

Town of Washington

Arts Council- Minutes

March 14, 2024- 7:00

Bryan Town Hall main conference room and zoom

Members Present: Abdo Ballester, Fran Keilty, Kent Burnham, Simon Holt, Victoria Rowan

Guest: Chris Combs

Staff: Michelle Gorra- Economic and Community Development Coordinator

1. Call to order 7:05
2. Consideration of the Minutes of February 8, 2024. Victoria moved to approve the minutes as amended and Kent seconded. All voted in favor.
3. Old Business
 - a. Budget request for FY 24-25. Michelle let the committee know that the Board of selectmen will preset their budget to the Board of Finance April 1st. The Board of Finance will deliberate April 15th and the Public Hearing on the Budget will be May 2nd and the vote will be May 16th. Victoria reminded everyone of the plans behind the budget request.
 - b. Cultural District progress- Michelle and Victoria met and made some headway on the map and listing of cultural assets.
4. New Business
 - a. New Council Member- Chris Combs of the Institute for American Indian Studies has agreed to join the Arts Council. He shared some information about the Institute including that they have 14 staff members and that they see 8,000 students a year.
 - b. Restaurant Week-Work is progressing. The cost for promoting the event will be \$1,800 total. The Arts Council will be splitting this cost with the EDC and the WBA. **Simon made a motion to approve \$600 on restaurant week promotion and Abdo seconded. All voted in favor. Fran moved we approve up to \$300 on a reception and Simon seconded. All voted in favor.**
 - c. Calendar for the year. Victoria mapped out the year so we can plan ahead for participation in the town wide events. The next event is the Community Block party June 7 and the council is encouraged to come to the April meeting with ideas. If we are doing music it should be over by the Pantry to avoid conflicting with the band at Town Hall. Also, weather dependent. Maybe we could suggest making the event rain or shine. Fran also proposed a fundraising event for the Arts Council. She would like to host a discussion of the book "Fourteen Days" on May 24th at Judy Black Park at 4:00. There are local authors that would participate and she would donate \$10 for each book sold.
 - d. Oral History Project- Karen has done before and is working on scheduling the first interview. We can learn more from her next meeting. Victoria reminded us of the Art Heroes nominations as well.

5. Sharing of Events- Abo shared his idea of having a something like the "Aspen Institute" a think tank around the arts or an artist in residence; a creative placemaking space. NW Arts Council fundraiser April 27th at Spring Hill. CT Theater exchange, April 7th Violet and Me at FGS. We also discussed having a tour of the arts facility.
6. Public Comment-none
7. Adjournment- 8:30

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Gorra

Recording of the meeting

<https://youtu.be/xQ2eTogTJnY>