

Present

Jenny Hawkins Lecce (chair)
 Franca Biales (v. chair) Susan Allison (Poet Laureate)
 Julia Faraci (sec.) Sebastian Giuliano, arr. 7:05pm, left 7:56pm
 Jay Hoggard Cassandra Day, arr 7:13pm, left 8:40pm
 Joyce Kirkpatrick Barbara Arafah, arr 7:25pm
 Sara MacSorley Robert Santangelo, arr 7:46pm
 Charlotte McCoid Lee Godburn, arr 8:30pm

Also Present

Stephan Allison, Staff

Absent

Fran Ganguli

Call to Order

Jenny Hawkins Lecce, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm in the Conference Room of the Community/Senior Center.

Minutes

a) September 23, 2015. Motion to approve by Commissioner Kirkpatrick, seconded by Commissioner Biales. Carried unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Chair Lecce to move public session to accommodate discussion of New Business, item (f), Kids Arts Full-day programs prior to Remarks from the Chair. Motion to approve revised agenda by Council Member Santangelo, seconded by Council Member Giuliano. Carried unanimously.

Remarks from the Chair

Chair Lecce welcomed Susan Allison, Middletown’s new Poet Laureate. Ms. Allison was well received at a reading October 27 with Poets Laureate from other Connecticut towns and President Obama’s inaugural poet, Richard Blanco. Mayor Dan Drew proclaimed October 30 as Susan Allison Day.

Commissioner Hoggard was congratulated on his installation as Music Ambassador.

Public Session

a) New Haven Symphony Orchestra (NHSO) – Elaine Carroll, Executive Director of NHSO, discussed their Board’s commitment to Middletown. NHSO will give the High School tickets to sell for the holiday concert as a school fundraiser.

Old Business

a) **Budget Report** – provided electronically to Commissioners.

b) Program Update

- i) Arts Stakeholders Group – About a dozen stakeholders met for the quarterly potluck at the Senior Center on October 20. Donita Aruny, Program and Marketing Director of Shoreline Arts Alliance, noted her organization’s role in advocating for the arts in Middlesex County. The next meeting will be at a local restaurant in an effort to integrate local businesses with the arts.
- ii) Kids Arts – discussed; ongoing.
- iii) Music Ambassador – quality of sound on phone recordings has improved.
- iv) Feet to the Fire (F2F) – Preliminary meeting held, work is ongoing.
- v) Other – Middletown schools celebrated “Unity Day” on October 25. New anti-bullying posters will be on display in the lobby at City Hall.

c) **Facebook for promotion** - ongoing

d) **Other** – nothing to report

Committee Reports:

a) Public Arts

- i) Committee status report – Committee met to elect Secretary Faraci and Commissioner McCoid to co-chair.
- ii) Discussion of first Public Arts curated show - Ongoing
- iii) Other - The restoration of the Risley work is ongoing, presently awaiting written quotations from 2 sources.

b) Nominating Committee

- i) Phone calls to follow up on absent commissioners - ongoing
- ii) Other – nothing to report

c) Planning and Projects Committee

- i) Committee status report – Committee met to elect Commissioner Godburn to chair.
- ii) Other – No report available at this time.

d) Poet Laureate Selection Committee/panel

The panel (Commissioners Day, Godburn, Secretary Faraci, poet Kate Rushin and former Commissioner Richard

Kamins) met on October 7, with John Cusano, Community Development Coordinator at the CT Office on the Arts serving as facilitator. After interviewing three candidates, the panel nominated Susan Allison for the position of Poet Laureate.

