

**Amherst Cultural Council  
Accepted Minutes  
December 7, 2010  
Amherst Room, Jones Library**

Present: Ann Woodbridge (Chair), Katya Ites (Treasurer), Ruth Rootberg (Secretary), Sandra Mullin, Arnold Friedmann, Laurie Nisonoff, and staff liaison Sondra Radosh. Michael Berins visited as a prospective member for next year.

Minutes

Minutes of October 25, 2010 were re-approved as re-corrected. Ruth had noticed an error for 2011-22 KO Festival. The earlier version stated they requested \$3,000; the re-corrected and re-approved minutes accurately show the amount to be \$2,200. This correction did not change any decision as to allocation of funding.

The Minutes of November 15, 2010 were approved as corrected.

Discussion of timing of correcting minutes:

Sandra raised the question of our practice of submitting corrections for the draft minutes to the Secretary via e-mail. She wondered whether we were still upholding the open meeting laws by doing so. Ann will confer with Jennifer Lawless of the MCC Boston office, and also with Amherst Town Clerk and get back to us. If we are to correct and approve only at meetings, then these minutes would be held over for correction and approval until fall of 2011 when the new Council convenes.

Old Business

Ann researched the Ko Festival's status. It is not for profit and has a 501 © (3) status (and therefore, is allowed to request grant money). Sabrina Hamilton, director, said she would re-design the website so that that information was more prominent.

Treasurer's Report.

Katya distributed an updated spreadsheet showing the amounts we have agreed to give at the November 15 meeting, and asked that we disregard the one she had e-mailed soon after that meeting. We then made further corrections: #47: The History of Hip-Hop (not hip hip) workshop contact is Rondae Drafts (Not Kate Carney).

Katya's updated spreadsheet shows we have \$336 left to award. This amount takes into account the specific calculation for #2011-3 Wildwood: \$546 will be given to just the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. (78 children @ \$7.00 per ticket). Although we had agreed to grant for just the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, we didn't know the number of children until after the November 15 meeting.

Katya distributed e-mail communication she had had between her and jubilat/Jones. Their planning cycle is difficult to sync with the ACC grant cycle, which explains the timing of the submission of some of their receipts. The Council has reversed itself and we will reimburse them \$213 for A2010-17 grant.

New Business

Request for extension of grant

Stephanie Krafts (A2010-19) applied for an extension because she has not yet made a presentation, which was part of the condition of her grant. The Council is obliged to approve such a request. Stephanie will have until August 31, 2011 to fulfill her commitment and submit for reimbursement. Ann will notify her.

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End of Grant Process

Ann explained the end of grant process. Before the end of the year, Ann will send out denial letters. Then we need to wait 15 days. If someone appeals the denial, and provides new information, the Council will need to meet again and discuss and vote on the appeal.

Amherst Cultural Council is streamlined as all members completed the online training. This means funding will become available fairly quickly for applicants who are accepted. After denials are settled, each approved applicant will be sent a form letter indicating what amount they will be awarded. There is also an online form to fill out after the first of the year for the accepted grants which is necessary before funds will be transferred from the State. Four to six weeks after the electronic form has been filed, funds will be transferred to Amherst, and we can start authorizing the writing of checks. The Treasurer submits requests to Town Hall for any reimbursements; we do not write checks, and applicants do not receive funding without having submitted appropriate receipts.

Gold Star

The Gold Star panel, for which award we nominated Amherst Ballet, meets in January and will probably announce their decision in February.

Community Input

Amherst is due for a public meeting to gather community input, after which we may decide to change our guidelines, including the number of grants an entity can submit. We would like Nancy Pagano to participate to discuss the possibility of the Bangs Center submitting one application for all performance events.

Names of Officers

The names of the current officers of our Cultural Council (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary) for FY2011 and subsequently FY2012 need to be changed officially so the correct people are contacted.

Seeking New Members

Arnold, Ann, and Ruth have been seeking new members. We believe the MCC guidelines require a minimum of five voting members to have a quorum, no matter what the size of our council (rather than Robert's Rules, which is one more than half), but that there is no upper limit to the size of the council. However, we recognize that even 12 might become unwieldy as far as scheduling, consistency in attending, etc.

Officers for FY2012

Ann is happy to remain as President or have someone else take over. No one stepped forward during the meeting. Ann thanked Ruth for taking on the role of Secretary during this current grant cycle.

