

Amherst Cultural Council Minutes

July 20, 2021

Members present: Jenny Lind, Matt Holloway, Robin Thompson, Rachel Wang, Cole Graber-Mitchell, Arthur Pero, Nandi Chivende and Cyndi Harbeson, Town Liaison
6:30 p.m. via Zoom

1. Meeting called to order 6:32 pm. Matt read mandatory script and checked audio
2. June 14, 2021, minutes approved by roll-call vote
3. Accessibility subcommittee report: not much is happening right now
4. Tim Kane request for date change of drumming event to July 22 - approved by roll-call vote. Matt will contact Tim.
5. Real Live Theater request to use grant monies for operating expenses. What percentage can they use? Any percentage can be use at their discretion and requests was approved by roll-call vote. Jenny will notify RLT.
6. Amherst Historical Society request to use funding for operating expenses - approved by roll-call vote. Matt will notify AHS.
7. Davis Bates request for date extension. Amherst LSSE can't accommodate his event this year and he would like to carry over grant funds to summer 2022. Approved by roll-call vote. Matt will notify Davis.
8. Grant opportunity for the ACC to apply for a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) for \$50,000. Is anyone willing to take this on? Could the ACC partner with the Cultural District to write the grant for an August 12 deadline or apply on our own? The dedication of a council member or two would be essential to carefully study, understand the parameters, and write the grant. After some discussion the council approved by roll-call vote to forward the opportunity to our grantees, with our higher budget grantees potentially being able to apply for funds.
9. PechaKucha report – Julianne was not present to report. The council is waiting to hear back about dates -- wondering if we have confirmation from Bistro 63 to confirm dates.
10. June 27th Celebration of the Arts event: Jenny reported that the event was hot, but we (Gigi, Julianne, Leah, Jenny and Nandi) arrived early and helped vendors set up their tents, set up the ACC table with literature provided by Mina who joined us later. All of the grantees that performed were well-received and Leah and Nandi assisted the storyteller on stage. Gigi spoke to the crowd and let everyone know that we funded some of the performers and encouraged people to come by the table for more information about the MCC/ACC. People were very appreciative about our help and for what the council does. We stayed to the end to help put tents away.
11. New Member recruitment – no applications have been submitted to the town to our knowledge. Cydi outlined the process with the Town Manager's office, and agreed to check with Angela Mills about timelines for recruitment. Matt will ask one of his neighbors who works in the arts.
12. Showcase report: Cole reported that Leah and Cole are working together and are gathering videos and planning for artist interviews and site visits. Amherst Media will assist with some filming. They created a timeline expect to be finished in October. Cole and Leah will start editing at Amherst Media when he returns in August. The plan is to

premiere the 30–35-minute Showcase Facebook Live (or some other platform) and there's enough footage create a more 2–3-minute films to share on Instagram. Can the council see a rough cut at the right moment and provide input with the understanding that this is Cole and Leah's project? Mid-September would be a good time to show the rough cut. At that time the council can provide some input for this exciting creative project.

13. Grant disbursement structure: Matt shared some new guideline ideas (draft language) that outline advance funding for those eligible and in need. The funds would be used to pay vendors directly for materials needed. The range would be between \$100 – \$500. What do we mean to demonstrate financial need? Their narrative will need to be compelling enough to approve their advance payment. How could we pay for materials ahead of time? Cyndi will explore with town if these payments could be paid with a Purchase Order. Can we do this for all grantees to make granting more equitable to everyone? Can Robin and the Town handle this added work? This will need to be discussed in more depth at the next meeting.
14. Updating next year's priorities/guideline: The next meeting, Wednesday, August 11 at 6:30 via Zoom, is set to review and write new guidelines.
15. September's council meeting date: Tuesday, September 9, at 6:30 in person at the Jones Library. We will view showcase.
16. Two public meetings: In person on Tuesday, September 14 from 6:30-8:00 pm at the Jones Library and via Zoom on Friday, September 17 from 12-1 pm (lunchtime). Matt will host but Jenny can be available, if needed.
17. Current application guidelines and potential additions are attached and can be reviewed prior to our next meeting.
18. Meeting adjourned at 8:19

Jenny Lind, Secretary