

Present

Jenny Hawkins Lecce (chair)
 Franca Biales (v.c.)
 Julia Faraci (sec.)
 Jay Hoggard
 Barbara Arafeh
 Julia Faraci
 Sebastian Giuliano, arr. 7:11p
 Joyce Kirkpatrick
 Charlotte McCoid, arr. 7:55p, left 9:00p

Also Present

Stephan Allison, Staff

Absent

Fran Ganguli
 Lee Godburn
 Robert Santangelo
 Cassandra Day
 Sara MacSorley

Call to order

Jenny Hawkins Lecce, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm in Municipal Building, room 208.

Public Session – Four members of the public present

Betsy Morgan of Oddfellows Playhouse brought forward a proposal for changes in the Children’s Circus to be effected in partnership with the Commission. With the raised minimum wage, the salary structure of Circus artists and staff must also be changed. Also, after 27 years of a half-day circus program, Oddfellows proposes a full-day program. Ms. Morgan reported that 75-80% of participating families have given Oddfellows feedback that they need a full-day program in the summer.

Alison McDermott, a teacher and performing artist who started as a Circus camper, noted that the participants want to learn more than can be accomplished in a half-day program. A full-day program will be more intensive and exciting for the campers. The extended program and more equitable salaries would make the Oddfellows program more competitive with other circus schools in New Haven, Harwinton, and elsewhere for campers and for staff.

Minutes

a) July 22, 2015 – Motion to approve by Commissioner Biales, seconded by Commissioner Faraci. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda – Motion to approve by Councilman Giuliano, seconded by Commissioner Kirkpatrick. Passed unanimously.

Remarks from the Chair – Chair Lecce thanked outgoing Chair Day for her service and her diligent, persistent and timely follow-up on Commission business.

Chair Lecce reviewed the mandate of the Commission to liaison and advocate tirelessly for the arts, and to empower the arts community.

Old Business:

a) **Budget Report** – Pre-sent electronically to commissioners for review.

b) **Program Update**

- i. Arts Stakeholders Group – The next meeting is Tuesday, October 20, and will be a potluck at the Senior Center at 61 Durant Street. October as Arts and Humanities Month will be celebrated by extending an invitation to Kristina Newman-Scott, director of culture in the DECD.
- ii. Summer Sounds wrap up report – The program went well despite some short-lived and minor crowd disturbances. Police were advised, and they promised better security next year. The Harbor Park location exposed more people to the Riverfront.
- iii. Kids Arts – Proposal for full-day programming discussed, including ongoing research into staff salaries in similar programs.
- iv. Fireworks – Next year’s festival date is set for Friday, July 1. Viewers will be able to see the fireworks and still have a 3-day weekend.

c) **Semi-annual report to Mayor/Common Council** – Commissioner Lecce reported to the Common Council in June.

d) **Use of Facebook for Promotion** – ongoing.

Committee Reports:

a) **Endowment Research Committee** – Council Member Giuliano noted that the Arts Commission can accept tax-exempt restricted gifts as approved by Common Council. Chair Lecce disbanded Endowment Research Committee until further notice.

- b) **Executive Committee** – The City Poet Laureate panel has been selected. Commissioner Biales was thanked for her work on creating the rubric for the interview and Commissioner Faraci for her research into Poet Laureate selection procedures in other Connecticut towns and cities. The three applicants will be interviewed in the first week of October, with an announcement of the new Laureate around October 9.
- c) **Nominating Committee**
 - i. Review of Bylaws – ongoing.
 - ii. Conflict of interest review /recommendations tabled until next meeting.
- d) **Planning and Projects Committee**
 - i. Kids Arts expansion considerations – ongoing.
 - ii. Open Air Market -August 30th: – Few children entertained at the MCA booth were from local families, and the Commission should consider making changes in format.
- e) **Public Art Committee** – The commission thanks Gil Scullion for painting the plinth beneath the Risley sculpture and the interior of the lobby display case.
 Risley sculpture: A dedicated space has been found in the municipal building lobby, once the lobby has been cleared of stored items. Commissioner McCoid will research artist/welders for Risley repair.
 City Art Collection: Secured storage has been found for art works needing to be removed from the wall while awaiting restoration or other work.
 Work is underway to provide a digital catalog of the City's art collection.
 Ghezzi donation update: The Commission decided that though this artwork is an important piece, it does not fit the City's criteria for acceptance of donated art. Motion for acceptance: Commissioners Arafeh and Faraci voting for acceptance, Commissioners Lecce, Biales, Giuliano, and Kirkpatrick voting against, with Commissioner Hoggard abstaining. Chair Lecce will write a letter to the artist to thank her for her offer.
 - i. MCAAAA – ongoing
 - ii. Plaques/Labels – A final decision has yet to be made on the lettering on the plaques. Commissioner McCoid will circulate the template to the Commissioners again.

New Business

- a) Establishment of 2015-2016 Committees – Commission Chair Lecce reviewed Committee policies and suggested limiting reply-all emailing, and replying to emails with 48 hours. She noted that committee members convening to fulfill tasks as listed in minutes, agenda and during official meetings do not need to post these task-fulfilling meet-ups. Committee assignments by preference and appointment:
 Nomination Committee: Commissioners Arafeh, Godburn, and MacSorley.
 Public Arts: Commissioners Day, Kirkpatrick, McCoid, Faraci.
 Public Events and Planning: Commissioners Godburn, Biales, MacSorley, Hoggard, Arafeh.
- b) Grants Panel selection – Commissioners Lecce, Biales, and Kirkpatrick with Commissioner MacSorley as alternate, to meet on October 20 to review grants, subject to availability.
- c) Poet Laureate – Coordinator Allison will send packets of the applications to the panelists this week. In order to maintain confidentiality, there is to be no discussion of the applicants or applications. Coordinator Allison will create a surveymonkey to determine interview dates.
- d) Other: None

Miscellaneous

- a) Grant Report(s): forwarded electronically to Commissioners.
- b) Announcements –
 Recreation and Community Services Fall Festival is looking for vendors to promote their businesses at the Downtown Trick-or-Treat on October 24; contact is Karen Nocera.
 “Fish for Life” by Bradley Jones is the current exhibit at Green Street.
 Greater Middletown Concert Association is presenting the first of its productions, “Broadway, Our Way” on October 4 at Middletown High School.
 Michael Arafeh and his Coffeeshouse Recording Studio were honored by Mayor Drew this month.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:07pm by Council Member Giuliano, seconded by Commissioner Faraci.
 The next regular monthly MCA meeting is Wednesday, October 28, 2015 in Room B19, Municipal Building, 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
 Julia Faraci