godburn noted that all meetings are open to the public.

b. Staff report

Michael, Arts Coordinator reported that she performed an inventory of the Arts Office in order to assess its activities and any assistance needed. The list is intended to be a work in progress. Action items include offering professional development to build business skills to artists in the community, compiling a database of Middletown artists, and matching businesses with artists for creative relationships and partnerships. She asked that Commissioners share names of artists with her.

Godburn suggested that an ad hoc subcommittee of the Planning and Projects Committee follow up. He also suggested coordination with the Community Foundation of Middlesex County (CFMC).

Michael also reported that she has been in contact with the developer involved with the former Tesoro space, who is very interested in working with the arts community. She has provided him with a list of arts organizations that can assist him with leads. Commissioner suggestions included an exhibition or pop-up shop during the holiday season.

7. Committee Reports

a. Executive Committee – no report

b. Public Art Committee – McCoid reported that the artist creating the sculptures for Palmer Field currently has the project on hold, pending further research.

c. Nominating Committee – With the recent resignation of Commissioner Day, the Secretary position is now vacant. Godburn proposed Laffan for the spot.

Two Commissioner positions are vacant. Steele proposed that Commissioners be recruited from the business community; this would “add value” in connecting businesses and artists, as well as helping to plan professional development events.

Each Committee would select its own Chair. Godburn offered to be a resource to Committees.

d. Planning and Projects Committee – no report

e. Music Committee - Arafah reported that she attended the Shoreline Arts Alliance webinar “Reopening CT Arts”. Panelists from Yale University discussed rooms for musical performance during the pandemic, offering new information about air purifiers and ventilation. The Association of Performing Arts Professionals, among other organizations, is involved in trying to find ways to keep the arts going.

Arafah said that schools are turning their focus to non-performance fields such as songwriting and music theory. She asked that Michael schedule a meeting with the representatives of the music departments of Middletown High School and Wesleyan, and with the Middletown Historical Society.

Arafah noted that some events that had been scheduled have been cancelled.

f. Public Relations Committee – no report

g. Poet Laureate Committee – no report. The Arts Coordinator is expecting information from the Poet Laureate about her activities.

8. New Business

a. PSG Grant Recommendations

Michael noted that Summer Theatre of New Canaan withdrew their application, with plans to reapply at a later date.

Godburn moved to accept the recommendations of the Grant Panel as written, less the award for the Summer Theatre of New Canaan. Seconded by Laffan, approved unanimously.

Applicant	Project Title	Award Amount
-Jewel Lucien & Youth Sponsor	Arts Enrichment Program	\$1,200
-Mark Meyering	Middletown March for Science	\$7,000
-Oddfellows Playhouse	Jr. Repertory Winter Production	\$2,500
-ARTFARM	"Where Are We Now" Production	\$5,000
-Abigail Horton	"Dead End" Production	\$5,900
-The Buttonwood Tree	Youth Photo Contest	\$1,000
	Total	<u>\$22,600</u>

9. Announcements

Bauer suggested that the Commission look for business involvement in an event similar to Open Studios Hartford. Faraci suggested that MCA solicit venues including Free Center and the former Tesoro space. Kincy and Faraci commented that the virtual production of The American Dream benefits from the collaboration between Heartbeat Ensemble, Free Center Hartford, TheaterWorks, and many Hartford arts organizations.

Kirkpatrick announced the Greater Middletown Chorale's virtual performance of "Messiah" will take place on December 8.

Arts Coordinator Michael represented the City Arts Office at the Halloween Candy Cruise last weekend, handing out treats with her family last weekend.

10. Adjournment

Godburn moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Steele. Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted
Julia Faraci, Commissioner