

HAMDEN ARTS COMMISSION MINUTES

Meeting of Wednesday, December 3, 2014
7 pm: Miller Cultural Center Activity Room

Commissioners in Attendance: Lois Jason, Sandy Schiff, Charles Kortsep, Marita Gargiulo, Ruth Resnick, Johnson, Tracy Nista, Lisa DeGrand , Cheryl Riello, Donna Elkin

Commissioners excused: Jim Brewster, Janet Hunter, Deb Dozier, Loraine Brown, Nancy Hurlburt, Ricardo Henriquez

Commissioners welcomed new member Ruth Resnick Johnson, a native of new Haven,. She and Donna were in the same classes at Hillhouse and Middle School. Ms. Johnson has a BS in Art Education, and had been certified to teach k-12, but detoured into being a public artist for the City of New Haven, where she met Ms. Coleman. She has painted inside and outside murals with artists and community members, put on festivals in the Chapel Square Mall and in various parks. She worked with the cities social service agencies with City Spirit Artists.

Call to Order

Ms. Jason called the meeting to order at 7:26 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Elkin made a motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting. Ms. Schiff seconded the motion. The vote was five in favor, three abstained. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Kortsep reported a balance of \$17,417.72 in the Saturday Series account. He also reported a balance of \$39,519.68 in the Gift Fund. The town line accounts are shown on Page 2 of the agenda. Ms. Coleman reported a balance of approximately \$90,000 in the Peter Herreld Trust Account, which is used to fund the Sunday Series in the amount of up to \$5,000 per year. Any profits from the Sunday Series go into the Gift Fund. There is also a balance of \$3,530 in the vendor account, which is a total revenue from several years.

Ms. Johnson asked where the money comes from. Ms. Coleman responded that the town lines are from the Town's Budget. The Saturday Series and Gift Fund comes from revenues for tickets, sponsorships, contributions, and some state grants.

Old Business

Silverbells

Volunteers are needed for field work, puppet show, tent activities. This is an annual winter holiday festival and includes an indoor puppet show, face painting at the library, and outside activities including hayrides, holiday crafts, vendors, caroling, tree lighting and Santa's arrival by firetruck. There are serious weather problems approaching calling for rain most of Saturday. Ms. Coleman will call the National Weather Service and make a decision Friday morning. This creates a number of problems, i.e. getting the word out. The indoor activities will remain the same, but the outdoor events will probably be moved to Sunday. Ms. Dozier can come until 4:00 p.m., the Riello family can come and two will do facepainting, and the other two will work with button making. We still need a volunteer for letters to santa. Ms. Hunter will help. Mr. Graham can help on Sunday. Ms. DeGrand will know by Friday if she can come on Sunday. Puppet show volunteers are Ms. Jason, Ms. DeGrand, Ms. Nista, possibly Ms. Elkin. If the outdoor portion gets postponed, Ms. Coleman can stay.

Mayor' Jackson's youngest son and Al Gorman's grandson will light the tree. The Rotary Club will bring donuts.

Riello signage

One of Ms. Riello's daughters made signs for the following activities at Silver Bells: letters to Santa; button making; face painting; and donations to the toy drive

Saturday Series

November 8: Puppet People: Wizard of Oz – This was the first time we had Puppet People. They were very professional and had four types of puppets. We had great feedback. The cost was \$900, and we brought in \$790. Ms. Coleman said she would have them back in a minute.

December 6: Mr. Punch's Christmas Carol – Crabgrass Puppet Theater will perform. They are multi national award winners.

Sunday Series

November 9: Flamenco Music, Dance & Song – Ms. Jason reported this was a terrific program. They had two singers and a dancer. Ms. Gargiulo mentioned that the entertainers seemed to really enjoy themselves. We took in \$1,044. They cost \$1,500, but it didn't cost us anything because of the Trust. Our favorite donors gave us a check for \$100 and put money in the jar.

Galvanized Jazz Band performs in January.

Cultural Directory: Update

The Cultural Directory is an on line directory of institutions and cultural notables. One person was paid to do the website and one commissioner did the writeups. During the last two summers we have had QU presidential fellows work on the directory. Commissioners have decided that it is time to update. Ms. Riello's daughter Susan is a grad student in communications and technology at Quinnipiac and we hope to retain her for this project. Ms. Riello is already incredibly experienced according to Ms. Coleman, who has met with her. She has agreed to accept \$15 per hour for 5-10 hours per week. The commission has to vote on this tonight and then it has to go to Council. Chris Riello will get the additional information on to the website. Susan Riello will be hired as a consultant or an independent contractor.

Ms. Nista made a motion to retain Susan Riello to work on the commission's cultural directory at a rate of \$15 per hour for 5-10 hours per week for approximately one year. Ms Gargiulo seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Ms. Gargiulo mentioned that it would be nice to do something for our notables.

Summer Concerts

A few updates - Ms. Coleman said she has not heard back from Tower of Power, and we won't hear back from the Navy Band for a while. It is time to start thinking about what bands we would like to have for 2015 summer concerts. Suggestions should be emailed to Ms. Coleman. Commissioners were happy to hear that George Moore wants to be involved. We already have some suggestions. Kenny Vance is still not performing. Jimmy Jameson from Survivor passed away a few months ago. Funds come from the Town and we get sponsors. Ms. Gargiulo was asked what is spent on entertainers for summer concerts, and when she responded, the person told her places she thought the money should go. Ms. Coleman responds to anyone who asks. She said the City of New Haven spent more on their radio spots than we pay for all of our concerts. The Arts Commission budget is .5 of 1% of the Town's budget. Southside Johnny, Meatloaf, and other suggestions were

discussed. The committee will meet in January.

Friday, July 3? - Fireworks will be held on Friday, June 26th and we will try to get a military band to perform. Our first concert will be held on July 3rd.

Coordinator's Report

The American Cancer Society wants to move their Relay for Life to Town Center Park, and now they want to sell luminaries at the Silverbells Festival. Commissioners agreed that we will not allow fund raisers at our concerts.

New Business/Ideas

Mr. Graham mentioned that his niece is looking for donations for her Emerson College basketball team to go to Virgin Islands.

Good & Welfare/Adjournment

Al Gorman ws recently honored by the Chamber of Commerce as Notable Citizen of the Year.

Ms. Nista made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Elkin seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk