

## **The Arts Commission, Town of Hamden**

Held a Regular Meeting via Zoom, on Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. The following items were discussed:

### MINUTES

Commissioners in Attendance: Ms. Johnson, , Ms. LBrown, Ms. Schiff, Ms. Gargiulo, Ms. McGarry, Ms. DBrown, Ms. Carter David, Ms. Elkin, Mr. Fernandez,  
Commissioners Excused: Ms. Hunter, Ms. Jason, Mr. Moore, Ms. Torello, Ms. Riello, Mr. Kortsep  
Others in Attendance: Ms. Martindale, Ms. Buggie, Mr. Graham, Ms. Tobin

Mr. Fernandez called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Treasurer's Report - There was no treasurer's report.

Mr. Fernandez turned the meeting over to Ms. Martindale who said we need to focus on what we can do to make up the summer, fall and winter because regular programming has been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We also need to focus on what we can do next year. Ms. Schiff mentioned that at one point Mayor Leng mentioned mentioned local bands for listening.

Ms. Martindale asked how we can involve the Commission and create the opportunities we want to see. All department budgets are being reduced drastically. There are cuts to all programming that comes out of the Arts and Culture line. The Saturday and Sunday Series should be okay. All cities and towns are effected due to no revenue coming in. There was discussion on a rant in the New Haven Register about how unnecessary this Commission is and said it is irresponsible of the Town to hold events. Ms. Martindale said she doesn't want to be all gloom and doom. Ms. Martindale hopes to see more community/resident involvement, and looks at the situation as not taking away, but coming up with something new. How can we reach the 100,000 people that attend our summer concert series? Ms. Dbrown mentioned that Long Wharf has cancelled their season. Arts and Ideas has cancelled their festival but will be doing small things – virtual performances – on their site.

Ms. Martindale said there are important Town items that have to be funded. We usually get between \$120 and \$130 thousand for summer concerts. This year the Mayor, because of the need to fund necessary items, reduced that amount to \$75,000 and now wants to cut it to \$50,000. There will be no pay raises and some pay cuts to town employees. We need to think of new ways to fill the void. We need more public participation and a home grown atmosphere.

Ms. Gargiulo said any money we get has to go back to Hamden artists and Hamden residents. Working with the Board of Education was also mentioned. Ms. Brown mentioned perhaps Friday Night concerts on Facebook Live and artist programs using Zoom. Ms. Gargiulo mentioned an open mike event held by the Library. How can we present that will grab people. Ms. Buggie mentioned that she is a musician and teacher. Perhaps we can do interactive things on line, such as hiring an expert to do master classes on line. Perhaps it is time to pay people a stipend to do something on line. Mr. Fernandez wondered if we could present someone like Tabiza.

Ms. Martindale is trying to cultivate things people that we know want to see. She started a Hamden Historic Society sketch book based on experiences during the pandemic. She also thought of a Hamden Heritage Cook Book in which we could share family recipes and sell some of the cookbooks with funds going to The Keefe Center.

Another idea is to have residents create sculptures in their front yard and document them. Ms.

McGarry mentioned residents could photograph something about Hamden they love and have a Hamden Has Heart virtual art show to present on social media. Ms. Johnson said we can think about this as a summer of inconvenience and have smaller projects to show we are still here, taking advantage of peoples strengths and keeping next year in mind. Ms. Gargiulo mentioned a zoom meeting with everyone singing the same song together, or people holding up a piece of art they made or a reciting a poem they wrote.

Ms. Martindale mentioned that the State still allows farmer's markets. There was discussion on holding the farmer's market in the Town Center Park. Ms. Martindale suggested holding it in front of the Library, where there is shelter if it rains. Ms. Schiff said this is not a precedent, and we are looking forward to getting back to our normal programing. Mr. Fernandez said he willl do a Cuban cooking class. Ms. Schiff mentioned a chalk fest. Hamden High cancelled their chalk fest this year. Ms. Elkin suggested that those students might want to participate in something. Mr. Fernandez mentioned liaisons to other organizations.

Ms. Schiff mentioned having generic business cards to hand to people. Ms. Martindale brought up new shirts. Ms. Elkin will follow up on the shirts with her nephew. Ms. McGarry mentioned that members should continue to spread the word about the Commission. Ms. Martindale mentioned the parable of the Tale of Two Seas and sharing resources.

#### New Business

Ms. Johnson asked about the Saturday and Sunday Series. Ms. Martindale said there is no official word but they are cancelled through December.

#### Adjournment

**Ms. Brown made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Schiff seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.**

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk