

**Northborough Cultural Council**

63 Main Street / Town Hall
Northborough, MA 01532

Northborough Cultural Council Meeting Minutes - APPROVED

Meeting Date: Wednesday, June 28, 2023, Northborough Town Hall, Conference Room B

In Attendance: Terry Underwood, Suzanne Cox, Craig Cox, Jen Tolman, Lori Tiron-Pandit, Jeanine Vitale, Hannah Chen

Absent: none

Guests: Julianne Hirsh

MINUTES:

Meeting called to order 6:08pm.

- Terry shadowing council roles and thinking of those who are going to phased out of NCC within the year. She suggested possibly having new people work jointly with current person in role as 'co-position' to help with workload, willingness to do role, and transitioning. There was acknowledgment that is a change from our previous operating model.

1. Approval of Minutes

- Craig motioned to approve minutes, Suzanne seconded, approval all

2. Set Next Committee Meeting Date

- Wednesday, July 26, 2023, Jeanine may not be able to attend, all others good with date

3. Go Out Doors - Northborough: Project Review & Closure**Financial Review**

- Suzanne reviewed finances for door, project came in under budget due to greater than projected auction revenues. Jen inquired about auction finances, discussion followed on details of auction and possible ways to increase revenues if held in future.

Post Mortem

- Suzanne reported project was well received and generated visibility for NCC and Public Art Campaign. Lessons learned regarding rethinking stipend amount to artists as well as getting more press for the auction to increase revenues. Also discuss about process of getting artists and being able to connect deeper to artist communities in area.
- Discussions about what to do with remaining doors was held. Group discussions about expanding to more artists in future events. Reviewed plans to skip event next year and comments about it may drive interest when it returns due to absence.

4. CultureFest 2023: Project Review & Closure**Financial Review**

- Craig reviewed the budget for CultureFest. Bottom line we were ahead of budget by about \$500 across all subgroups. Julianne asked about getting money from restaurants. Discussion about getting a percentage from the restaurants. Jen discussed her conversations with artist regarding money to participate.

- Craig reiterated how the totes and bake sale are outside CultureFest budget.
- **Publicity**
 - Lori relayed all very good. Discussion about more lawn sign for longer time to increase event visibility. Discussions about other channels of marketing not used including senior center, rec department, and general flyers about town. Also, discussions about banners about town. Hannah commented that bulletin boards are hard to see for many people. Julianne added that Applefest is successful because it on the same day every year and we might consider such an approach.
- **Facilities**
 - Craig expressed he was very pleased with DPW's support. Serval council members reported they received feedback about the lack of restroom at festival. Terry and Suzanne suggested that we should formally request town for porta potties next event. Discussion about Abu and changing of building ownership of and future implications for lot usage. Jeanine suggested we think about recycling for future events.
- **Festival Layout**
 - Terry shared that we had less than positive feedback on the layout of the booths. BeWell and Northborough Historical Society were not in ideals spaces to reach audience. They were not visible through the plantings. Lori suggested the inside be back in play.
- **Parking**
 - Jeanine shared more people are needed for this area with one for Avidia Bank full time. The artist lot behind the bank needs to be roped off because the town visitors took all the slots and the performers needed more space. Craig relayed that the bands could not find a space behind BOA because earlier acts filled up the entire area. Avidia bank came out during festival to discuss parking at the bank. It hard to understand who was using the lot. Artist would tell Jeanine that they were just dropping off materials but left cars in lots. Craig shared that they meet with Avidia regarding parking. Craig recommended that if the council does again next year, they consider doing the festival at Ellsworth McAfee park. Julianne suggested that we use the police to help with parking. Terry discussed taking to local business.
- **Food**
 - Hannah reported bake sale was great, lots of customers. Might need to have sign with suggested donation. Hannah got a lot of question on donations and what they were be used to fund. Hannah gave run down on what items sold out and what items did not more as fast. Hannah will post list. Terry reported take away from three restaurants was wonderful. Suggestion for future to book four and if one goes away that have a minimum of three wanted. Craig offered that it is good time to start looking for restaurants.
- **Music**
 - Craig reported that all were happy, one band commented that there were very few people left due to rain, but they understood about the weather and the effect on attendance. Craig reported that feedback from the musicians was they wanted a tent, for heat and for reflections on music. Dance floor did fine with a little bit of rain. Craig shared there are plenty of local support for manage stage.

- Dance
 - Terry reported all the acts were well received and that dancer groups were happy we did not cancel for weather. Craig reported that some people from Applefest ask about the dance acts for Applefest.
- Professional Artist Booths
 - Suzanne commented positively about artists and shared booking challenges with competing art events. Jen shared she meet with each of the artists to gain feedback and got very constructive feedback for future events. Craig mentioned developing relationships with art communes like one in Lowell to get more artist at festival. Julianne mentioned that possibilities of networking with Worcester art groups and museums. Suzanne discussed the importance of creating artist networks.
- Org & Business Booths
 - Terry did the walk around and feedback was that orgs were too way out of way per facilities feedback. Other than that, very positive feedback.
- Youth Art Gallery
 - Suzanne relayed all positive feedback. Installation of artwork was still hard this year, work in this area needed. Suggestion to have well known guest artist or recent graduate artist to 'host' and elevate gallery.
- Kid's Art Corner
 - Suzanne relayed all positive feedback. Had great help from young adults and high school students. Collaboration with Jr. Women's Club very successful and chalk art was a hit.
- Community Art Project
 - Suzanne relayed all positive feedback. High School students running did a wonderful job and everyone reported enjoyment making tree.
- Volunteers
 - Craig suggested we each reach out and thank those we worked with in addition to the general thank you by Terry. Jeannine suggested we do not do tee shirts in future but instead have all volunteers wear vest for easy identification. She has several instances where audience members could not find volunteers when needed them. She shared images of vest options. Idea well received for future large events.

5. 2023-2024 Community Input Survey

- Suzanne relayed survey is completed and was online with QR code during festival. Will continue with outreach via normal communications channels.

6. New Business Before Council

- None at this time.

Motioned to end meeting by Terry, second by Craig, approval all

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm