

Washington Arts Council

Minutes- Feb. 9, 2023- 7:00pm

Subject to approval of the Arts Council

Members Present: Abdo Ballester, Fran Keilty, Kent Burnham, Kirsten Leon, Sarah Clemente, Simon Holt, Tracy Liz Miller, Victoria Rowan

Staff: Michelle Gorra- Economic and Community Development Coordinator

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 7:02
2. The members all introduced themselves and shared some background regarding why they joined.
3. The Council decided to meet monthly on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00pm. All meetings will be hybrid. The Council also decided to adopt the Mission Statement that had been prepared by the previous working group.
4. **Election of Chair-** Simon Holt nominated Victoria Rowan for chair which was seconded by Kent Burnham. All voted in favor.
5. Announcements, discussion of goals and future work
 - Michelle shared the announcement of the CT Humanities grant recipients. Washington organizations receiving grants were: ASAP, Common Ground with Jane Whitney, Gunn Memorial Library and Museum, Institute for American Indian Studies, Pilobolus, The Judy Black Memorial Park and Gardens and the Washington Art Association. Fran suggested the information be shared on our web-page on the town web-site.
 - The "The Summer in Washington" postcard that the EDC put together last year was shared. It is a list of all the arts events happening in the summer and it is time to start working on one for summer 2023. There is money in the EDC budget for this.
 - Connecticut Main Street Center is hosting a webinar "How to start a Cultural District in Your Town" on Feb 23 at 10:00. Declaring a Cultural District is something that was discussed at a previous meeting and is something the Council would like to explore. We will start discussing at our next meeting once we have more information.
 - Abdo mentioned that it would be nice to have a sign on Rt 202 "Washington Cultural Center" like the one he saw in Madison CT. The WBA is also discussing signage. We will discuss and collect pictures of signs that we like.
 - Sarah shared she would like to explore affordable arts opportunities for children. The Arts Council can help inventory what is available, identify gaps and see if we can help fill the holes. ASAP has changed their model to be more in school and less after school. Discussed partnering with Parks & Rec.
 - Simon suggested the Council could be the place to be a clearing house for an Arts calendar. We discussed how to use the existing Explore events calendar with a special tag for "Arts" so you can filter events vs. classes etc. Michelle will ask Julia at explore about the category list. This led to a discussion of upcoming summer events and the conflict with the Pilobolus and Judy Black fundraisers. There is also a potential conflict with the ASAP event on June 3rd.
 - Victoria asked people to email agenda suggestions to her.
6. **Public Comment-** None
7. **Adjournment:** Fran moved and Abdo seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:20

Respectfully Submitted, Michelle Gorra

Meeting recording https://youtu.be/HVV_1WstzDk