

North Kingstown Arts Council

Wednesday, August 12, 2020 Minutes

Members Present: Nancy Whyte Sherman - Chairperson, James Halley - Vice-Chairperson - His *Zoom* cut out on him, Eleanor Acton, Gail Shawn Burda - Recording Secretary, Francine Crete, Gerry Grabowski, Nora Hall, Robert Martone, Kathleen McCarthy, Scott Monroe, Paul Pichette, Donna Vanderbeck

Excused Member Absences: none

Attendees: Chelsey Dumas-Gibbs - Recreation Director, Rose Pichette - Staff Liaison, Mary Brimer - Town Council Liaison

1. **Call to order:** 7:02 pm by Chairperson Nancy Whyte Sherman

2. **Pursuant to RIGL 42-46-6©** Notice of this meeting has been posted on the Secretary of State's website.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** Kathleen McCarthy was listed as an unexcused absence for July 8, 2020 meeting, but she signed on unbeknown to us. Robert Martone was listed in the July minutes as attending and also as having an excused absence – he was not here. Motion to approve Gerry Grabowski, seconded Nora Hall. Unanimous approval.

4. **Guests-Public Comment:** Yarrow Thorne from *The Avenue*, Mellissa Devine from *Leadership RI*

a. Yarrow Thorne from *The Avenue* & Mary Brimer our Town Council Liaison gave us an update on their meeting with Nicole LaFontaine – Director of Planning & Development for the Town, on The Avenue's Art Program's progress with North Kingstown. Even though the people they presented their ideas to liked them, since the Town has no art policy no one wanted to sign off on the venture. The buildings the group was interested in painting are privately owned and technically do not need the Town's okay to paint a mural or selfie portrait on them, but Yarrow does not want to proceed without the Town's blessing. The Town would like to put an art policy in place, figure out what Departments would and would not oversee ventures of this sort, etc. Perhaps by Fall or Spring 2021 something could be in place. *The Avenue* could put up a painting for a day or so and gauge reactions. Updates by Yarrow Thorne to follow.

There is a Historic Wickford Inc. (Hiswick) meeting soon, with the topic of murals being painted on buildings to be discussed. Yarrow will attend.

5. **Financial Items:** \$16,000 available, though \$600-\$800 incumbent. Nancy Whyte Sherman - Chairperson asked Chelsey Dumas-Gibbs - Recreation Director if the Town Council money was in our account and Chelsey said that she would check. Motion to approve Finance report made by Robert Martone, seconded by Donna Vanderbeck.

6. **Publicity/Website Report:** Scott Monroe has been working on publicity on our website and Gerry Grabowski has been keeping up our Face Book page with photos of the Family Concerts. Motion to approve report Nora Hall, seconded by Gerry Grabowski.

7. **Project Proposals:**

a. Heroes Around Here #80380 – Mellissa (Missy Devine) from *Leadership RI* presented the proposal that was a class project with seven local classmates from North Kingstown (a class comprised of more than 70 classmates state-wide), started a campaign called “Heroes Around Here”. They have created a logo and *Facebook* page, using the *Leadership Rhode Island* network and are creating a service coin their team designed, to be produced in bronze by local vendor Kennedy Manufacturing. The Military presents a service coin to military personnel demonstrating extra service, helpfulness, etc. to others. The group thought that it would be uplifting to: Honor and highlight citizens, the health care industry and businesses who are stepping up to help others during the pandemic. Gerry Grabowski made the motion to grant their request for \$800, seconded by Donna Vanderbeck. Unanimous approval.

8. **Final Funding:** None

9. **Old Business:**

- Gail Shawn Burda talked about the role of the Arts Council liaison. The responsibility is more in-depth than some may realize so when an Arts Council Member becomes a liaison to someone requesting financial assistance, the liaison should make them aware of both their and the liaison’s obligations. This should also be done with organizations that we have worked with in the past, as well as the new organizations, since they may be unaware of all the support being extended to help them to experience a successful event. Make sure that they have a copy of the liaison’s duties. It will make a liaison’s position more logical and helpful to those submitting proposals.
- Gerry Grabowski let the Council know that a hundred people attended the first Thursday night Family Concert and fifty attended the second concert. Gerry read some of the positive concert feedback posted on our Facebook page.

10. **New Business:** President Nancy Whyte Sherman announced that Susan Hannel resigned from the Arts Council Committee and suggestions for a new member will be accepted.

a. Volunteers to review and update website. Initially, the Project Proposal.

- A suggestion was made to put the “Heroes Around Here” information on our website.
- Gail Shawn Burda and Gerry Grabowski volunteered to review and update our website with Scott Monroe.
- Scott Monroe said that he’d send out pages of the website for us to highlight changes and return it to him and he’d compile the results. We would then have discussions before passing it along to the Arts Council for review.

b. Discussion of our Mission Statement

- Nora Hall brought up the subject feeling that more depth should be added to how we fulfill our Mission Statement and wondered if other’s felt the same. There was agreement that we can always do better.

c. Discussion on the role of the Arts Council in stimulating Art Awareness & Appreciation

- This comes out of the Mission Statement questioning. Nancy Whyte Sherman mentioned that several different offerings that the Arts Council’s programming had included in years past, were suggested and run by people passionate to a certain program and they were no longer on the council to keep those programs going, so other offerings came along.

- Kathleen McCarthy, Bob Monroe and Eleanor Acton volunteered to work with Nora on the Mission Statement and Art Awareness & Appreciation.
- It was suggested to post Project Proposals on the website.
- More discussions and suggestions on this subject will take place.
- It was mentioned that the student's portraits have never been hung in the North Kingstown Library, Donna Vanderbeck offered to assist with that project.
- Gail Shawn Burda suggested posting the art work on our website particularly for those students who may be out of our school system to be able to view their work getting notoriety.

11. **Correspondence:** As Art Council Liaison for *Smith's Castle* and *Gilbert Stuart Museum* Gail asked for and received e-mails from the President of the *Cocumscussoc Association* (dba Smith's Castle) and the Director of Gilbert Stuart Museum stating that they were cancelling all festivities that require funds from the Arts Council for the rest of the year. The two Museums are looking forward to working with us next year and are most appreciative for the support afforded to them, by the Arts Council, in past years. This knowledge helps the Arts Council plan their finances.

12. **Adjournment:** 8:10 pm Motion to adjourn by Gerry Grabowski, seconded by Kathleen McCarthy.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Shawn Burda

Recording Secretary