

MINUTES: The Arts Commission, Town of Hamden held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, October 6, 7:00 PM in the Activity Room, Miller Library Complex. The Following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Lois Jason, Vice Chair
Lorraine Brown
Lisa DeGrand
Deborah Ann Dozier
Donna Elkin
Derek Mirabilio
Tracy Nista
Mark Peel
Stacey Sandler
Sandra Schiff
Evelyn Skelly

Commissioners Excused: George Moore
Charles Korstep

Others in Attendance: Mimsie Coleman
Peggy Craft (Acting Clerk)
Ryan Ellen Burback
Steve Graham

Sandra Schiff introduced Ryan Ellen Burback. Ms. Schiff said that Ms. Burback has recently moved back to Connecticut. She said that Ms. Burback has a MFA, and goes to the Midwest every summer to run a theater program for children. Ms. Burback now resides in Hamden.

Ms. Burback thanked Mr. Schiff for inviting her to the meeting. She said she grew up in Westchester and UCONN. She has a deep-rooted passion for theater. She does not have teaching credentials, so she goes to the Midwest to teach a theater arts program. This program was founded in Fargo, North Dakota. Ms. Burback discussed the program, and said their performances are before crowds of 30,000 people. She has also worked as a curriculum consultant, and has done work on securing grants.

Call to Order

Vice Chair Jason called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Commissioner Nista noted that she was at the September 1st meeting, but was marked absent. There were no further corrections, additions or deletions, and Chairman Jason called for a motion to approve. **Commissioner Dozier motioned to approve the minutes of the previous meeting with the correction. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.**

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Treasurer's Report

Mr. Korstep was not present at the meeting to present the Treasurer's report. Ms. Coleman reported the balance in the Longevity, Special Projects and Professional/Technical Accounts. She added that the Advertising budget has been exhausted.

Ms. Coleman explained that the current budget shows \$57.50 in advertising, 0.0 in Special Projects, 0.0 in Professional Technical. She added that we started with \$5,000 in special programs of which \$445 was spent on the Saturday Program. Ms. Coleman explained that unlike other departments in Town, this department is allowed to have separate bank accounts. There is currently \$13,986.60 in the Saturday account, and the balance in the gift fund is \$49,547.74. Commissioner Sandler will join Ms. Coleman on the fund raising committee.

Programs

Columbus Day Parade Concert

All present agreed it was excellent. Ms. Brown said the performers came into the audience and passed out roses, she added that it was wonderful - although she wasn't fortunate enough to get a rose. Ms. Schiff said that she had overheard a conversation regarding the concert and there was great praise for the event. She added that one of the women speaking had gotten a rose. About 400 people attended. Ms. Coleman thanked the Commissioners for the approval of the allocation for the golf cart. One of the vendors, (Louie DeSorbo of DeSorbo's Bakery) contributed \$50.

Film Festival

The Commissioners that attended agreed that it was great. Ms. Jason said it gave her insight into the population. She said it was very well done. Ms. Brown said the turnout good was good. The Sprout representative said that usually there is not a great turnout from the general public.

Ms. Coleman said she is not sure if this should be done again. There has been some discussion regarding doing this annually, but Ms. Coleman added that it is a lot of work, it was necessary to watch about 50 films to choose from. She added that it was very meaningful.

Ms. Jason asked if we have learned anything about the workshops. The first workshop will be held on October 12th. Mr. Brown said that a videographer has been chosen. A film will be produced focusing on the artistic accomplishments of people with disabilities. This film will be submitted to Sprout. There was a discussion regarding the workshops. Ms. Coleman said there are enough people currently involved but if there is someone who is interested they are welcome to attend.

Saturday Series

Ms. DeGrand said they had a storyteller minstrel on Saturday. There was some worry that it might be too scary, but the storyteller gauged the crowd very well. There was a multi-cultural festival on the green at the same time, and this could have affected attendance. Ms. Coleman said they made \$78 on the event.

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On November 6th there will be Bublemania. Ms. Jason said she would work at the box office. Ms. Schiff will be there but plans to bring her grandson. Ms. DeGrand asked about the chair situation. Ms. Coleman said usually the kids sit on the floor. Ms. Schiff said there should be chairs for the adults attending with their children/grandchildren. Lisa asked if someone should be there to set up chairs if needed. Ms. Coleman pointed out that more people would fit on the floor. It was decided that an aisle would be set up and roped off.

Sunday Series

The Riverboat Ramblers will perform on November 16th.

Commissioners Mirabilio, Brown and Elkin volunteered to help with this performance. Ms. Jason advised them to arrive between 1:00 PM and 1:15 PM.

Ms. Coleman discussed the Air Force Jazz Band. Ms. Coleman believed everything was fine but when she contacted them she was told that they only perform in venues with a capacity of 500. The High School has a capacity of 500 but is unavailable on the requested date. There is no other venue in Town with a 500-person capacity. Further, the selection of music, jazz artists from Boston and New England, would not be a draw in this area. It was decided that this would not be pursued.

Raymond Sontino, who was one of the performers at the Columbus Day Concert, will perform on February 5th.

It will be necessary to find a replacement for the March 6th performance.

There was a short discussion regarding the expenditures for the Sunday Series. **Commissioner Peel motioned to approve the expenditures for the Sunday Series. Commission Mirabilio seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

Coordinator's Report

Ms. Coleman said that she hasn't gotten the Tower of Power contract yet. The group will be going to Europe but there is a 70-30 percent chance they will be here on the date we requested. The cost for this show is \$30,000, the same price as last year. There was another request for Three Dog Night. There are two Three Dog Night Groups. Ms. Coleman noted that the one with Chuck Negron is cheaper. Commissioner Peel said he saw him at Oakdale. He add that Mr. Negron has sang the lead on most of their songs.

Ms. Coleman said that a \$500 grant has been received from the Library for the Saturday programs.

Ms. Coleman discussed dates for the Salute to Young Artists. The dates to be considered are Friday, May 13th or Friday May 20th. Ms. Coleman said there are issues with both. After a discussion, it was decided that the event would be held on May 20th. The rehearsal date will be May 12th.

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Summer Concerts

As noted above in the Arts Coordinator's Report, regarding Tower of Power and Three Dog Night.

Old Business

There was no Old Business to come before the Commission.

New Business

Commissioner Mirabilio has an idea for an exhibition that could be done by this Commission for the Town. His idea is that we do an Earth Day exhibition. His initial thought was to have participating artists come up with theme-based art, which would be sold, and the money donated to the Commission. He would like to talk to local nurseries to arrange to purchase trees with the proceeds from the sale of art. These trees could then be planted in a Town park. Chris Rendiero Park was suggested.

Good and Welfare

Commissioner Mirabilio will be opening a fine arts and dance gallery in Wallingford with his partner. He discussed how this came about. There will be a gallery, an after school program and a framing facility included in this gallery.

Several members went to Derek's opening at Stella Blues. All who attended said it was excellent. They will be there again on October 27th, November 17th and December 8th.

The next meeting will be on November 3rd (this will be the November meeting). The December meeting will be on November 30th due to the start of Hanukah. There will be no meeting in December.

Ms. Nista's son Michael described his day at the Big-E.

Ms. Schiff discussed the New Horizons Art Center. Ms. Coleman said there has been a hold up in one of the building so the application process has been halted until the problem is corrected.

Mr. Graham asked about Mr. Korstep's injury. Ms. Coleman said she has spoken with him, and he is back at work.

Adjournment

Mr. Peel made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM

Submitted by: _____
Peggy Craft, Acting Commission Clerk

