



## Draft Minutes of the Meeting

Wednesday, April 26, 2023, 7:00 PM

Room 208, Municipal Bldg.

245 deKoven Drive, Middletown, CT

Hybrid – To Be Held Both In-Person and By WebEx

### In attendance

Lee Godburn, Chair  
Pam Steele, Vice Chair  
David Wolfram  
Charlotte McCoid  
Kate Ten Eyck  
Sandra Russo-Driska

### Also in attendance

Kisha Michael  
(Arts Coordinator)  
Julia Faraci (Admin. Secy)  
Ed McKeon, Common Council

### Absent

Mike Marino, Common Council

### In attendance via Webex:

Domenique Thornton, Secy.  
Anthony Pandolfe

**1. Call to Order:** Meeting called to order by the Chair at 7:00 PM.

**2. Public Session:** no members of the public were in attendance.

**3. Approval of Minutes:** March 22, 2023 Meeting

- Motion to approve Minutes by Steele, seconded by Russo-Driska, passed unanimously with no discussion.

**4. Approval of Agenda:**

- Motion to approve Agenda by Steele, seconded by McCoid, passed unanimously with no discussion.

**5. Remarks from the Chair**

Godburn thanked the Commission for their work. His last meeting is next month. In July 2023, he will join the Design Review & Preservation Board.

**6. Old Business –**

#### A. Staff Report

**Budget** – Arts Coordinator reported the checking account balance of \$19,186.01.

**Common Council Budget Meeting** – At the Budget Meeting, the Common Council complimented the MCA on their process supporting the stewardship of funds.

**Kids Arts** – Registration has reached 30-place capacity for Teeny Tiny; 80 kids are signed up for the Core Troupe.

**Meeting Space Offered to City** – The Church of the Holy Trinity has some space available and has offered it to the City for use for organizations or activities. Hector Pinero is the contact. Ten Eyck said that she could use space to collect and work with tiles for the Riverfront project. The Arts Coordinator will forward the email from Holy Trinity and keep the space in mind for new / upcoming projects.

**Arts Advocacy Celebration** – The Buttonwood Tree is having a celebration for their former director Anne-Marie Cannata McEwan on May 21. As she has been selected by the MCA for the Arts Advocacy Award, the Commission had a choice to join in the celebration or plan their celebration separately. The Commission agreed that more time was needed to plan the MCA's celebration so that it could properly honor both Arts Advocacy Awardees, McEwan and the Middlesex Music Academy. As McEwan has been



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travelling, the Arts Office will reach out to her to plan Arts Advocacy event for Fall 2023, keeping in mind that there is no Commission meeting planned in August.

### B. Committee reports

#### i. Planning and Projects

- a. **PRIDE** – Discussion of plans for the MCA booth. Funds allocated for Funky Dawgz band. Godburn will arrange for decoration of a truck, supply salon chairs and reach out to drag makeup artists; he will give a supply list to the Arts Coordinator. Wolfram will take photos.
- b. **Artist Laureate** – Arts Coordinator recommended more discussion of the Laureate position. Research by the Arts Administrative Staff indicates that in some towns, the Poet Laureate position is managed by the town library. Stressing a “community of readers and writers”, the Arts Coordinator advocated institution of a “Literacy Laureate”. Vice Chair Steele emphasized the “importance of young people” in considering this role, noting that youth are “not getting the tools they need” for self-expression. This item will be tabled for further discussion at a later Planning and Projects meeting.

#### ii. Public Art

- a. **City Art Collection** – Flexible hanging equipment being installed on City Hall walls will facilitate future art placement.
- b. **Purchase of digital art from artist Kat Owens** – The Committee proposed purchase of digital copies of two of Owens’ recycling-themed creations for \$200 each. The actual physical works themselves are fragile, subject to degradation, and difficult to maintain. The images will be printed and framed. The Arts Coordinator has drafted a contract. Godwin moved that the MCA approve \$400.00 to purchase 2 digital images from Kat Owens. Seconded by Ten Eyck, passed unanimously.
- c. **MCAAAA** – Commissioners Ten Eyck and McCoid will visit the Senior Art Show at Middletown High School to view the artwork and select the awardee(s) of the MCAAAA; they will also return the 2022 art. Commissioners of the MCA will attend the MHS awards ceremony to bestow the prize. The Arts Office has prepared a contract for the City’s receipt and display of the artwork.

#### iii. Nominating Committee

- a. **Commissioner recruitment** - The Arts Office’s list of proposed candidates for the Arts Commission has been forwarded to the Mayor’s office and to Common Council. The Arts Office will review and vet the candidates before they are nominated. The Arts Coordinator has corresponded with some of the candidates. She is awaiting a response from one, and is planning an onboarding process. The Nominating Committee will meet again on May 11 at 10:00 a.m.

### 7. New Business

- i. **Amendment to § 44-11. Federal, state or other grants** – Discussion of amendment exempting grant recipients from matching requirements when applying as an individual under certain



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circumstances. Commissioners acknowledged the value of artist services as well as their materials. Faraci suggested language should read “grant amount of \$2,999.00 or less” instead of “grant amount of less than \$2,999.00”. Ten Eyck moved to accept Amendment with correction, Steele seconded, motion passed unanimously.

ii. **Kids Arts Fees** – tabled.

iii. **PRIDE Sponsorship** - Booth Sponsorship fee of \$2,500.00 from Arts checking account. \$900.00 for makeup artists, and \$2000.00 for Funky Dawgz Brass band will be expended the Arts Office’s Special Projects line. And \$300.00 for makeup will be expended from the MCA checking account. Russo-Driska moved that the Commission approve \$5500.00 in spending for the PRIDE event, Steele seconded, approved unanimously.

iv. **MCAAAA Award, Amount** – Discussion of the MCAAAA award description; suggestion that the Mayor should be a judge. Commission agreed that the amount of the award should be increased. Steele moved that the Commission increase the MCAAAA to \$500.00 for one student or split between two students. McCoid seconded, approved unanimously.

### 8. Announcements

The Arts Coordinator announced that Americans for the Arts is posting many positions. She also noted that Goodspeed Opera House has posted a lot of jobs.

Godburn is in contact with an artist who has staged outdoor Shakespeare Steele in the past, and knows of other companies who could be approached.

Ten Eyck recommended the Senior Art Exhibitions at the Zilkha Gallery till the end of April.

“Oceanic Journey” and “Ocean Filibuster” will be presented at the Center for the Arts in the coming week.

### 9. Adjournment

Russo-Driska moved to adjourn, Steele seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Julia Faraci  
Admin. Secretary III,  
Arts & Culture Office