We need a new Treasurer for the following year. If no one steps forward as Treasurer, we can use 5% of our budget to hire one. This person could attend meetings, but would not participate in discussion. Or the person might not attend, and data would be transferred to him or her. Katya has offered to continue as a paid, non-Council Treasurer. If someone else takes the position, Katya would like to begin training the new Treasurer in February. Further discussion of finding a new Treasurer was tabled. A summary of the Treasurer's job description written by Katya is included as an addendum to the minutes.

Grant Allocations

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#3 Wildwood School requests PASS Grant of \$1,477 for grades, 3, 5, 6. Approve \$546 for just 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. (78 children x \$7.00/ticket).

Of the \$336 remaining, the allocations are:

#38 JCA to receive an additional \$100. Total grant will be:  $\$300 + 100 = \$400$ .

#46 Mohawk Trails Concerts to receive an additional \$100. Total grant will be:  $\$750 + 100 = \$850$ .

#53 Amherst area publications to receive an additional \$150 (adding an additional \$14 from our earlier estimates). Total grant will be  $\$400 + 150 = \$550$ .

We added an additional \$14 to #53 to come up with a round number. Katya will request the additional \$14 from unused grant money.

Future Actions

Ann will send denial letters immediately. It is a form letter.

Ann, Katya, and Ruth will meet January 8 to prepare the acceptance letters, which are also form letters, for mailing. Ann will add a link to the website to find reimbursement forms online to the acceptance letter, but would like to guide recipients toward independence; all the information they need is furnished on the MCC website. There is also an on-line form to be submitted to the MCC to report our decisions.

Ann thanked us for our participation, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Rootberg, Secretary

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Addendum: Job Description: Treasurer  
12.10.10

**ACC Treasurer's job description**

In early January, the treasurer (T) submits to the Town Hall, directly to Holly Bowser, information on the ACC grants awarded for the new FY. (I submit it in the same format I use at our meetings). At the end of January, T submits to Holly a template-request to transfer to the ACC Unused Grants account grants from the previous fiscal year, which have not submitted reimbursement forms or have not requested an extension. If submitted and approved, extensions can be granted up to August and the \$\$ from these grants are not sent to the Unused account until then. If not submitted for reimbursement by the extended deadline, in September T issues a request to transfer these grants to the Unused account and the \$\$ from this account is added as local funds to the amount the MCC allocates for the ACC in August.

In September, T and the Chair, in tight collaboration with the Town Hall and guided by the MCC guidelines and worksheets, calculate the amounts available for spending and grants in the new FY. By October 1, a calculation worksheet is developed. It has to be discussed and approved at the ACC voting meeting that takes place in early October before the Council begins its grant distribution meetings.

For each distribution meeting in October – December, T provides the ACC members with an updated Grant Applications spreadsheet that represents the submitted proposals and reflects the council's decisions pertaining to grant awards it makes at these meetings.

Through the year, every other week, T collects reimbursement requests from the mailbox in the Jones Library's Main Office. T verifies and corrects information provided on the form (if necessary, T has to contact the grantee for clarification). Once a month, the verified and signed reimbursement request forms are submitted to Holly Bowser. The forms have to be signed by T and by any other ACC member. In addition, T develops and submits a coversheet summary of the reimbursement requests turned in to the Town Hall (a template is available). T makes copies of the paperwork he/she submits and is responsible for keeping records of these transactions, as well as for keeping all the documents grantees have submitted along with their reimbursement requests. (Among other things these materials are indispensable when the ACC nominates a project for the annual MCC Gold Star Award).

Periodically (3-4 times a year), Town Hall sends the Treasurer a budget report that reflects updates in the ACC accounts, a.k.a. Arts Lottery Funds, and shows, among other information, which awarded grants have been reimbursed or adjusted and up to what amount. To have fast access to contact information for each grant, as well as to data on when and by whom the reimbursement request was submitted, T has to rely on his/her own records and the paperwork he/she develops and submits to the Town Hall.

There are some routine duties the ACC Treasure position involves. Others forms of engagement and service are kind of representative. Thus, as treasurer, I have represented the ACC at the Town and Gown events held by the UMass Chancellor and at three annual Assemblies of the LCCs in Boston (including two times when the Gold Star Award Ceremony honored projects that had been funded and nominated by our Cultural Council). I also participated in several local events organized by MCC officials and the town of Amherst and the region. Besides, the treasurer, like any other ACC member, is expected to attend public events of the projects (some of course) we award a grant to. The last time I did it in November, it was a poetry reading workshop organized by the jubilat/Jones series project.