

Amherst Cultural Council
Re-Approved Minutes
Wednesday, October 26, & Thursday, October 27, 2011
Jones Library, Large Meeting Room

The Wednesday evening meeting called to order at 6:30pm by Ann Woodbridge, Chair.

Present: Ann Woodbridge (Chair), Ruth Rootberg, (Secretary, Co-Treasurer), Honoré David, Sandra Mullin, Joan Temkin, Arnold Friedmann, Ellen Kosmer, Laurie Nisonoff, and Sondrosh Rodysh, liaison.

Absent: Gretchen Fox

Agenda and information:

Ann passed out the agenda and Council Membership roster, a list of applicants that included the amount they requested, and a **list of all LCC's** amounts allocated by the MCC.

Minutes:

Ruth distributed a copy of the draft minutes of September 26, plus another sheet of page 1 showing three corrections and additions, and asked that the additions and corrections be accepted. They were, and with no further additions or corrections, the corrected minutes were approved. Ruth reminded the group she will e-mail accepted minutes, and also upload them to the town website.

Double meeting minutes:

As the next meeting is just one day later, Ann suggested we treat October 26 and October 27 as one meeting with a recess. Ruth will compile minutes for both evenings and e-mail them for Council Members to read and review prior to the next meeting, to be held November 2.

Meeting dates:

When the meeting dates were first set, the time for one meeting was very early to accommodate John Coull. As he has not joined the Amherst Culture Council, we changed that meeting time to our standard 6:30pm. It was also noted that only one of the two meetings originally scheduled for November 30 & December 1 would be held. The remaining meetings will take place:

Wednesday, November 2 @ 6:30, Jones Library, Large Meeting Room

Tuesday, November 8 (not 9th) @ 6:30 Jones Library, Large Meeting Room

Wednesday, November 16 @ **6:45pm**, Jones Library, Large Meeting Room

No meeting Thanksgiving week

Thursday, December 1 @ 6:30pm, Jones Library, **Trustees' Room**

Wednesday, December 7 @ 6:30, Jones Library, Large Meeting Room

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

(Note: **BOLD** above indicates a change in time or place from the usual.)

Financial report

Ann reported Gretchen Fox has come forward to do the reimbursement portion of the Treasurer's job, receiving requests for reimbursement, organizing them and handing it off to the Town for cutting checks. Ruth Rootberg will serve as Co-Treasurer, keeping a tally of the specific amounts we grant to each applicant, during the voting meetings. When Gretchen attends meetings, she will also keep a tally as back-up support. Laurie volunteered to help when Gretchen isn't present.

Ann reported on the process of preparing the calculation sheet so that we know how much we must grant, carried over from FY2010 (unencumbered funds) and unused administrative funds, in addition to the MCC allocation, and how much remains in our interest bearing account, which we can make available for either further granting or current and future administrative needs. At present, we can

grant \$19,307, which represents \$18,250 from the MCC, \$861 unencumbered funds from FY2010, and approximately \$195 left over in the administrative account.

Ann further clarified that, if we were to draw administrative funds from the FY2012 allocation, we could take up to 5% of the \$18,250. However, as we have over \$13,839 in our interest bearing account and are allowed to use that for administrative tasks (duplicating, postage, reimbursements for supplies, salaried bookkeeper), it makes more sense to keep the entire MCC allocation for granting.

Ann recommends we keep a low overhead and also remain conservative by not transferring too much from the interest bearing account into grant funds. She noted that, if there are particularly strong projects not getting funded enough, **we could amend tonight's decision in a few weeks and draw down the account somewhat. She would like to keep sufficient funds so that if MCC's future allocations drop, we have a "rainy day" fund.** Ruth mentioned Jennifer Lawless from the MCC considers we are already at the rainy day period. Jennifer also cautioned that keeping a large amount in the interest bearing account from year to year might lead the Town of Amherst to question the validity of our holding on to that money. She recommends using some of the funds each year so the Town recognizes we are decreasing the balance. Further discussion ensued. It was noted that groups **that hadn't previously** needed to ask are submitting grant applications, further indication of the squeezed economy.

Vote on Total Grant Amount:

The Council approved granting \$19,307 and will reconsider a possible amendment to increase the funds after we have discussed all grant applications.

Ruth reported the total amount requested from the 67 applicants is \$48,542. This amount represents 67 applications as originally submitted.

Laurie **noted the schools requesting field trips, formerly known as "PASS Grants,"** are collectively asking for nearly \$9,000, which represents a huge % of the total available this year.

Substitute Application

Ann distributed a new Application for FY2012-37, Many Hands Farm Cooperative Stage project because they are requesting for a capital expenditure and did not complete the proper forms the first time.

Guidelines for Granting

Ann reminded us that copies of the MCC & ACC guidelines are in the packets and requested we please read them to benefit our discussion and decision making. She believes the guidelines should be fairly self-explanatory. As we discuss individual applications, things will also become more apparent.

On-line training for new Council Members

New members have taken the training online except Joan; each year members are encouraged to take the training so our grants can be streamlined.

