



## Minutes of the Meeting

May 22, 2019, 7pm  
Room 208, 245 deKoven Drive, Municipal Building  
Middletown, CT

### Present

Cassandra Day, Chair  
Charlotte McCoid, Vice Chair  
Lee Godburn  
Joyce Kirkpatrick  
Crystal Laffan  
Pamela Steele  
John Basinger (arr 7:32pm)  
Julia Faraci, Secretary (arr 7:34pm)

### Also Present

Sebastian Guiliano  
Council Member  
Robert Santangelo  
Council Member  
Kisha Michael, Arts Commissioner

### Absent

Barbara Arafah  
David Bauer  
Franca Biales  
Cheryl Hale (Poet Laureate)

1. Call to Order – Chair Day called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
2. Public Session – No members of the public in attendance. Ms. Lauryn Wendus of Fred Astaire Dance Studio had been invited to the MCA meeting but was unable to attend; she was seeking guidance on applying to REGI grants to help bring cultural dance to underserved communities and youth within the Middletown area, as well as to individuals with disabilities.
3. Minutes
  - a. April 24, 2019  
Changes to the April meeting minutes were passed around to the Commissioners to review. Giuliano moved to accept the changes and approve the minutes as revised; seconded by McCoid. Day, McCoid, Godburn, Kirkpatrick, Laffan, Steele, Giuliano voted aye, with Santangelo abstaining; motion passed.
4. Approval of Agenda  
Godburn moved to approve the agenda as published, seconded by Kirkpatrick. Day, McCoid, Godburn, Kirkpatrick, Laffan, Steele, Giuliano voted aye, with Santangelo abstaining; motion passed.
5. Remarks from the Chair  
Discussion of the Special Meeting on May 17 concerning MCA Grant Recommendations. Giuliano moved to accept the Special Meeting minutes as written, seconded by Steele. Day, McCoid, Godburn, Kirkpatrick, Laffan, Steele, Giuliano voted aye, with Santangelo abstaining; motion passed.  
Godburn noted Arts money was returned to the General Fund, not because there was no need for Arts funding, or mismanagement of the grants, but because of the disruption in the process caused by the departure of Stephan Allison from the position of Arts Coordinator and the transition of Kisha Michael into the position. Godburn asked to be on record that he was appealing to the Common Council that the Arts grants funds going back to the General Fund at this time find their way back to arts.
6. Old Business
  - a. Budget Report  
All expenditures for the year have been posted.
  - b. Program Update
    - i. Arts Calendar – Michael urged Commissioners to connect to the Arts Office Facebook page, and to “like” and “share” events.

New tabs have been added to the City Arts webpage to include the Fireworks Festival, Summer Sounds, and other events.

ii. Grants

Grants were addressed in the Special Meeting on May 17; see notes under Item 5, "Remarks from the Chair", above.

iii. Fireworks Festival / Summer Sounds

a. Fireworks Festival

Vendor Food License revenue totals \$2840.

Michael asked how a food stipend requested by the musicians involved in the Festival might be funded. Each of the 21 musicians will be given a \$10 food voucher. In the future, meal provisions should be written into the musicians' contracts.

b. Summer Sounds

Summer Sounds will be held at the River. The Arts Coordinator is working on logistics. No report.

iv. Kids Arts 2019

Enrollment in Kids Arts is continuing. Enrollment for Circus is 91 out of 130 limit for the core group, and the Teeny Tiny Troupe is full at 30. First day of camp is July 1.

7. Committee Reports

a. Executive Committee – No Report

b. Public Art Committee

i. MCAAAA Award

Two Awards, one for two-dimensional art (painting/drawing) and the other for three-dimensional art (sculpture) were presented at Middletown High School on May 22, as were two honorable mentions.

Discussion of an award honoring Evan Boyd Knoll, the late young slam poet; his family may be organizing such an award.

ii. Palmer Field Sculpture – No report.

iii. Mislabeled painting – City Art Collection

Efforts made to find the correct name of the artist of a self-portrait previously labeled "Malia Timmerman" have run into dead ends. The portrait will be taken down from the walls of the Senior Center and not re-hung there. The space will need to be filled.

iv. "Guadalcanal" Raising of the Flag artwork

The Cubeta piece recently re-homed at the Military Museum from the City Art Collection was erroneously labeled "Guadalcanal"; it should be "Iwo Jima". No report.

c. Nominating Committee – Slate of Officers must be submitted for June meeting for July vote.

d. Planning and Projects –

i. Open Air Market is August 25. The new Executive Director of Wadsworth Mansion, Megan Bush, was brought into the loop by the previous Executive Director.

e. Music Committee –

Members Dominique Thornton, Anne-Marie Cannata McEwen and Barbara Arafah met in May. No Report

f. Public Relations Committee – No Report

- g. Poet Laureate Committee – No report

## 8. New Business

- a. Proposed new acquisition for City Art Collection

Discussion of painting by Adis Halilovic, offered by the artist to the City. Halilovic completed the work, representing themes of anxiety and mental illness, in fulfillment of his Wesleyan degree. The painting is quite large and because of the media used, would be difficult to maintain. Santangelo suggested that the Commission assist in making contact with CVH, which would be a powerful and appropriate venue for this work, in view of its theme.

- b. Grants Process and Revisions - The Arts Coordinator said that the forms are outdated and must be revised before the June Commission meeting; she will start preparing the forms. Revisions to procedure must be completed by September. Publicity should start as soon as possible so that citizens understand the grants process. Applicants should discuss matching funds with the Arts Coordinator before applying, otherwise the funding could be held up for matching grant documentation.

- c. Meeting of Middletown's Plan of Conservation and Development

Faraci reported participants in the April 27 meeting suggested some desired projects, including an arts center and a youth center. Attendees also expressed interest in public art throughout the City, extending past the North End. Discussion of the possibility of sculpture on Main Street.

## 9. Announcements

- a. Day of Tears play at First Church – On May 18, First Church of Christ hosted a performance of “Day of Tears”, based on Julius Lester’s novel about the largest slave auction in American history, told from the point of view of slaves on the auction block and their loved ones. The performance was sponsored by the NAACP.

In March, First Church had also hosted a program a program called “Aretha, Theresa & Me” with vocalist Linda Ransom recreating the music of Aretha Franklin with Hartford jazz singer Theresa Wright.

- b. New artwork for City Collection – Discussion of outlook for purchasing new artwork. Procedure is in bylaws.
- c. Suggestion for light art in South Church windows – Basinger suggested that the large windows of South Church would be an ideal setting for an art installation featuring light. Faraci said that past vice chairman Marc Pettersen of MAC650 created such an installation in the tunnel to the river several years ago and that he would be a good contact.
- d. Make Music Day, Friday, June 21 – The Arts Office has yard signs for host locations.

## 10. Adjournment

Giuliano moved that the meeting be adjourned, McCoid seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Julia Faraci  
Secretary  
Middletown Commission on the Arts

cc: Town Clerk  
Mayor Daniel T. Drew