

West Hartford Commission on the Arts
Minutes of the Meeting
September 20, 2021 at 6:30 PM

I. Meeting Opening

- Call to Order-the meeting was called to order at 6:34pm
- Roll Call- Present: Karen Bachman, Matt Bragg, Javier Colon, Chuck Coursey, Nancy Hoffman, Carol McCabe, Mirela Panaitisor
 - Absent Latanya Farrell and Susan Rothenberg
- Approval of the minutes from July 19, 2021 meeting -Nancy made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Matt.
 - Matt, Javier, Chuck,Carol and Mirela voted -YES
 - Nancy and Karen -ABSTAINED as they weren't present at the previous meetingMinutes were approved by the majority.

II. Old Business

- Terms of Commissioners/New Commissioners – Chuck informed everyone that after checking with the Town Council and the Mayor, those WHAC members who are approaching the end of their 1 year term this December are not precluded to be reappointed for another 3 year term.
- Possible Annual Music Event – Javier has many ideas and had conversations with a couple of entities regarding a music event that could beginning next year or the following year depending on how quickly we can secure funding
- Possible Winter Festival – Mirela mentioned being able to reach out to the BTC only about the festival but will soon follow up with the rest of Arts and Culture organizations in town, planning to discuss a possible event in December 2022.

III. Committee Updates

- Partnerships – WHSO – Mirela & Sue-presented updates about the Holiday Stroll
- Communications – Carol & Chuck -presented updates about the Art League
- Artist Outreach – Javier & Latanya-presented updates about a possible annual music event 2022
- Town Outreach – Chuck-presented updates regarding the WHAC members' appointing process
- Finance – Matt -no updates
- Events – Nancy, Karen -no updates
- West Hartford Arts & Culture Collaborative Update – Karen mentioned that the West Hartford Women's Chorale is also supportive of a dedicated performance spot equipped with a good sound system, a spot which won't interfere with other happenings during the Holiday Stroll.

IV. Conversation with Town Manager Matt Hart

- Kiosks/Morris Columns – Public Space to Post Arts & Culture Notices - Chuck had asked Matt Hart if the town would support the installation of Morris Columns-Matt asked about a package of information that WHCA could submit to initiate the proposal, discuss location, permits, funding.
 - Mirela suggested that the Commission could share with Matt Hart and the town's planning staff the Morris Columns research already done and circulated among the commission members.
 - Karen mentioned that the Arts and Culture Collaborative members are also supportive of this initiative to expand posts and advertisements of arts and cultural events in town.

- Mural Application Process-Chuck put together a simplified Mural Application for art intended to be displayed on private property. Matt mentioned that the town welcomes the updated form as the easier process will encourage more artists to apply.
- Possible Arts Funding – Capital Projects & New Development Applications-
Chuck asked the Town Manager what are a few possible options in funding public art in town?
Matt Hart shared the following:
 - there is an Incentive Zoning Ordinance in place which recognizes public art in public space and would possibly be expanded to include a fund
 - another possibility would be for the Town of West Hartford to create a matching grant program or providing seed money
 - American Rescue Plan Act Funds-Matt shared with the Commission that Town of West Hartford received \$25,000,000 on the town side, \$10,000,000 for the schools, and \$12,000,000 for county-based funds (money that the town could use for storm water infrastructure). Matt stated that part of the money allocated to the town will be used to provide relief to non-profit organizations as well as human services organizations that incurred financial loss during the pandemic and did not receive any other type of state or federal financial help. Matt also explained how the town intends to organize forums meant to elicit ideas on how the funds could reach the organizations in our community negatively impacted by Covid. Matt invited members of the commission to participate and engage in future conversations regarding the process of allocating funds to the arts and culture non-profit organizations and help spread the word about the opportunities.

V. Events Update

- Holiday Stroll December 2021 - Art League & Chamber– Carol, Nancy & Mirela
Mirela -Carol updated the Commission regarding the Art League meeting the 3 WHAC members had with Roxanne Stachelek-the executive director. Due to many other events already planned in support of the Art League members, Roxanne declined this year's participation at the Holiday Stroll as the nature of the event (one day) is making it hard for artists to wish to get involved.

Mirela also updated the Commission on a joint event that WHSO and BTC are hoping to present for the Holiday Stroll. However, both organizations need an appropriate space for this to happen and are asking the Commission and Chamber's help to figure out if the Town Hall can accommodate a quartet and dancers the night of the Holiday Stroll.

VI. New Business – Commission members may introduce items for exploration and discussion at the next Commission Meeting.

VII. Public Comment- no public comments

VIII. Adjournment- Matt made a motion to adjourn seconded by Mirela. Meeting adjourned at 7:28pm.

"ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY WHO NEEDS SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING OR PUBLIC HEARING SHOULD CONTACT SUZANNE OSLANDER, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, 860-561-7580 AT LEAST TWO DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING OR PUBLIC HEARING."