

Amherst Cultural Council
APPROVED Minutes
Monday, September 26, 2011
Jones Library, Large Meeting Room

Ann Woodbridge, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Present: Gretchen Fox, Arnold Friedmann, Ellen Kosmer, Sandra Mullin, Ruth Rootberg (Secretary), Anne Woodbridge (Chair), and staff liaison Sondra Radosh. Also present were two guests considering joining the Council: John Coull and Honoré David.

Ann passed out a member contact list, and invited everyone present to introduce themselves.

Minutes

Ruth passed out draft minutes of January 13, 2011 and May 5, 2011 meetings. With no additions or corrections, both sets of minutes were approved.

Financial Report

Ann distributed a summary of our financial situation and announced the Council needs to fill the position of Treasurer from among its members. **Katya Ites' term expired over the summer.** The MCC has provided \$18,250 for fiscal year 2012. There is an additional total of \$861 from two unused extensions from a prior year. We will have a total of \$19,111 to award.

A total of \$5,200 is still encumbered from a dozen grant award recipients who have not yet turned in requests for reimbursement. Each entity must either submit the proper forms by end of December or will need to apply for an extension.

The interest bearing account is still building up. Currently there is \$14,632.14 in this fund. Ann reminded the Council we used a large chunk to increase the amount we could award last year. Historically the Council has been **keeping this fund for a "rainy day"** in case the State cuts back our allocation severely during a future fiscal year. The Committee would like to wait until we see the grant applications before choosing to use any money from this fund. Ann will check whether we can decide at any time, or only before we begin the decision making process.

Ann reported Katya continued to work as a paid financial administrator for the group after her **term expired as no one had stepped forward to fill the Treasurer's role.** In order to pay Katya (most recent bill was \$105) and have money for the coming year's administrative needs, Ann advised us we need to take \$274 out of the interest bearing account to max out our 5% administrative allowance for FY2011.

Action: It was moved and seconded to draw \$274 from the interest bearing and transfer it to the administrative fund in order to pay Katya. The motion passed unanimously.

Ann further explained the Council is not in a position to continue paying for financial administration. The Administrative Fund balance is \$195.87 until February, 2012, when we can draw 5% from the \$18,250 (i.e., \$912.50). This fund covers primarily postage and printing costs.

After explaining the financial report and answering questions, Ann reiterated the need for a **Council Member to step into the Treasurer's role. She can't fulfill the role because she'll be gone two weeks during granting meetings.** (Ann will designate someone to run the meetings in her absence.) Furthermore, Massachusetts requires three officers, Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. **There is a possibility that the Treasurer's role can be divided among two people:** one to monitor the allocations during the granting meetings, and the other to take care of reimbursements and contact with the Town of Amherst on financial matters. Ruth offered to monitor the allocations, if it is OK to do that while also remaining Secretary. Ann will check on it. **There would still be a need for another person to fulfill the rest of the Treasurer's duties.**

Scheduling Meetings

Ann announced we need a quorum of five to vote at each meeting and encouraged everyone to be present each time.

We then discussed what evenings in general would work for the group (Wednesdays), and then tentatively set the following schedule, to be confirmed via e-mail by Ann:

Wednesday, October 26 @ 6:30

Thursday, October 27 @ 6:30

Wednesday, November 2 @ 6:30

Tuesday, November 8 (not 9th) @ **5:30 (early)**

Wednesday, November 16 @ 6:45pm

No meeting Thanksgiving week

Wednesday November 30 OR Thursday, December 1 @ 6:30pm - **to be confirmed by Ann** depending on her travel.

Wednesday, December 7 @ 6:30

Wednesday, December 14 @ 6:45 (if needed)

Short meeting in January TBA to accept final voting figure, etc.

The Executive Committee will meet in January to handle the acceptance mailing process.

Packet of grant applications

Packets of grant applications will be available for pick up Friday, October 21 at the Jones Library office. Any member who needs applications delivered to him or her should contact Ann.

Arnold suggested making a personal evaluation system (grading) while reading the applications. A system can streamline decision making during the meeting.

New Member process

Ann informed prospective members they will need brief on-line training so the committee can be streamlined. New and prospective members then asked questions about the **Committee's work.** Ann invites them to consider membership and get back to her soon. Of note: Joan Temkin was not present but her membership was already in process.

Discussion on decision making

The Committee discussed whether we should always fund an applicant if they meet the criteria, even if that means the money gets spread out and few groups receive the amount they request. According to Ann, the MCC says if the applicant meets the criteria, we have to fund them, but we can vote our disinterest by giving a small portion of what they request. The discussion continued with explanation of reasons for denial, based on experiences from last year.

Miscellaneous

Ann is in her last year of her second term. The Council will need a new Chair next year.

Ruth explained the process for accepting minutes. She will e-mail a draft version before an upcoming meeting. Members are invited to e-mail corrections so that Ruth can become aware of them, but the process of correcting and accepting minutes must take place during the meeting to adhere to the Open Meeting Laws. The accepted minutes will then be e-mailed to the Council members. Minutes will be in Microsoft Word 97-2003 Document format.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Rootberg, Secretary