



TOWN OF PUTNAM
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
TOWN HALL
200 SCHOOL STREET • PUTNAM, CT 06260

Putnam Arts Council
REGULAR MEETING
Monday April 27, 2026
MINUTES

Present:: Laura Moorehead, Chairman, Elaine Turner, Vice Chair Anna Ionkin, Carmine Angeloni, Beth Johnston, Julie Reid

Absent: Oliver Williamson

Also Present: MaryAnn Chinatti, Director, Economic & Community Dev./Redev. Susan Ramos, Recording Secretary

Call to Order: Chairman Moorehead called the meeting to order at 5:34PM.

1. Roll call was taken; it was determined a quorum was present.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes: **(M/S/C Turner/Williamson)** to approve as written. Carried unanimously.
3. Additions to Agenda: 501c3

Chairman Moorehead asked for a motion to continue discussion to possibly change the Putnam Arts Council from a Town Council to a Non-Profit.

(M/S/C Angeloni/Williamson) to continue discussion. Carried unanimously.

4. Finances:

I. Budget Report:

Chairman Moorehead stated a Grant from The Putnam Area Foundation, Byrnes and Bank Hometown were all received.

B. Johnston asked if something came in from The Northeast Art Guild, M.A. Chinatti answered no.

II. Refund for Dan Merlo:

M.A. Chinatti stated it was processed within the week.

III. Downtown Sculpture Project:

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Chairman Moorehead asked if the money coming into Café goes to the Arts Council, to which M.A. Chinatti stated she believes it does and would double check.

IV. Art Festival Double Booth Option:

Chairman Moorehead stated that this year there aren't as many applicants for the Art Festival.

B. Johnston suggested offering a double booth to Applicants who would want one and explained how a couple of applicants asked for double booths or an end booth last year. The price would be \$200.00 for the double booth. She also suggested sending a separate link to the people who request a double to pay the extra \$75.

Chairman Moorehead asked for a motion to vote on allowing applicants to request double booths this year for \$200. **(M/S/C Turner/Reid)** to approve double booths at \$200. Carried unanimously.

J. Reid feels it will bring in more money for the event.

E. Turner asked if this will be offered to the people who already paid, to which B. Johnston replied yes, letters will be sent to everyone.

J. Reid suggested this could be used as an incentive offering an end spot.

B. Johnston stated there is a balancing act setting up booths, some will request end booths, and that it should be kept vague to accommodate what works best setting up.

E. Turner stated it should be specific so there is no booth sharing, just one artist per booth.

5. New Business:

Chairman Moorehead suggested motion to add Poet Laureate discussion to agenda.

(M/S/C Angeloni/Turner) to add. Carried unanimously.

C. Angeloni informed the council that Aubrey, the Poet Laurite, will not be able to attend a meeting of the Arts Council until July 27 and asked Recording Secretary Ramos to include on that meeting's agenda.

Chairman Moorehead confirmed that she is still interested in doing the event in the woods. Aubrey will also be doing a reading at the Pride event.

6. Old Business:

I. Term Limits: Chairman Moorehead keeping it on the Agenda. Chairman Moorehead noted that, on the last meeting minutes, O. Williamson had some concerns. She asked if there were any thoughts on this topic.

II. Particle Accelerator:

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Chairman Moorehead stated they have started advertising for the event, and that she also received a text from Eric asking for a bit of artistic help. She then asked if any member(s) would be interested, or possibly someone from the Art Guild.

Chairman Moorehead then gave an explanation about Particle Accelerator, stating it is a yearly concert in Rotary Park for Mental Health. She stated the event was started by the parents of a young man who committed suicide, along with Eric Gould, noting they work with United Services to raise money for mental health. She stated they have a Wall of Angels, with pictures and names of people who committed suicide in the area, noting the display they have now is older and falling apart.

B. Johnston suggested someone from the Art Guild, and asked what type of help they're looking for.

E. Turner asked what the art was made of and whether it would be temporary, to which Chairman Moorehead responded that she believes it is only temporary, for that day. E. Turner asked whether a list of questions could be compiled prior to reaching out to Mr. Gould. She also stated there are "no dig" areas in Rotary Park and that must be taken into consideration re placement. She also noted that liability issues must be considered.

Chairman Moorehead questioned whether it could be attached to, or be a part of, the stage. She also agreed that a list of questions is a great idea.

