



Meeting Minutes – September 28, 2016

Arts & Crafts Room, Community/Senior Center, 61 Durant Terrace

Present

Franca Biales (Vice chair)
Julia Faraci (Secretary)
Barbara Arafteh
Cassandra Day
Jay Hoggard
Joyce Kirkpatrick
Charlotte McCoid (arrived 7:12pm)

Also Present

Stephan Allison, Arts Coordinator

Absent

Lee Godburn
Sebastian Giuliano
Robert Santangelo
Susan Allison, Poet Laureate

Call to Order

Franca Biales, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:07pm in the Arts and Crafts Room at the Middletown Senior/Community Center, 61 Durant Street, Middletown.

Public Session – no members of the public present.

Minutes

July 27, 2016 –

Motion by Day to revise Minutes to reflect that Fran Ganguli is no longer serving on MCA, seconded by Faraci, carried unanimously.

Motion by Day to approve Minutes as amended, seconded by Faraci, carried unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Kirkpatrick to approve agenda, seconded by Day, carried unanimously.

Remarks from the Chair

Acting Chair Biales spoke about the Vietnam Veterans memorial that was unveiled in a beautiful and moving ceremony on September 27. Day's photos of the event will be in the Middletown Press, and on Mayor Drew's Facebook page. Biales noted that the support of the Middletown Commission on the Arts was acknowledged at the ceremony by artist David Schulz and Councilman Santangelo.

Old Business

Budget Report – Arts Coordinator Allison distributed to the commissioners and reviewed. Possible cost saving measures were discussed.

Hoggard proposed raising the fees of the musicians who play for Summer Sounds. The current rate was set years ago to reflect the musician's scale at that time; however, it no longer reflects a fair musician's pay rate. The Music Committee will review and present proposals by December.

Program Update

- i) Arts Stakeholders Group - nothing to report
- ii) Kids Arts update – The first full day program worked well and was fully attended. A note of appreciation from Kristen Palmer of Oddfellows and a program from NEAR, Inc.'s Creative Arts Workshops finale were circulated. Next year the program will start on June 26 and end on July 29.
- iii) Fireworks Festival/Summer Sounds update – The fireworks were praised by viewers, many of whom came to Middletown from towns that did not have fireworks this year. Summer Sounds continues to grow in audience size, also attracting visitors from out of town.
- iv) Poet Laureate – The Coordinator noted that Susan Allison's health has improved. She continues to meet visitors at her monthly poetry event on the last Thursday of the month from 10am to 2pm at Brewbakers North, and is working on her third book. The commissioners expressed their pleasure at her improved health, and asked that the Commission be notified of her upcoming engagements.
- v) Municipal Building update – none
- vi) Facebook/Wordpress – Stephan Allison has created a mockup and Day is working on photos; Allison to be presenting to the City. Discussion of how best to link arts calendar from City website. A Commission subcommittee will be created next month.

Review changing focus for awarding grants – Executive Committee to schedule meeting before grants panel to discuss further. Arts groups have been advised that without matching funds, grants must go through Common Council.

Other – none

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – no report.

Public Art Committee – no report. The Committee commented that more committee members are needed to plan for ArtWalk and other Public Art activities.

Nominating Committee – It was suggested that the Nominating Committee meet to address the three vacancies on the Commission. Committees will be reassigned next month.

Planning and Projects Committee

i) Open Air Market – Some MCA-supported organizations shared their literature and assisted in staffing the Commission booth; however more organizations should be taking advantage of the excellent opportunity to publicize their activities by leaving handouts and being present in the Commission booth. Most Middletown residents already had copies of the MCA Arts Calendar.

People continue to be attracted to the mask-making activity offered for the children. Biales suggested craft activities for adults, such as tile painting or making seaglass jewelry.

ii) Music Committee – Arafah nominated jazz artist Kitty Kathryn to be the next Middletown Music Ambassador.

New Business

Grant panel selection for Category 2 and 3 - Day, Biales, and Faraci volunteered to serve on the Grants panel, with McCoid as alternate. A survey will be used to select a date in the second or third week in October.

Changes to meeting dates – The December 21 Commission meeting date may be changed; to be discussed in November. Budget must be completed by end of the year.

Other

Makerspace – Faraci noted the surge in creation of makerspaces and other creative spaces throughout Connecticut, and suggesting a makerspace in Middletown would be a great resource to the creative community. Since some libraries have created makerspaces, the Commission suggested contact with Rolande Duprey of Russell Library.

Author event – Faraci noted “Literary Libations” was a successful and well-attended author event that was a fundraiser for the New Britain Library. Russell Library had an author display in the recent past and contact with Rolande Duprey at Russell Library was suggested.

Miscellaneous

Announcements

Gary and Kyle O’Neill are having an artist talk about their joint exhibit “Comforts of our Past” at Wesleyan Potters at 6pm on September 30.

Magic Food Bus opened on September 21. The food pantry for the Middlesex Community College community received a grant from the Commission.

“Red Moon Gala” on October 1 will benefit the students of Middlesex Community College.

Greater Middletown Concert Association is presenting “The Sicilian Tenors” on October 22. Their Opera Series will feature “Eugene Onegun” on November 13 and “Tosca” in May.

The Greater Middletown Chorale is celebrating its 40th anniversary year, having started in 1977 with a \$250 grant from the MCA. The Chorale will present five concerts and a fundraiser this year.

The Chorale’s “Letter from Italy”, which won a New England Emmy, will be performed at Mortenson Hall in Hartford on May 4, 2017.

Other – Arafah encouraged the Commissioners to attend ArtsNet90, an initiative for networking sponsored by the Shoreline Arts Alliance, taking place on Tuesday, October 4 from 8:30-10am.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Kirkpatrick; seconded by Day, at 8:53pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Julia Faraci

Secretary