



Minutes of the Meeting

November 17, 2021

Room 208, Municipal Bldg. Middletown, CT

Hybrid Meeting

In attendance

Pam Steele
Joyce Kirkpatrick
Barbara Arafeh
Julia Faraci
Kate Ten Eyck
Charlotte McCoid
Domenique Thornton
David Wolfram

Also in attendance

Kisha Michael
(Arts Coordinator)

Absent

Lee Godburn
Ed McKeon (Common Council)
Ed Ford (Common Council)
Cheryl Hale (Poet Laureate)

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM

2. Public Session:

Jennifer Alexander Director of Kid City and Chair of the Downtown Business District reported on a meeting with Sen. Matt Lesser that would create liveliness on the street and give a an opportunity and help businesses recover from the Pandemic. Sen. Lesser received funding through the state budget process to create liveliness on the street through public art activities. Through Sen. Matt Lesser's office, the Downtown Business District had received a grant to give job opportunities for artists through the Economic and Community Development Commission Office of the Arts. Liz Shapiro oversees those projects. Over the next two years, we will put together projects. One has been completed next to Schlien's. A Pierre Silvain was installed next to It's Only Natural Restaurant and 3 more art installations will be commissioned. The owner of the building at 420 Main Street, Dominic DeMartino, was also interested in doing more art installations on buildings that he owns such as the Camp building where the Sicily Restaurant is located. A creative team from Kid City will create an imaginary business. The 3rd project will be the Woolworth building. They are also addressing empty store fronts with imaginary window fronts. The Woolworth building will have Artists for World Peace display on Dec. 4 and 5. December is Holiday on Main Street activities so there will be people downtown and the following weekend it will be used as a vendor fair that have signed up to come downtown. Then after that the space will be used for a couple of months by artist Pat Owens for her grant project who needed space. She developed marine animals that are impacted by plastic waste projects. Her next project is to build a 60 foot whale which will be a participatory event mid- Dec. and Jan. We have had discussions with the historical society about historical events and spoke to the Buttonwood Tree about an artist who would like to make origami butterflies in the spring. There are a few other ideas a young people's group to make an imaginary pet store with imaginary creatures. There are a lot of ideas and I wanted MCA to know. We are hopeful to seek out other local arties to make walking up and down the street and making it an amazing experience. Grant was \$100,000 from the state but they have to work with the state to be sure the projects are appropriate.



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3. Approval of Minutes:

October 22, 2021 Meeting

* Motion made by McCoid and seconded by Arafeh to approve minutes. Kirkpatrick abstained. No discussion, passed unanimously.

4. Approval of Agenda -

* Motion made by Kirkpatrick seconded by Wolfram to approve the agenda as written. No discussion, passed unanimously.

5. Remarks from the Chair

The Chair began with a discussion of the 50th Anniversary in 2022. We are speaking to other organizations about ideas for the year coming up and moving forward with that. We are excited about the year coming up and the level of activities. We are to finalize the activities in January and begin certain things.

6. Old Business –

A. The year 2022 Meeting schedule: MCA meets on the 4th Wed of each month except Nov. and Holiday. 2/23; 3/23; 4/27; 5/25; 6/22; 7/27; 8/24; 9/28; 10/26; 11/16 and 12/14/2022 and 1/25/2023. All conducted in room 208 unless otherwise indicated. August meeting is announced and then canceled.

* Motion made by Kirkpatrick seconded by Faraci to accept the meeting schedule as written. No discussion, passed unanimously.

B. Michael presented a resolution which is due to council clerk on 11/22 of this month for council meeting on 12/6 for the recommendation that went to the Mayor and legal counsel was approved by him the grant application of Tre Davis be rescinded because the event had tickets sold instead of being a free event; matching amount was changed from \$1,500 to \$1,000; they changed the date and advertised it prior to common council approval; contract was not executed and the certificate of insurance not obtained. He was supposed to have submitted changes in writing to the Commission so we can discuss and vote on them but he did not do that which is a requirement in the grant. All the requirements are stated in the application guidelines. He will be encouraged to apply for January grant.



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C. Committee Reports

Public Arts reported on the John Risley restoration the bench to be remounted and painted at the cost of \$325.00 by Richard Bergen. We are waiting for a green light if the price goes higher if other repairs need to be made.

* Motion made by Kirkpatrick and seconded by Faraci to approve the \$325 estimate and to go as high as \$900 if other needed repairs are found. No discussion, passed unanimously.

B. Committee Reports

Public Arts:

McCoid discussed the entrances to our city need to be brightened and asked the commission to think about the entrances. The back of the buildings that are part of Mellili Plaza could be used as a canvas and is visible from the highway and a heavy traffic but it is the first thing you see. Michael discussed the art that could be done at that location. Committee discussed signs crossing over to the bridge but much of it is state owned property, however, with a state grant for art perhaps there would be some synergy to allow us to put art on state property. The committee discussed possible location of new public art projects.

Music:

Arafeh was pleased to report that this week we are having 3 different live performances from the Chorale, the Opera and the Vocal Chords. Then the subcommittee discussed the Music Ambassador and the Music Advocate. It was decided that Mike Arafeh would be the music ambassador this year and Carolyn Halstead next year. Arafeh suggested that the 50th Anniversary end with a First Night event for our 50th Anniversary with a First Night 2023. The chair commented that we have a whole year to end our year with a New Year's Eve event.

* Motion made by Thornton and seconded by Kirkpatrick to approve the Music Ambassador of Michael Arafeh. No discussion, passed unanimously.

7. New Business:

A. The municipal grant award ordinance Section 44-11 of the City of Middletown Municipal Code requires a one to one match of all grants requiring the expenditure of city funds. This procedure discourages young and or new artists to apply because of the lack of resources to match. Discussion was favorable to amend the ordinance to make an exception from the matching fund requirement for an individual artist.

- Motion made by Thornton and seconded by Kirkpatrick to amend the ordinance of grants up to \$3,000.



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B. Artolution, an organization who are global healers in art and make large public art murals, made a proposal for a public art project with the objective and purpose to facilitate a community based public arts installation in the City of Middletown to promote social inclusion and cohesion across demographics through community dialogue and participatory art-making. Michael recommended that this program be included in the city budget next year under the Kids Arts Programs as an additional summer arts program to engage city youth and create a large public art installation aimed at youth who may age out of the Children's Circus usually between ages 13 - 16. Michael, Ten Eyck and another member of the executive committee to investigate further. Michael requested questions to be asked of the group.

8. Announcements

Arafeh passed out the Puccini's La Boheme Opera poster announcement for Nov. 20, 2021 at 7:30 PM

Michael announced that Fox 61 Friday at 10:40 AM does a feature called Creative Futures reached out to Michael and requested Steven Allison and other artists in our city. They interviewed him. Kerry Kincy and Dick Wheeler will also be interviewed. Faraci mentioned that it can also can been seen on the FOX 61 Facebook page.

9. Adjournment

* Motion made by Faraci to adjourn and Ten Eyck seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Domenique Thornton
Secretary