

Newtown Cultural Arts Commission

Minutes of October 3, 2019 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, October 3, 2019 at the Municipal Center.

Members present: Jennifer Cebry, Laura Lerman, Sue Kassirer, Andrea Spencer, Deborra Zukowski, Rob Kaiser, Tracy Van Buskirk, Suzanne Lang

Members absent: Grant Ossendryver

Auxiliary members present: none

Public present: Jen Rogers

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

- Minutes: The minutes of the September 5, 2019 meeting were approved (moved Spencer, seconded Kaiser, passed unanimously).
- Officers' Reports:
 - Chairman's Report (Laura Lerman): nothing to report
 - Vice President (Andrea Spencer): Shared information about a fund raiser for Faith Food Pantry organized by BD Provisions and Connecticut Clay Artists. Handmade mugs are being sold for \$30 at BD Provisions with proceeds going to FFP. Purchasers get free fill ups of coffee for two months.
 - Treasurer's report (Jim Cebry): The invoice from pianist Ben Model was received (approved at last meeting).
- Public Participation: None
- Community Center (Jen Cebry): The Community Center is hosting an open house on Oct 5 from 11 am – 4 pm with lots of activities and food. The Fall Program guide is coming out next week.
- Newtown Arts Festival (Jen Cebry): The Festival was a big success. Attendance was estimated at 4,000 to 4,500. Gate sales were \$16,848, Friday night music was about \$2,000. Wine and beer sales not finalized. There were many positive comments about the layout of the festival this year, specifically the location and size of the stage, available shade, access to food trucks and the "Free Way". The Guman's did a fantastic job of coordinating the musical entertainment. A new Director(s) for the festival needs to be found for the 2020 Festival.
- Someday Cinema Series ("SCS"): Presentation by Jen Rogers and follow up to the discussion on 9/5/19. Jen spoke to Bob Tate, Director of Finance at ETH to get a better understanding of costs and revenues for the SCS and the regular films shown by ETH. The SCS is a partnership between ETH and the CAC. The CAC had previously established a \$2,000 budget in 2014 for the SCS and has not contributed any further funds since then, except for the \$300 for a pianist to play at the upcoming silent film, Nosferatu. Jen is

usually able to secure sponsors to host a particular film which pays for the licensing fee. In the past 4 years, there have been only 2 or 3 times that a film was not sponsored. ETH does not charge for the theatre rental and keeps all ticket and concession income. The benefits of the program are that the SCS films have wider demographic appeal than the regular films shown, they attract audiences from outside Newtown, the CAC is acknowledged as a presenter at each film, each film is shown once with captions, and proceeds from the series that are allocated to ETH's capital improvement fund (\$12,000) allowed ETH to improve the theatre sound system. Jen Rogers requested that the CAC allocate \$600 to the SCS for the 2020 season, to cover licensing fees if needed and the purchase of the films. Zukowski motioned that the NCAC budget \$600 for the SCS 2020 season. The motion was seconded by Cebry and passed unanimously.

- Gallery at Municipal Center/ Gallery Showcase: Hannah Munro's composite photographs are currently on display. The showcase has a display of local artist Leslie Fuller Randle's woodblocks and prints (she is a relative of local artist Nancy Cole).
- Library Showcase: October is Arts Month, a display of the activities in town during October.
- Website: Kaiser reminded us to send any events and activities to him to include on the website.
- Other Business-
 - Jen Cebry spoke to Fred Hurley about the possibility of the CAC building a storage facility, perhaps at Fairfield Hills. We will need a climate-controlled building because of electronic equipment we own. Mr. Hurley offered to put together a plan and cost estimate. Lang mentioned the possibility of a grant to fund it.
 - Debbie Zukowski suggested a gazebo at FHH as a sort of "beta test" for a more permanent Band Shell in the future. Both Park & Rec and the CAC would like to have a permanent performance space at FHH. A grant program might be the best way to finance this. Debbie felt that any grant application will need a well developed strategic plan and mission statement from the requesting organization. She proposed the formation of a sub-committee to develop a framework for a strategic plan. Suzanne Lang and Andrea Spencer agreed to sit on this sub-committee.
 - Susan Kassirer mentioned that there is a multiple location exhibit in area libraries called "Art and Text" on display from Oct 15 to Nov 15. The C. H. Booth library is participating and a piece by Susan's mother will be on display there.

There being no other business it was moved (Zukowski) and seconded (Spencer) to adjourn. Passed unanimously. Adjourned around 8:10 PM.