Voting

The Council first reviewed the several Field Trip applications from Crocker, Wildwood, and Fort River Schools. The combined request is \$8,962.

Ann explained that in the past the Council has helped, through our granting, to get every child one ticket with no duplications. Last year Wildwood School had requested tickets that duplicated some **grades. We cut them back to one child/one ticket. This year's applications reflect last year's policy and** granting. However, Fort River has this year requested grants that duplicate for 3rd and 4th grade.

Discussion followed about the purpose of field trips and how they tie in with curriculum. It was noted **that, in part due to the MCC's application form, there was scanty information in many cases as to what** benefit the children would derive from attending the various programs. See note at the end of October 26 portion of minutes in regard to changing our local guidelines.

2012-1 Crocker Farm requests \$1,000 to attend a performance at the Eric Carle Museum. Honoré will call to ask about ticket price and exact number of students. They are asking for \$10 per child when we think the price is more like \$5.00. It was also noted that the Council does not pay for transportation, so \$500, half of their request, would be dropped automatically.

Decision was TABLED.

2012-2, 3, 4, 5, - Wildwood School - each child goes to one performance:

- #2 Korean dance and music, Nov. 8, Kindergarten;
- #3 Visible fictions: Zoro; April 12, Grades 3 & 5;
- #4: Mufaro's beautiful daughter, May 4, Grades 1, 2, 4;
- #5 Creole Concert of Cuba, Oct. 12, 2011, grade 6.

There was more discussion on the policy of giving field trip grants, what per centage of our total giving it should represent, etc. There were also questions about the amount requested to cover chaperone tickets. We are considering an upper limit of 1/3 the total requested for field trips or for **everything that involves children in public schools. We also feel it's correct for us not to pay for** chaperones.

Action: Honoré will find out the current UMass policy on cost of tickets for chaperones, and perhaps even request per ACC not to charge chaperones.

Ellen: suggest give only 75% per cent of this school's total request: they ask total: \$3173. That would be \$2,378.

Decision was TABLED.

2012-6-10 Fort River School:

- #6 Theatreworks, Springfield Symphony Hall, Kindergarten
- #7 Springfield Museums, Grade 3

#8 Historic Deerfield, Grade 4
#9 Bowker Auditorium, Grades 2,3
#10 FAC, Grades 4, 5

Sandra will talk to Dory Goldman at Fort River to determine how many 3rd & 4th graders there are, and if each is intended to go to both programs listed for their grade. We wish to grant only one ticket per child, and will probably also shave off 25%. It was also suggested we consider the merit of each project separately.

Decision: Tabled until we find out how many students in each grade, verify number of students in each class who will go, and cost per child.

2012-11 Momodou Sarr requests \$2,000.

Award: \$200. We can state in the letter we want to **encourage him but can't possibly fund all he asks.**

2012-12 Anna Sobel requests \$300 for Little Superheroes

Award: \$100

2012-13 Amherst Leisure Services Community Theater access ticket program requests \$500 for Annie.

Award tentatively: \$350. We will try to fully fund if we have money left over in the end.

2012-14 Amherst Ballet requests \$1,500. We discussed giving 10% less because we have less money this year.

Award: \$1,300. We will revisit.

2012-15 Amherst Public Arts Commission - Terry Rooney, Chair requests \$2,000.

Ruth will look up what we gave two years ago when they last submitted an application.

Award \$1,800, but will revisit after information is received.

2012-16 Amherst Survival Center requests \$600 for 2 concerts.

Award: \$300. We will revisit.

2012-17 Arcadia Players Requests \$500 for its spring concers.

Award: \$500.

2012-18 Arena Civic Theatre requests: \$600 for Radium Girls.

Award: \$500. We will revisit.

2012-19 Juan Carlo Carpio, Latin American Music requests \$900 for Latin American Music. This is full funding.

Award: \$400. We will revisit.

2012-20 Crocker Farm residency Nields Music Concert Requests \$500. It was noted that an in-house concert such as this is more economical than funding field trips.

Award: \$500.

2012-21 Da Camera Singers requests \$500 for Classics New & Old \$500.

Award: \$300.

The Meeting was recessed at 8:30pm until Thursday, October 27 at 6:30.

Note: Any time after we have finished granting for FY2012 and September 1 the Council can change

local guidelines. We will probably convene in the spring, at which point we can modify our guidelines to reflect the strong feelings about what we required to award field trip grants. We might want to ask the schools to indicate other funding sources, etc. Projects that are fully dependent on the ACC will not be considered favorable.

Minutes for October 27 continued on following page.

Amherst Cultural Council
Draft Minutes Continued
October 26 & 27, 2011
October 27

The meeting was re-convened at 6:30 pm.

Present: Ann Woodbridge, Ruth Rootberg, Honoré David, Sandra Mullen, Arnold Friedmann, Ellen Kosmer, Laurie Nisonoff, Gretchen Fox. Also present briefly was a member of the public: Susan Diener.

Absent: Joan Temkin and Sondra Rodysh, liaison.

Financial Report:

Ruth passed out Voting Meeting totals from last night and said the future spreadsheets would also show the application number and the per centage given toward field trips. We have awarded \$6,250 and have \$13,057 remaining.

