

# **Amherst Cultural Council**

## **Annual Report for 2018-2019**

The Amherst Cultural Council (ACC) receives funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). The amount of funding received by the MCC is part of the budgetary process of the Commonwealth's Legislature. For the year fiscal year 2019, Amherst received \$29,600. To that figure, the ACC added unclaimed funds from the previous year that added an additional \$3,375 to funds available for this round of grants for a total of \$32,975.

In September a press release was prepared and sent to the local press to announce the funding cycle and a public meeting, but once again the public meeting in September was not well attended.

A year ago it was suggested that the Amherst Cultural Council create a FaceBook page. Jennifer Lind found a volunteer who was interested in helping the Council and perhaps becoming a member. She created a FaceBook presence for the Council, but then moved out of the area. Unfortunately, none of the volunteers on the Council has time to keep the page current.

Robin Thompson is the representative of the Cultural Council to the Amherst Center Cultural District (ACCD). She attends monthly meetings of the ACCD and has attended several gatherings sponsored by the Mass Cultural Council. The ACC and the ACCD are working collaboratively to have a strong presence in this year's Arts Week, a state-wide effort of the Boch Center and the Highland Street Foundation to promote the arts in Massachusetts. It takes place in April 26 to May 5 and Amherst applicants to the ACC were notified about this initiative that provides extensive free promotion in the media throughout Massachusetts.

This year 65 proposals were received (71 last year) and the ACC funded 57 (59 last year). Most recipients received about one-half of their requests, although seven received 100% of their request. The largest grants went to the Literacy Project, Picture Book Theatre, Amherst Leisure Theater Services, Kestral Land Trust, Amherst Cinema, Amherst Art Alliance, Amherst Ballet Theatre, Amherst Public Art Commission, Amherst Regional Middle School, Arcadia Players, Crocker Farm Preschool, Hampshire College Art Gallery, and Avital Sagalyn, an Amherst artist. Smaller grants were made to the Jones Library, the Bangs Center, and groups serving Amherst and the region such as the Springfield Symphony Youth Orchestra, Friends of Amherst Community Theater, Friends of the Holyoke Range, and Mohawk Trail Concerts.

Members of the Council during the past year were Georgia Barnhill and Jennifer Lind, co-chairs, Andrea Battle, treasurer, Martha Toro, secretary, Sondra Radosh, Alice Briggs, Gina Chaplain, and Robin Thompson. Cyndi Harbeson has

served as the liaison with the Town. Alice Briggs has resigned her position, effective February 15. Currently we have openings for two new members. The terms of Sondra Rodosh, Jennifer Lind, and Georgia Barnhill expire in 2018. All would like to continue for second three-year terms.

Respectfully submitted,

Georgia Barnhill and Jennifer Lind