

HAMDEN ARTS COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES of Zoom Meeting of March 3, 2021

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Commissioners in Attendance: Ms. McGarry, Mr. Kortsep, Ms. Elkin, Ms. Schiff, Ms. Gargiulo, Ms. Carter-David, Ms. LBrown

Commissioners excused: Ms. Jason, Mr. Moore

Commissioners Absent: Ms. DBrown, Ms. Mickens

Others in Attendance: Legislative Council Representative Ms. Clouse, Auxiliary Member Deb Dozier, Community Development Interim Director Ms. Smith, Arts & Culture Manager Ms. Martindale, Commission Clerk Ms. Tobin

### **Call to Order**

Ms. Elkin called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes of February 3, 2021**

Tabled to March meeting

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Martindale reported balances of \$52,149 in the Gift Fund; \$12,238 in the Saturday Series: and the same as previous month in the Peter Herald Fund. There was no balance reported in January. The last balance recorded in the minutes was June, 2020, in the amount of \$69,437.28.

### **Old Businesses**

### **Chair's Report**

Ms. Elkin had no report.

### **Director's Report**

Ms. Smith reported on recent staffing changes at Government Center, She is currently acting Community Development Manager, but also still doing the arts and school building items. In the next fiscal year budget, we are looking to moving the Arts Department to the Keefe Center. The Commission will still have Ms. Smith and Ms. Martindale. The Community Development director oversees Community Services, Youth Services and Community Development. She and Ms. Martindale are already doing a lot of work with those Departments. Ms. Martindale will be moving to the Keefe Center and will put more focus on community art, the arts trail, etc. Nothing will change with concerts, Saturday Series or Sunday Series. They will bring more services to Southern Hamden, but there will be no changes with the Arts Commission.

Ms. Smith said there will be more collaboration with the Commission on Disability Rights and Opportunities, Human Services, etc. When asked if we would still have the Arts Commission Office at the Library. Ms. Smith replied yes, we will continue to use that office when we are doing concerts and other events in the area. Ms. Schiff expressed concern that Ms. Smith would be overburdened. Ms. Smith assured her that she would not.

## **Salute to Young Artists**

Ms. Martindale has been in touch with Eric Nyquist, and they discussed their concerns regarding loading more onto teachers right now. They discussed students sending videos or images of their work. Each student will have their own profile page. Mr. Nyquist will send the information to the teachers asking for nominations. Ms. Gargiulo said she is glad to see some continuity. Ms. Smith said we will be highlighting the nominated students on the Town's social media pages with links to their work and a bio on each. Ms. Schiff said we are assuming that everyone that gets nominated will be featured. There was also discussion on keeping the nominations to seniors. Ms. Schiff said it would be good to do a press release on this coming up virtually in order to get the Commission's name out there to show we are still doing things. Commissioners wondered if the participants could be filmed on the stage at Thorngon Wilder. Ms. Martindale said that because of Covid, we would have to wait six hours between individuals. We would probably plan the Salute for mid May.

Ms. LBrown mentioned that her company usually holds an annual all day show case of entertainers they use, but this year they split it into six sessions. You can see them on the AFLCT.org website. Artists sent in links and they put them together. Ms. Dozier joined a Yale group and the members sent in their videos each week and they put them together. People from Ohio and Florida participated in their event.

Ms. Schiff wants Commissioners to think of ways to get our name out to the public. In the back of the Hamden Adult Education Brochure, various departments are listed, and there is a phone number 287-2546, which is the old Arts Commission Office at Thornton Wilder. Ms. Smith doesn't know who published the booklet. Ms. Schiff said we should be listed on that publication and the number should be changed for the future. Ms. Schiff said perhaps we could get some publicity in the weekend guide or on the Hamden Patch. Ms. Smith mentioned that someone on the Commission could look into that.

Ms. LBrown asked if we could just have some local bands for a drive in concert series with food trucks or something. Ms. Dozier attended an event last year where they painted out six foot squares and each group in attendance occupied a square. There were six foot aisles between the squares. Ms. Schiff mentioned that in Florida, local movie theaters do a drive-in movie. She also mentioned that some people attend services on Friday nights and wondered if we could do something on Saturday or Sunday nights. Friday nights are the tradition, and some members felt it should be kept on Fridays.

Ms. Smith said we had this conversation at the meeting last month, and mentioned Thabiza and other possibilities for entertainers. Ms. Gargiulo said it would be easier if there were no food involved. People could bring their own picnic. Ms. LBrown said President Biden said everyone should be vaccinated by the end of May, and we would have herd immunity by July. Ms. Smith said we should move forward with Thabiza. She does a wide range of music. Others mentioned were Boogie Chillin and Mark Kaplan. Also mentioned were a 50's, 60's 70's group and country music. Commissioners should sent their suggestions on the Google document or via email to Ms. Martindale or Ms. Smith. Willie Nillinger was mentioned. Regarding changing from Friday to Saturday or Sunday, Ms. Smith said Friday is tradition, but nothing is set in stone. Ms. Schiff wonders if Saturday would work. Commissioners were asked to think about this for the next meeting and put it to a vote.

When asked about fireworks, Ms. Smith said it is possible this year. There was discussion on broadcasting on line. Ms. Smith said we can do Facebook Live on the Town Center Park's Facebook page. Ms. Schiff mentioned Susan Werner's website. Ms. Gargiulo mentioned that she is concerned that Mr. Moore is unable to attend meetings. Ms. Elkin said he called her and said his computer was being repaired.

### **Good & Welfare**

Ms. Gargiulo had to leave the meeting, but before doing so she mentioned a young woman in the Hamden School System who is publishing a book called "The Other Black Girl". Her name is Vakia Harris. Ms. Elkin suggested a book signing. Her book will be available on Amazon on June 1, 2021. Ms. Smith said perhaps the book signing could be in collaboration with the Library. Ms. Carter-David will speak to Ms. Harris' Dad, whom she works with.

A retired Hamden teacher Eva Johnson has a book out called "My Other Students" available in paperback for \$15. It tells about what she and her students learned from each other.

Ms. Schiff mentioned that all Staples stores will laminate your Covid card free, provided it does not have a sticker on it.

### **New Business Ideas**

Suggestions by Ms. Buggie:

Create an artist performance/consultant catalog

Community musical talent show on Zoom

Collaboration with Hamden Symphony Orchestra

Set up a non-singing guitar performance with students of Mark Turko Guitar Studio

Adjournment

**Ms. Schiff made a motion to adjourn. Ms. LBrown seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting ended at 8:30 p.m.**

Ms. LBrown mentioned that she will be unable to attend the next meeting.

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

A message from the clerk: Please remember to let me know if you are unable to attend the meeting so I can put you in as excused.