



CONNECTING THE ARTS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Tuesday, July 14, 2015 8:30 AM

Norwalk City Hall, 125 East Ave. Room 101

MINUTES

Present: Katherine Hebert, Daija Brunson, Nori Grudin, Jeff Price, Susan Wallerstein, Tony Velez, Becki Christopherson, Melissa Slattery, Diane Jellerette.

Chair, Susan Wallerstein, called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM

Business

1. Jeff Price moved approval of minutes from March, April, May & June meetings. Becki Christopherson and Tony Velez seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
2. The chair reviewed status of operating, capital and NEA grant budgets
3. Jeff Price moved and Becki Christopherson seconded approval of the public art policy (latest version which incorporates input from department heads following meeting convened by Mayor Rilling). Next steps, the City Clerk will facilitate review by the Town Law Dept. and the Mayor and department heads will introduce/discuss with Council leadership.
4. Those present agreed to cancel the August meeting.

Updates

1. Mayor's Gallery curator Melissa Slattery provided an update on upcoming show and future plans.
2. Susan Wallerstein and Becki Christopherson provided an update on Arts Commission's booth at the Norwalk Arts Festival, including ideas about expanding our involvement next year.
3. Nori Grudin talked about the Commission's Facebook page and encouraged everyone to LIKE, SHARE and POST! She explained the idea of having an artist LEGO character named "Rummler" travel to various public art pieces throughout the City; possible contest. Those present were supportive and suggested having additional characters (names pending) for MUSIC and THEATER/PERFORMING ARTS
4. Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) student Daija Brunson described the work she has been doing to inventory and rehang student art in the Ralph Sloan Gallery – 3rd floor at City Hall. Another goal is to create a virtual gallery on the district website. Members of the commission suggested the BOE make sure the form that is used for selected works includes full release of ownership, copyright, etc. Note: Via email following the meeting, commission members approved expenditure not to exceed \$500 for Mayor's Gallery curator, Melissa Slattery, to assist with rehangs in the Sloan Gallery as well as Bea Brown Room (231) and Patricia Haugh Room (300).
5. Susan Wallerstein provided an update on the Norwalk High Freshman Academy student docent program and with Nori Grudin, the CT Open House Day including van tour & "Faces & Families" premiere. These activities were/are supported by the NEA grant.
6. Susan Wallerstein provided an update about WPA mural signage. After a public invitation to respond to "Request for Proposals," Melissa Slattery and Elizabeth Avery will begin work on the basic signage, funded by the capital project. Susan is working on supplemental narrative signage for "Steamboat Days on the Mississippi," as well as the Avison sports paintings and "Purchase of Norwalk."

7. Round table – Becki Christopherson talked about the Art Society sponsorship of four (4) SONO concerts this summer and three family festivals with the library. They will resume “First Thursday” programs in the fall.

New Business

1. Jeff Price presented the concept of adding REFLECTIONS to each meeting agenda. This would be an opportunity for members and guests to speak on non-agenda items of interest and importance in a respectful, way. Each person interested in contributing would have three (3) minutes to share, with others allotted one (1) minute to respond. The chair would be responsible for ensuring civil discourse and for maintaining the time limits. If topics generate significant discussion/interest, the commission might consider hosting a separate conversation or forum about the issues that surfaced during the reflections. Those present endorsed Jeff’s proposal.
2. Reflections
 - It seems the Commission connects the ARTS, the CITY and the COMMUNITY (not just the arts and the community)
 - It’s difficult when white people talk about race, but it also presents a positive opportunity to take the discussion about race and art to the next level.
 - Can we begin to invite local artists (visual, music, performing) to attend our meetings?

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:00 AM

September 8, 2015 – Business meeting
October 13, 2015 – Business meeting
November 10, 2015 – Business meeting
December 8, 2015 – Business meeting
January 12, 2016 – Business meeting

February 9, 2016 – Business meeting
March 8, 2016 – Business meeting
April 12, 2016 – Business meeting
May 10, 2016 – Business meeting
June 14, 2016 – Business meeting