The total request for funds is revised from \$48,542 to \$48, 342. This is because #37, Many Hands Farm, reduced their request from \$1,200 to \$900 when they re-submitted their next application, now correctly showing **it's a request for capital expenditure.**

Follow-up on Council research into specific grants:

2012-1 Crocker Farm:

Honoré spoke to the Crocker Farm principal. He applied for bus money **but realizes he doesn't need it.** He reported someone at Eric Carle helped him complete the application. Later he realized it was Therèse Donahue. Honoré followed up with staff from the Eric Carle. The ticket price will only be \$5.00. Apparently the other \$5.00 requested per child is to cover the cost of the book they would receive.

Ann will contact the MCC; we are not certain we can fund payment of books.

As this request is for fall of 2012, **they don't know now** exactly how many children there will be in first grade next year. 50 is an estimate. If we award for 50 children and there are fewer, we know they will have to produce receipt for exactly the number of children taken.

Honoré also reported the Fine Arts Center currently charges \$7 per chaperone. With their tight budget, **they can't offer free entrance to chaperones.**

Of separate note, "Angel tickets" go to social service agencies and **don't have anything to do with the schools.**

2012-6-10 Fort River: Sandra spoke to Fort River, asking them to more clearly define their proposals, state how many children from various grade levels would go, clarify that there are duplications of 3 & 4th grade, and describe what program they will attend at Springfield museum. They will get back to her.

#15 Amherst Public Arts - Ruth reported in FY2010 we gave \$600. At present we have granted them \$1,800, which is three times as much as we gave them two years ago. Ann will look up what they asked for that year.

Voting:

2012-1-10 All school field trips are tabled until we have enough information to consider them during

one meeting.

2012-22 Dance Generators requests \$400 for Dancing Across Generations. Concerns about their budget: why do they ask for space rental at senior center? We can't give gas money because that's transportation.

Tabled: we will look at this application with other senior center projects.

#23 Eventide Singers request \$100 for hospice chorus.

Award: \$75.

There is no confirmed venue, but past record shows they sang at Fisher home in Amherst. We assume they will again.

#24 Fanfare Brass Choir requests \$670.

We noted there are more concerts at the same place under the umbrella name: Music on Main. This is a similar situation to looking at individual requests for programming at the Senior Center. We wonder why such a talented group would not charge or ask for a donation.

Award: \$200. We will revisit to compare to other projects at the same venue.

#25 Friends of Amherst Recreation requests \$1,260 for afterschool program.

We are not sure why they checked arts AND humanities. Their budget seems really skewed, and we wonder whether this is a social service rather than arts. We have no reason to deny, but don't support it.

Award: \$90. In the letter, we will suggest they apply for scholarship supplement money, not programming in the future.

#26 Aimee Gelinias requests \$1,600 for World Drum & Dance Workshops and Concert.

It's the only project intended for the middle school this year. We want to support the middle schoolers, but can't fund travel.

Award: \$700. We will revisit.

#27 Gallery A3 requests \$1,500 for Cross-Pollinate. We don't consider this a well-planned program.

Award: \$400. If it becomes necessary to reduce, this project will be FIRST TO CUT

#28 Hampshire Choral Society requests \$800 for A Cambridge Mass by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

We note that we are willing to give the same dollar amount to this project which excites us as to a project that does not. Further discussion ensued about how much impact we make on a project as a whole.

Award: \$400. We will revisit.

#29 Hampshire Shakespeare Company requests \$1,200 for Shakespeare Under the Stars 2012.

Award: \$800.

#30 Hampshire Young people's Chorus requests #325 for a concert.

Award: \$275.

#31 Henry Lappen requests \$425 to perform at the Amherst Town Common at the Apple Harvest Festival.

Award: \$50.

#32 Jubilat/Jones Reading Series requests \$1,200.

Discussion ensued on their other possible sources of funding. And their discussion of what they would do with a smaller award discusses travel expense, which we don't fund.

Award: \$200.

#33 Leo Hwang-Carlos requests \$50 for Rethinking the Creative Economy, Community Art Show.
Award: \$50.

#34 Jones Library requests #300 for Children's Music Series.
Award: \$275.

#35 Ko Theater Works request \$1,900 for The Plays of Connie Congdon.
Award: \$1,000.

#36 Gregory Maichack requests \$475 for Georgia O'Keeffe: How to Pastel Paint Flowers.
Tabled until Sondra is available at the next meeting to offer input.

#37 Amanda Hill requests \$900 for a capital expenditure request for The Many Hands Farms
Cooperative Public Art Stage.
Tabled until Ann has more information to offer us.

#38 The Marble Collection requests \$150. Although it's a small amount, we are not in favor of
supporting this project.
Deny: # 9 "Priority is given to Amherst artists/cultural groups.

Denials

It was noted that when the MCC updated its website, they swept away the list of reasons for denial.
We are unsure how to word our denials, and whether we can deny groups that fulfill our priorities at
the lowest level. Ann will speak with Jen Lawless.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Rootberg, Secretary