- i) Report on process – Secretary Faraci recommended forming a Written and Spoken Word Committee to facilitate the application and interview procedure. The panelists in attendance agreed that the panel should have more control in formulating the questions, handling the application process, and planning the interviews. General discussion ensued concerning procedure and suggestions for changes.
- ii) Other – nothing to report

New Business

- a) **Grants Panel Recommendations** – Discussion on disbursement of grants funds
 - i) Commission vote on grants. Commissioner Day and Council Member Giuliano not present for vote.
 - Artists for World Peace for programming and administration of AFWP (Barbara Ally, Robert Nasta) – Motion by Vice Chair Biales to award no funds, seconded by Commissioner McCoid. Ayes: Commissioners Lecce, Biales, Faraci, Kirkpatrick, MacSorley, McCoid, Arafeh, Santangelo, Godburn. Nays: none. Abstentions: Commissioner Hoggard. Motion carried.
 - Center City Productions (Trevor Davis) – Did not attend Grant Panel. Motion by Vice Chair Biales to award no funds, seconded by Commissioner McCoid. Carried unanimously.
 - Marc Pettersen for illuminated art in storefront windows on Main Street: Motion by Commissioner MacSorley to award \$3000, seconded by Vice Chair Biales. Carried unanimously.
 - Oddfellows Playhouse for production of “The Wiz” (Betsy Morgan): Motion by Commissioner Godburn to award \$2000, seconded by Commissioner Kirkpatrick. Carried unanimously.
 - Middlesex Community College toward paint for “ALICE”, a bus housing a mobile food pantry (Judith Felton, Cheryl Dumont Smith, Trenton Wright): Motion by Commissioner McCoid to award \$500 with a stipulation that the funds be used for paint/supplies only, seconded by Commissioner Godburn. Carried unanimously.
 - RMI (Resonant Motion Inc) for presenting 4 musical programs at Russell Library (Kate Ten Eyck and Sue Honer): Motion by Commissioner Godburn to award \$2000, seconded by Commissioner McCoid. Carried unanimously.
 - New Haven Symphony Orchestra toward musical programs presented in Middletown (Aric Isaacs): Motion by Commissioner MacSorley to award \$1000, seconded by Commissioner Godburn. Ayes: Commissioners Lecce, Biales, Faraci, Hoggard, MacSorley, McCoid, Arafeh, Santangelo, Godburn. Nays: Commissioner Kirkpatrick. Motion carried.
 - Salt Marsh Opera: for musical performances integrated into school curriculum (Sara Lathrop): Motion by Commissioner Kirkpatrick to award \$2500, seconded by Commissioner McCoid. Carried unanimously.
- b) **Poet Laureate upcoming dates** – tabled until November meeting
- c) **Contact sheet updates** – tabled until November meeting
- d) **Resolution submitted by City Council Member David Bauer on celebrating 366 Days of Middletown History and Heritage** - Motion by Commissioner Godburn to assign to Public Events Committee; seconded by Vice Chair Biales. Ayes: Commissioners Lecce, Biales, Hoggard, Faraci, Kirkpatrick, MacSorley, McCoid, Arafeh, Santangelo, Godburn. Nays: none. Motion carried. Stephan Allison will report to David Bauer.
- e) **Line items for sustaining organizations** – tabled until November meeting
- f) **Kids Arts Full-day programs** – Betsy Morgan and Jason Leinwand of Oddfellows Playhouse discussed the major organizational changes proposed for the Kids Arts programs. A full-time program will better accommodate family needs and improve participants’ experience. In order to make this program more competitive with other circus programs, Oddfellows will need to increase staff salaries. Chair Lecce, Vice Chair Biales, and Secretary Faraci will meet with Ms. Morgan and her Oddfellows team to strategize a presentation to City Council.
- g) **Other** – none

Miscellaneous

- a) **Grant Report(s)** – none
- b) **Announcements** – Council Member Santangelo noted that because of a job change, he will not be able to get to Commission meetings before 7:30 p.m.
- c) **Other** – none

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:51pm by Chair Lecce, seconded by Secretary Faraci.

The next MCA regular monthly meeting is Wednesday, November 18, 2015 in Room B19, Municipal Building, 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
 Julia Faraci