

HAMDEN ARTS COMMISSION MINUTES

Meeting of Wednesday, June 5, 2013

7 pm: Miller Cultural Center Activity Room

Commissioners in Attendance: Charles Kortsep, Deborah Dozier, Donna Elkin, Sandra Schiff, Stacy Sandler, Lois Jason, Loraine Brown, Tracy Nista, Marita Gargiulo, Janet Hunter, Jim Brewster, Cheryl Riello and auxiliary member Steve Graham

Surprise Guest: Derek Mirabilio

Excused Absence: Evelyn Skelly, Ricardo Henriquez, Lisa DeGrand

Others in Attendance: Director of Arts Recreation & Culture Mimsie Coleman, Commission Clerk Gerry Tobin

Call to Order

Ms. Jason called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. and welcomed new commissioners.

Introduction of new and upcoming Commissioners:

Cheryl Riello is the Assistant Director of Advancement Services at Quinnipiac University, a doll maker and author, and has two daughters that went through the Hamden School System

Janet Hunter lived in Hamden since 1975 when she moved here from New York City for her husband's job at Honeywell. She retired after 37 years as a reading specialist with the West Haven School district. She has one daughter and three grandchildren. She and her family are very involved with what goes on in Hamden. Ms. Hunter also ran the Connecticut Trails summer camps for 20 years.

Jim Brewster came to Hamden to attend Paier College of Art in 1980, and spent 15 years as a graphic designer working construction in between. He taught art and gym at St. Ritas, was a substitute teacher in Hamden and North Haven and is now working as a carpenter. Jim's wife Lisa works for Naugatuck Savings Bank and is on the board at PLACE.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Kortsep reported a balance in the Saturday Series Account of \$17,764.54 as of 5/25. This account is used for youth programming. Revenue goes into the Gift Fund, which as of 5/25 has a balance of \$29,801.86. In the Town Lines Accounts, there is a balance of \$117 in temporary wages and \$1,200 in Advertising. The advertising funds are usually spent for summer concerts, so those funds will be spent soon. The commission also has a balance of \$96,125 in the Herreld Gift Fund, which is used for Sunday Series programming only, and funds in a vendor account.

New Budget

The new budget for the Arts, Recreation and Culture Department is on Page 3 of the handout. Ms. Coleman pointed out the five Arts Commission accounts within that budget.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Dozier made a motion to approve the minutes of May 1, 2013. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Old Business

Sprout Film Festival, with Arts for Learning CT:

Ms. Jason said it is such an experience to see these documentaries and see these disabled children and adults. Ms. Elkin, Ms. Brown and Ms. Jason were in attendance. Ms. Brown chose the films and was especially impressed with one non verbal man and his work, which was referred to as visual music. There were about 50 people in attendance, and the reception went well. We will continue to do this.

Fireworks Issues

Ms. Coleman explained that we help the volunteer firefighters in many ways, but the volunteer firefighters have to raise the money for the fireworks. The volunteer firefighters have been putting on the fireworks show for 20 years, but this will be their last year. The Town will make up the difference in cost this year if the volunteers fall short. Hamden will continue to have the fireworks according to Ms. Coleman.

For a number of years we have brought in military bands to accompany the fireworks. This year we had the Navy Band Northeast set up, but this was canceled because of sequestration. We will have a disc jockey for this year's program starting around 6:00 p.m. Fireworks start about 9:25. Ms. Jason told of her experience last year when some audience members were being rude by not paying attention during the National Anthem and the salute to Veterans in the audience.

Ms. Coleman said two members of the Trinity Boys Choir will sing two patriotic songs at this year's event. The volunteer firefighters wondered if we can get some other singers to do some patriotic songs. Avery Wilson or Soul Tempo were mentioned. The DJ will play patriotic music during the fireworks. The commissioners agreed to pay \$400 if Soul Tempo performs, or \$200 if Avery Wilson performs.

Fliers/Posters

There was a lengthy discussion on whether or not to mention that we will not have a band at the fireworks on the fliers and posters. Ms. Gargiulo felt it was important to put a positive spin on this. It was decided that the fliers/posters would be positive about having a DJ this year, and if mentioned at all, the lack of a band would be due to lack of funds, not the sequester and be placed at the bottom. Since there will not be a band, there will be no need for hospitality.

A surprise guest arrived, and everyone was excited to see the return to Hamden of Derek Mirabilio. He is living in Hamden again, and has been hired by Post University as a professor of marketing, and will also be doing some administrative work. Mr. Mirabilio will not be able to serve on the commission at this time, but would like to be on the auxiliary.

Ms. Brown made a motion to approve Jared Richards and Derek Mirabilio as auxiliary members of the commission. Ms. Dozier seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Summer Concerts

Publicity/Website/Rack Cards

Ms. Coleman mentioned that the final flier will include opening acts. She also explained about the bucket collection for the new members. Ms. Coleman said Ms. Sandler did a great job again on the rack cards. Ms. Sandler said she is waiting for the sponsors for the reverse side, and then they can be printed. Ms. Coleman said we put a quarter page ad in the New Haven Register and then we do rack cards, flyers, etc., to get the word out. Thea Morris from Quinnipiac has designed our final flyers. Ms. Sandler mentioned that Hamden High School is working on a logo which is a combination of the commission's logo and the cupola on the high school.

Performer updates

Sponsorship Update UI

A sponsorship by United Illuminating is shown on Page 4 of tonight's handout. They have promised a \$5,000 sponsorship. There is an upcoming United Illuminating project encouraging people to switch to natural gas. Because this is a joint special program with Hamden, they will be allowed to have a tent at the concerts and speak about this program from the stage. There were many suggestions about businesses to approach for sponsorships. One sponsor is having a function this weekend and they will be using the commission's show mobile. Ms. Coleman explained that this show mobile was purchased several years ago with grant funds.

Ms. Schiff told of bringing letters from to several businesses soliciting food for hospitality and/or sponsorships. She also has money left over on Costco cards from last year. Ms. Jason will approach Stop & Shop and Shop Rite if she can bring a letter from Ms. Coleman. Ms. Schiff said Whitneyville Market told her they would donate this year. Tonino's and Giovanni's will probably contribute once we know what we need.

Hospitality Update - a hospitality meeting will be held to plan for the concerts. Ms. Coleman explained that each band has its own requirements for hospitality.

Sign-up sheet – a sign up sheet for concerts was sent around.

Shirt Sizes for new commissioners – Ms. Elkin will order commission shirts for the three new commissioners (one large & two XL) Mr. Mirabilio still has his shirt.

There was discussion on various groups that would like to participate in our concerts. Ms. Coleman mentioned that she was approached by a Shakespeare Group (Eric Nyquist) which charges \$20,000. This is not something the commission can afford.

Approval of Auxiliary Appointment (see above)

Ms. Schiff told of her volunteer work in Florida. The organization uses tags that hang from a rear view mirror that she feels commissioners could use for parking. Ms. Brown will work on these tags.

Ms. Elkin mentioned that the Chalk Festival took place at Hamden High School today, and she recommends that the commissioners visit.

Coordinator's Report

New Business/Ideas/Good & Welfare

There was discussion on procedures for the fireworks.

Adjournment

Ms. Brown made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Elkin seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk