

## **Northampton Arts Council**

**10 August 2021**

### **Municipal and 501C3**

**Present:** Jesse Hassinger, Kent Alexander, Eamonn Edge, Freeman Stein (B), Danielle Amodeo (B), Dana Osterling, Thulani Davis, Ellen Augarten, Kathy Service (Inc)

**Absent:** Lori Steiner, Ashlynn Cradic, Esther White (Inc), George Myers (Inc)

Danielle made the announcement that this meeting is being held via Zoom and is also being audio and video recorded. The meeting is being audio and video recorded.

No public present or public comments.

Point of clarification as to municipal VOTING MEMBERS: Eamonn Edge, Lori Steiner, Freeman Stein, (Treasurer), Danielle Amodeo, (Chair), Rachel Hart, Ashlynn Cradic, Michael Abbatiello, Kent Alexander, Jesse Hassinger, (Secretary), Dana Osterling, Thulani Davis

### **Municipal Meeting**

Municipal meeting called to order at 7:07 pm

### **Biennial Update -**

At this point, we learned that we cannot have food or drink at the library and need to be mindful of the of the ever changing state and local guidelines regarding capacity and regulations. . . Trustees will be meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup> and will review the guidelines. Kathy reported that the committee is looking for Council members to volunteer to be at the library (times TBD and responsibilities in writing forthcoming. The tasks that are being asked from these members are to accept and document the art that is being dropped off on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> , help hang show on the 1<sup>st</sup> , and/or process the art being picked up at the end of the month. Rose had been working as a coordinator but is scheduled to leave soon. It is still undetermined whether we will be having a poetry reading (as in the past); however, this is tentatively scheduled for Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm. Rose reported that accepted 50 pieces were accepted from 312 submissions. We spoke about a virtual gallery and Danielle summarized points about the Black Arts Festival which was held virtually by Amherst College which included a virtual reception that occurred at the Mead Gallery and shared the links etc. in the Chat Section (which will be documented at the end of these meeting minutes). Ellen also noted the other activities include labeling and a document for patrons which includes for the visual art: names of artists, the pieces, prices etc. along with a poetry chapbook

### **Cinema**

Efforts are still postponed due to COVID restrictions. There has not been any communication from AI (NOM) and Dylan. Brian suggests that he and Jesse meet to plan for programming the Kids Best Fest in February. He hopes to have the Four Sundays all programmed by December, so that there will be a seamless transition post First Night.

## **Grant Round Update → Fundraising**

September 1<sup>st</sup> is the day that the grant round opens for applicants. Freeman shared that the most important thing was that the MCC has put out a website and both he and Kent signed in to listen to the presentation. Freeman noted that the recording is a tad slow and will try to use his draft notes to summarize the salient points for us. He also noted that there will be a printed panel of grant applicants which can also be accessed online and sign in individually. opportunity with process. The website is now 'live' to access. We need to set and register our priorities by the 31<sup>st</sup>. Freeman stressed that at some point we need to have a conversation post grant and equity committees meet to discuss our process as to actualize philosophy on equity and inclusion. These meetings had been scheduled to happen on the 17<sup>th</sup>; however, it may be rescheduled as this is the date of Performance. The next equity meeting will examine the documents want to share with everyone. Kent stressed that the priority will be to honestly and thoroughly reflect our mission statement with regard to DEI principals (not just a veneer).

## **Council Membership;**

Michael Abbatiello resigned from this Council as he is moving. Rachel has resigned. Currently have nine members so we have six vacancies which includes Ashlynn, who reportedly may be moving; however, has yet to resign. Link to recruitment document at end..

## **Public Arts -**

A2Z submitted their proposal for a mural on a back wall of their store as required by a City Ordinance. There is no money involved in his process. A2Z is following protocol as despite it being a private mural on a private property the Arts Council is required to determine that design is not publicly offensive and that we deem it as "public art. A2Z is a commercial enterprise, and we are not curators for this. Discussion: Most agreed that it was a very commercial execution and not very creative. Who is the designer for the group? Question as to process and whether kids are or were involved in the process. It will be tabled as the wall is open brick so it must be processed through the Central Business District Architectural Subcommittee. Public acceptability, but what is our curatorial oversight. Because it is private ownership, businesses have freedom in their choices as long as they follow the "public acceptability" (our oversight). The history was explained: regarding the sculpture on the side of bridge facing Main Street which was installed without public input (i.e., the planning commission gave a large contract without public oversight). By issuing a permit, we are deeming it as public art. A very detailed discussion ensued regarding what is public art and **who** is being included in the discussion, installation, etc in public art. Please see recording for details. This is a commercial piece for a commercial purpose and Freeman asked that we move forward and to have more inclusion etc. taken into account in the future and it is well worth having a future conversation with a clearer perspective. Motion by Jesse seconded by Danielle with voted called: The Arts Council has no objection with A2Z moving forward with this mural: Yes from: Dana, Thulani, Eamonn, Danielle, Jesse, with Abstention from Kent and Freeman. (Ellen and Kathy are not on the Municipal Council.) Freeman made comment regarding no graffiti on public art murals. In our reply to A2Z if they can move forward. Jesse asked that in the draft of the reply "as trying to promote more inclusion that these are taken into account in the future". Brian asked that Jesse draft a

