

# **Newtown Cultural Arts Commission**

## **Minutes of January 2, 2020 Meeting**

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE NEWTOWN CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION AT THE NEXT MEETING.

The Newtown Cultural Arts Commission held a meeting on Thursday, January 2, 2020 at the Municipal Center.

**Members present:** Laura Lerman, Andrea Spencer, Deborra Zukowski, Tracy Van Buskirk, Jennifer Cebry, Jim Cebry (Treasurer), Suzanne Lang, Grant Ossendryver, Rob Kaiser

**Members absent:** Sue Kassirer

**Auxiliary members present:** Barbara Snyder

**Public present:** none

Laura Lerman called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM

- Minutes: The minutes of the December 5, 2019 meeting were approved (moved Kaiser, seconded Cebry, passed unanimously).
- Officers' Reports:
  - Chairman's Report (Laura Lerman): It was proposed (Zukowski), seconded (Kaiser) and passed unanimously that Laura Lerman, Andrea Spencer and Tracy Van Buskirk continue as Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary respectively.
- Treasurer's Report (Jim Cebry): The 12/31/19 balances show \$50,395 in the savings account, \$4,973 in the checking account (aka Gift Fund), \$1,063 PayPal balance and \$120,000 in CD's. There was a question as to where interest income on the CD's is paid. Laura will ask Bob Tate, Town Treasurer. Jim reported that the surplus from the Art Festival was approximately \$3,800, compared to a deficit in 2018 and an approximate \$5,000 surplus in 2017. It was moved to accept the report (Van Buskirk), seconded (Zukowski) and passed unanimously.
- Public Participation: Barbara Snyder gave us an update on the Town Information Cards that are being distributed in the area to promote visits to Newtown. Although it is difficult to tie the cards to increased attendance at events, Barbara noted that the Holiday Festival, that was featured on the most recent card, had excellent attendance. She would like to expand distribution to other locations.
- Community Center: The CC is being actively used. NHS had an art show at the center utilizing panels lent by SCAN. The next session of after school programs is starting up, as well as a painting workshop. There is now after school busing available from all schools to the CC. There will be a big Chinese New Year's festival on Jan 22. Grant complimented the graphics used at the center and in advertising/promotion.
- Newtown Arts Festival: We do not have a chairman to run the 2020 festival. Laura is in discussion with a possible candidate. We need artists for the tee shirt, possibly a local student. It was suggested that we have a separate meeting on the festival because there are many topics to be addressed.
- Public Relations (Grant Ossendryver): Grant has spearheaded an initiative to develop a more systematic way centralize and publicize art related events in town. He is working

towards an art event calendar and an Event Card that would be distributed physically and electronically. Grant shared a mock up. The cards would probably be produced bi-monthly and would contain information about selected upcoming events. Discussion centered on mode of distribution: at locations in town, Facebook, email, Constant Contact. Future work will address collecting the event info, printing, distribution. Grant made a motion for a \$200 allocation for the "NCAC Events Card" to fund start up costs of the first card to be produced for March-April 2020 events. The motion was seconded by Zukowski and passed unanimously.

- Gallery at Municipal Center/ Gallery Showcase: SCAN show is up until the end of February. The showcase has a display of lampworked glass art by Ellen Merrell.
- Library Showcase: Newtown Environmental Action Team (NEAT) through January, followed by Someday Cinema Series.
- Website: No report
- Other Business-
  - Strategy Subcommittee (Deb Zukowski): The committee meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month. They are currently compiling a list of all arts related organizations and groups in Newtown with the intent of finding out what their goals and desires are for the art community. The group has come up with a mission statement for the CAC<sup>1</sup>. There was much discussion about how the CAC should actually go about helping the organizations attain their goals, including helping with grant applications, group collaborations, etc. It was suggested that we host a brainstorming event where all the organizations could share information about what they do and find synergies. Andrea felt that the process of talking to the organizations will uncover ideas about collaboration, goals etc. Deb asked the CAC to submit questions to her about what we would like to find out. The subcommittee will schedule meetings for the next 6 months, but will disband earlier if their work is complete.
  - Grant Ossendryver reported that he has started the Newtown Music Series. He will arrange monthly performances to be performed at the theatre or Alexandria Room of ETH. He will focus on local and regional acts. His website is [thenewtownmusicseries.com](http://thenewtownmusicseries.com).
  - Tracy Van Buskirk reminded the committee that Lisa Schwartz and herself will not be hosting Risk A Verse this year, so if the CAC wishes to continue with this event, a replacement needs to be found. Tracy agreed to reserve a date in April at the Meeting House in case the event happens. This led to discussion about finding a new Poet Laureate. Laura will talk to Lisa Schwartz to find out if and when she plans to resign as Poet Laureate.

There being no other business it was moved (Kaiser) and seconded (Lang) to adjourn. Passed unanimously. Adjourned around 8:26 PM.

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<sup>1</sup> "The mission of the Newtown Cultural Arts Commission is to act as an umbrella, focusing on a holistic, town-wide vision to create a community that is enlivened through the arts.