

HAMDEN ARTS COMMISSION MINUTES
Special Meeting
Wednesday, September 8th, 2021
7pm

Minutes

1. **Call To Order:** Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.
2. **Attendance**
 - a. **In Attendance:** George Moore, Chairman; Donna Elkin; Lorraine Brown; Jennifer McGarry; Charles Kortsep; Lisa Morrison; Charlotte Lefland; Sandy Schiff
 - b. **Absent:** Alex Mickens; Diane Brown; Siobhan Carter-David; Marita Gargiulo; Margaret Craft
 - c. **Also In Attendance:** Liana Paglia, Commission Clerk
3. **Vote on Sponsoring Restaurant Week Performers**
 - a. As Ms. Martindale was unable to attend the meeting, she prepared a written statement regarding the Hamden Chamber of Business Restaurant Week. She reminded commissioners that last year, the Arts Commission sponsored about 10 mostly Hamden based bands/performers and spent about \$2,100. She requested a vote to confirm commission sponsorship, so she could notify the Chamber.

Chairman Moore called for a vote on sponsoring the Restaurant Week Performers. All commissioners were in favor.

Several commissioners questioned which bands would be performing and if perhaps, last year's bands would be interested in doing so again. Ms. Schiff requested a list of the participating restaurants. Ms. Elkin and Ms. Schiff questioned if restaurants have to provide a deal/price fixed menu in order to participate. There was general consensus among the commissioners that only those restaurants who offer a deal/price fixed menu, should have sponsored performers.

4. **Concerts Recap (Diane, Sandy, Siobhan, Lisa)**
 - a. As Ms. Martindale was unable to attend the meeting, she prepared a written statement regarding the August concerts. She thanked those commissioners who were able to organize or assist in some way. She acknowledged that the concert series came together rather quickly, due to constantly changing Covid protocols. However, she reported that the attendees were greatly appreciative of an outdoor summer activity. She noted that Boogie Chillun brought in a crowd of about 1000 attendees. The Rahshaan Langley Project brought in a crowd of about 500 attendees (most likely due to rainy weather prior.) She commented that both bands gave excellent performances. The New London Big Band was unable to perform, due to inclement weather. She is working on rescheduling their performance for Saturday, September 18th, which would coincide with the Hamden Chamber of Business "Hamden Fest."

Ms. Schiff commented that while she enjoyed the performances, she was disheartened that the concert attendance was so low, compared to prior years. Ms. Brown explained that she believed this to be largely Covid-related, and probably ideal, given the growing Covid cases. Several commissioners noted that most weeks, the Arts Commission was not mentioned. There was a brief discussion regarding the difference in roles/responsibilities of the Arts & Culture Department vs. the Arts Commission. Commissioners expressed an overwhelming desire to be more involved in the event planning process, and an overall more collaborative relationship with the Arts & Culture Department.

5. **Art Kits Recap (Diane, Jen)**
 - a. As Ms. Martindale was unable to attend the meeting in person, she prepared a written statement. She thanked those who helped order, pack, and distribute art kits. The current expenditure estimate is about \$3000. After several returns are processed, she will update the commission on the accurate amount spent. A total of 288 kits were made. About 100 kits

were distributed at the collaborative event hosted by the Hamden Police Department and Hamden Youth Center. The remaining kits will be divided between the Hamden Youth Center and the non-profit Hamden based youth organization, "The Village." She is also hoping to distribute some kits to the Hamden Children's Center. She was happy to report that by partnering with the above listed organizations, the commission will have potentially reached and directly distributed to about 288 families of the general public, families directly within the black community, and families with special needs.

Ms. McGarry and Ms. Morrison both distributed art kits and noted how excited the kids were. Ms. McGarry noted the heavy advertising on social media, which she believes contributed to the positive turnout.

6. Comments/ Suggestions

- a. Overall, commissioners are hopeful about the upcoming months, and the active planning and participation that has largely been on hold, due to the pandemic. They are interested in reexamining the commission charter, and outlining the roles and responsibilities of the commission vs the Arts & Culture Department.

- 7. Adjournment:** Chairman Moore requested a motion to adjourn at 8:27 p.m. Ms. Brown made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Ms. McGarry. All were in favor.

Submitted by: Liana Paglia, Commission Clerk