Chairman Moorehead noted she hasn't heard from Rec Director Jimmy Callaghan re the shuttle, to which M. A. Chinatti stated she would check. B. Johnston also stated the need to know shuttle stop locations and indicated the Council would like to make signs for the stops.

E. Turner stated some liability issues need

III. MuralFest Update

E. Turner stated they had a trip to Keene, New Hampshire with Linda Colangelo, Laura Cossetti and Emida Roller, looking for information on how to run one. They were very accommodating and helpful with information. They will also be joining our MuralFest in 2028. They did a full historical walk. It was nice to spend the day. There is a \$12.00 tour you can sign up for. It is a fundraiser for their Historical Society and the fund that maintains the murals. C. Angeloni asked how many murals, E. Turner stated there are 16. Their budget was \$250,000.00, and after expenses, \$12,000.00 left for maintenance.

C. Angeloni asked if there was any artwork prior to the MuralFest. E. Turner stated nothing on that scale. They created a Kiosk in the center of town that had history, sponsors and how it came together. They set the bar. E. Turner said they are now getting ready to go to Menomonie, WI, noting there will be six (6) going. Chairman Moorehead asked if E. Turner could give a quick synopsis of what MuralFest is.

E. Turner explained that the Walldogs a non-profit organization in the Midwest. First event in Illinois 35 years ago. Walldogs are old sign artists. If you see ghost signs or faded signs on

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walls they painted it. There is now a generation of mural artists and sign painters. They call themselves "letterheads" if they specialize in lettering. They got together for one town across the country every year. Over the years they have painted 75 murals. People come from all over the world to see this. There is a prototype that the towns people vote on. 16 subjects, possibly 17, will be chosen. They go rain or shine, arriving on Tuesday may go until Monday if they are behind schedule. Our responsibility is organizing, feed, transport and house. About 200 Walldogs sign up and 100 volunteers.

IV. Art Festival:

B. Johnston had handouts of the set up for the Art Festival. She explained there was a lot of space open, because of working around the trees. The rough draft gives every booth a hidden area to hide things, it gives a lot of walking Space. Chairman Moorehead stated some people complained the first year about sun in the tent all day. B. Johnston stated the layout gives people the option of an extra wall on the outside.

B. Johnston gave a handout showing a summary of who will attend. 18 have paid and sent their forms in, 10 have paid and have not submitted forms. They have been sent emails. The 27 who haven't paid or sent in forms. Emails have been sent to early acceptance people next week will send email to regular acceptance people. Three have withdrawn. There is a fill in for the withdrawals. There were 2 people who applied after the close of the call. They didn't have to pay the 10.00 booth fee. Should they pay? C. Angeloni agreed they should pay. How should they make payments? M.A. Chinatti stated a check will be easiest but add detail to the check so we know what it's for - Memo arts festival jury fee. B. Johnston will send them an email.

L. Moorehead gave summary on the digital ads. Jack Andraide was very helpful. Didn't charge last year. He has evaluations of how money worked last year. Stick with responsive ads. Simple ad, provide wording, photo and logo, google puts together series of ads to send out to different categories (ex: gardening, decorating art, jewelry etc.). All static ads. L. Moorehead stated another meeting was set up with him after he sends a summary. B. Johnston wanted his thoughts on graphics and play with 4 designs and have him measure the response rate.

E. Turner commented on the use of AI. It's been a thorn of contention. Purists are upset, while some artists have no problem with it. Committee members thought it would be a good idea to show what they wanted. No, they would ban your location, and some said they wouldn't go. Chairman Moorehead stated all posters will be hand designed.

B. Johnston stated she would reach out to all to put up signs. She has a list of addresses, and also stated if you put a sign out, please take it back and please ask for permission.

B. Johnston moved on to discuss the shuttle stops and have additional signs made up for Saturday when the stops are confirmed for the Arts Festival or Particle Accelerator.

Anna Start gathering pictures like last year and trying to get access to Facebook page. B. Johnson will reach out to Anthony Ferenda for the Facebook passwords or reset them. E.

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Turner suggested closing the page and opening a new one. B. Johnston explained how you will lose all your contacts, followers and fans. B. Johnston stated that her and Chairman Moorehead will be starting to post on their social media and encouraged others to do the same for promotion. Last year Anna did all the picture work and emailed it to B. Johnston and she posted it. B. Johnston asked if anyone found any social media pages that may be good to promote to please let her know.

B. Johnston stated they have an interview on May 20, 2026 at WILI. B. Johnston, Aubrey and Anna will attend. WINY is also in the budget. Chairman Moorehead will reach out for a possible spot the end of May beginning of June.

