

May 9, 2017

Members, Present: Susan Wallerstein, Becki Christopherson, Nori Grudin, Jennifer Bangser, Chris Bradley, Janet Evelyn, Lynn Massey, Jeff Price, Judith Bacal, Helen Roman

Friends, Present: Laurel Peterson, Melissa Slattery, Dorothy Mobilia, Jeff Price

Guests: Jim Clark, Wendy Bodden,, Suzanne Cahill, Danielle Vinci, Stephanie Allgood, Eddie Nino, Billy Banks

Meeting called to order 8:35am.

Introductions

Report: Suzanne Cahill, Wall Street Theatre

There was built in 1915 - the regent, it's been in redevelopment for 5 years; grant for 1.5 million for the property, more for remediation; bank loan from Patriot Bank underwritten by tax credits (historic - original blue/gold, red seats, patina finish), tax and environment); May 15 grand opening Gala; expect to be completely finished in one month; putting up a marquis sign and a blade sign from 1927. 3 major renovations - 1927 - the Norwalk; 1980's - bigger renovation to be a club; shuttered in the '90s and sat. All acoustical elements have been added (insulation and tiles); will be holding live concerts, opera, live theatre, CT Public Broadcasting for an in-place theatre training program with Norwalk High School. Ultimately they want to be a place for emerging artists to grow. High technology set is data driven, will be live-streaming with 8 fixed position cameras; Steve Rust of Theatre Projects was the go-to on design, and Jaffe Holden did the acoustic design. Not a movie house; It's a non-profit with a small board of family and friends who worked with the developer. They have 690 seats between the main floor and the balcony. Billy Banks Jr is Artistic Director, moved from LA. His background includes multi-media, dance, and film, uniquely qualified for the diverse programming the theatre wants to do.

Susan

Approve minutes - Jennifer/Jeffrey, unanimous

Financial Reports - Lynn question, total available for Mayor's gallery is wrong, please ignore; should be \$500, which makes the total balance available. *NOTE: Susan sent out email after meeting clarifying that "balance available" is for a budget line including all expenditures (Commission & Poet Laureate).*

Laurel - sent updated numbers for Poet Laureate; Susan to review

Arts Commission - requested \$40,000, recommended \$15,672, ended up with \$15,135 for 2016-2017.

New MUNIS for 2017-2018 presented.

Authorize expenditure for family arts activities for \$500 for the Norwalk Arts Festival. Motion made by Lynn, Nori, passed

Report: Becki Christopherson, Norwalk Arts Festival

Arts Festival - Norwalk Housing Authority, Five Fingaz, everyone who gets a presence should staff for an hour; tessnorwalk@gmail.com; mobile app at arts festival + Pokémon stop. Sign-up sheet was passed around and the concept for the booth explained. We would like to have activity to draw people to the booth and active volunteers to engage festival attendees.

Report: Melissa Slattery, Mayor's Gallery

Creativity and City Employees - Mike Mocciae and Fodor Farm, taking pictures to document the work that they did, going slowly.

CT Open House day - on June 10, partnered with Norm Bloom Copsps Island Oysters, tour of oystering WPA murals and boat ride to oyster beds; two rounds based on response; eventbrite will be up this week.

Report: Laurel Peterson, Poet Laureate

14 people at RAC; Writer's Resist had about 50 people; done for the season; Oak Hills on June 3 - reading; St. Paul's might have her for the summer camp at the end of June; NICE festival in July

Report: Kathy Hebert, Maritime Gallery

They need a new curator- it's a paid gig. Short-term they are doing a NCC student exhibit with Joe Fucigna, so the position would begin in September.

Report - Danielle Vinci, Traffic Graphic at 20 West

The box is almost done - the front is done. It's between O'Neills and the Peruvian restaurant. Weather has been a challenge for completion but it will be done. The theme is Love Norwalk. The model was appropriated by David Shockley, who identified other boxes in the city that could benefit from this project. There is one near SPAG that is being developed. They are presenting to David today based on a monument nearby about Norwalk's participation in the Revolutionary War. Chris - the library board is looking at doing one with Jerry Craft. The commission is always asked to review the design and we will put out the call for artists if needed.

Report - Janet Evelyn, NICE, July 8

Kick-off event on June 15 at Fodor Farm in the barn; this event will focus on India for this event. It is a ticketed event which is a fundraiser for the event. They have partnered with the Patel Grocery Store, Tawa restaurant, and Sikh Foundation (provide entertainment in the pavilion). Beer tasting of a new beer from India 1947 (emancipation year). Cooking demonstration by Tawa Indian Cuisine. Goody bags of Indian spices. Tickets are available online on eventbrite. The festival is a multi-cultural event with multiple languages for the poetry readings and cultural performances and food.

Report - Stephanie Allgood, Norwalk River Rowing (by Fat Cat)

Concrete slab and no place for the boats until this year; 4 bays of boats for launching; Fairfield U has one, they have three; there will be a loft space. There is a lot of white space, potential for hanging things; family movie night in two weeks on the 26th of May as a fundraiser; trying to expand to more community events. Working with Norwalk ACTS this summer too. Susan is going to look at the space after the meeting today.

New Business

- Jim - Shout out to Chris and Laurel for Jazz and Poetry Month and his album release. Thanks to the Arts Commission for supporting this event.
- Susan - Cultural Tourism is alive and well in Norwalk; let Judith or Susan know if you're interested in getting involved in promoting Norwalk. May 10th at Seaport Association is the meeting.
- Charles Perry legacy - dormant sculpture park, Helen Roman and Jeff Price, might use the location for Charles Perry's works. Locked in Time & Space studio in South Norwalk also.

- Norwalk Youth Chorus - Susan Pettibone is retiring, and he will be the new Norwalk High School Chorus teacher. He appreciates our assistance with the regional chorus.
- Dream Street - Julio Pardo, Tim Gaylord - outdoor murals, they met with Jackie Lightfield to discuss a systemic approach. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. - Dream Street artistic installation.
- Commission Updates - developing bylaws, business meeting on June 13,

Guest - Billy Banks, Jr., Wall Street Theatre

The theatre is to be community driven. Billy's background - fitness background and dance. He created a workout called Dance It Out. He went on Shark Tank, said no to the deal, was approached afterwards and partnered with them. Dance is his love as well, was in TV and on Broadway, and started directing. He did an event in Stamford at Chelsea Piers and met the board of directors for the theatre. The board of directors was open, about being a community theatre. He will direct two shows a year using only community resources. Their gala is on Monday, May 15th, at 7pm with lots of Broadway stars. He wants to hear from the community to hear what we want to experience - jazz, theatre, rock music, dance, etc.

June meeting will be at City Hall.

Adjourned 10:10am