J. Reed has music called Acoustic Ruckus to play at the Art Festival on Sunday. Chairman Moorehead asked if she had social media contacts, or the groups send to B. Johnston to promote. B. Johnston will create a reel and record the music off YouTube and it will be the background music for her reel.

Chairman Moorehead stated Kim had been working on food, coffee and donuts. Kim stated they are a little different from last year and need approval, has all the pricing and info. It is \$600.00 for Saturday and \$600.00 for Sunday. Kim stated Little B's BBQ can only do Sunday. They have someone with Jamaican Food on Saturday and Little B's BBQ will help. B. Johnston stated they will need to be contacted and told they will need to get a permit thru The Town Clerks office; permits are good for the year. Kim will follow up.

Chairman Moorehead stated the E. Turner had been nominated for the volunteers. E. Turner stated Homeschoolers are not available, and the Leos are helping on Saturday and Sunday. A high school student from PHS, Aiden, reached out who needs some hours and will volunteer Friday to Sunday. E.

Turner also stated the state of the arts group asked if they could do an art table next to the Duck Table. Aiden will man the booth. Shane Donohue may be able to get a few students.

Chairman Moorehead said Laura Crosetti helps with clean up every year.

B. Johnston asked if we had the details of Pluck a Duck. Chairman Moorehead stated they have a tent and noted Beth Markowski-Roop has left over craft items. Chairman Moorehead will ask about the Arts Festival getting 50% of the sales for one day as B. Johnston previously stated.

V. Scholarships:

Chairman Moorehead stated there are still no applicants and it is open until the end of May. She then suggested to donate to the QVCC Foundation for an art scholarship for a Putnam student.

VI. Corridor Gallery:

Chairman Moorehead stated that A. Ionkin had her opening and sold a few paintings. She then asked if Anna had any suggestions, to which A. Ionkin stated they ran out of time at

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the end, which was OK. She then stated her family came and brought friends and that, overall, it was great.

Chairman Moorehead stated there will be four (4) artists next year – Annie Joly, the Pride artists, Carmine Angeloni and one other, noting the Gallery full for the year.

Chairman Moorehead stated the 501c3 was added in, it is also in the last minutes. Members continued discussion regarding the pros and cons and noted the Council would lose town support but opened to more grants. E. Turner stated it is not a simple process, noting that a board would have to be created, that the Council would be allowed to take donations, but would lose the Town's umbrella.

J. Reid stated that the issue is insurance with prices going up.

E. Turner stated the Council may lose the area for the Arts Festival because, being a part of the Town, you can hold the event on town property. The Town may not want to rent out the property because the Council set a precedent. She further noted the Festival could be held in other parks, but the Council would still be required to follow rules. She also noted that the Council may need to supply more help than is provided by being part of the Town.

C. Angeloni asked if there is discussion at the Town level re splitting the Council off, to which Chairman Moorehead responded there was not but noted she and M. A. Chinatti and she had been discussing it and the advantages/disadvantages. He then suggested compiling a list of pros and cons before voting on it.

E. Turner asked how the Council was developed, to which B. Johnston stated that the creation was in the last meeting minutes. Chairman Moorehead read from that section of the April minutes. E. Turner then stated her belief that the Council has more power staying with the Town.

C. Angeloni stated that having the Poet Laureate on board expands the Council's scope to literary arts.

7. Public Participation:

Edward Spillars from Van Den Noort St. stated he would like to volunteer during the Festival on Sunday. He also stated he could potentially donate funds. Chairman Moorehead stated he should give his contact information to M. A. Chinatti in the Economic Development office. He stated he felt the scholarship was a wonderful thing and would share information about it. He continued, stating he went to Manchester, NH, to their Museum of Art, and asked if MuralFest was similar. E. Turner stated it was not, noting Manchester's was a lot of lettering looking more "old school" and suggested going on YouTube and look up Keene's MuralFest and watch their video to get a full idea of the scope of it.

L. Moorehead added that there is an opening for an alternate on the Putnam Arts Council, to which Mr. Spillars responded he would take that under advisement.

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Chairman Moorehead stated the next meeting is on Tuesday, May 26th due to Memorial Day.
J. Reid stated she would not be able to attend.

8. Adjournment*

(M/S/C Angeloni/Williamson) to adjourn at 7:05PM with no further business. Carried
unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Ramos, Recording Secretary

* Vote Required