document which will reflect such from the Public Art Committee/ Arts Council that also includes the suggestion by Danielle to offer to work with them (“call them in not call them out”). Please refer to zoom recording for further details.

### **Equity-**

Jesse talked about the change of name of Performance. An email had been sent this morning which did not have language about the change of name and reason and the press release; also, tertiary-wise, the art (image particularly) and most musicians are “very white centered”. It does not reflect and is representational especially around something the Arts Council is supporting and promoting. The Press Release was questioned. Many comments were made. Brian shared with all the media today. The press release was not shared with the marketing media that went out today to sell tickets. As what happened, the first notice goes out to the Council; however, members did not realize that this was the case and have opportunity to provide feedback. Going forward: Another outreach using renaming as to sell tickets. Today Brian included edits which was shared with all the media today. The time frame was quite condensed Brian notes that Council members are free to provide timely feedback. Thulani asks for Brian to include a time frame for feedback from the Council whether very short. It was noted this was a learning process for all of us. A thoughtful discussion regarding feedback, timelines, work activities. Eamonn talked about using a timeline (upcoming calendar) of known events and work back (or schedule with to when the production details) are noted so messaging points are built into the timeframe. He would help organize a timeline (schedule out to meet requirements). Please refer to zoom recoding for more details.

### **Online Communication –**

ReBrand as Marketing Committee. Danielle detailed some ideas of the proposed activities of such a committee which would include someone to project manage that process. Thulani emphasized that it is not to micromanage the activity. Jesse notes the notion of White Supremacy and Capitalism in this process and this relationship to the cadence of “rushing to get things done”. Equity subcommittee must take more time with regards to the lensing process i.e., we are also to rebuilding an overall organization using a different more equitable lens and need to fully take the time needed to be fully engaged and thoughtful as we move forward and now is a ‘muddy and ragged’ time for us all. Attention was also called to caution regarding the goal of hiring BIPOC artists. Eamonn notes that regarding to “wrap up” logo, get those versions together and bring to larger committee. He reiterated that need for marketing to include a timeline for feedback and approval and to include graphic design and imaging that what we are doing. Please review Zoom recording for further details.

### **Poet Laureate -**

Announcement on Youth Poe Laureate went out. The term of the Poet Laureate is coming to a close in April 2022. We need to talk about the timelines to work backwards. We should have an “exit interview” with her so we have all her practical points. Kent and Kathy will work on this. Brian shared on the Chat the document with a process that Jenny Sechler a former Council member devised a process in the past.

Academy has asked to have Rio at a big poetry event which is one of many.

### **Subcommittee Updates: School Update –**

Freeman, Thulani and Lori have not had a meeting in the past month and continue to have exchanges which have been positive but ambiguous. Freeman discussed specifics regarding his communication with Dez regarding monthly family gatherings at JFK and asked for Rio (and Karen) to participate with a reading and will work with Brian on this. Leeds Mill River group includes a group of retired teachers doing drawing and photo and mural project at school at Leeds. As a group Freeman noted they need to be clearer on what we want to accomplish.

### **Volunteer Committee**

Other than the upcoming Biennial and future First Night, there is no new news; other than wonderful representation of volunteers at Performance.

### **Meeting Minutes Approval**

Minutes of Meeting on 13 July 2021: Freeman made a move to accept. Jesse asked Thulani regarding whether the change of the name of Performance was duly reflected in the minutes. We will table it until the next meeting. Thursday the 9<sup>th</sup> was the date asked for feedback to Kathy.

Meeting concluded at 8:50 pm.

### **Inc**

Meeting commenced at 8:51 pm.

### **Events Updates**

Summer Park Series has been fun! Brian shared pictures. Salsa exceptional. Performance next Tuesday with a decent presale tickets. DSP shows will be there the day before and after so we will have lights, tents, sound to use. Brian made the first requests for sponsorships and corporate grants per their respective protocols. COVID-wise stay tuned.

Meeting Concluded at 8:54.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Service, Inc Board Clerk

### **From the Chat Section on Zoom:**

Danielle's link to the website that was built for Mead Art Gallery's Virtual Opening:

<https://www.amherst.edu/museums/mead/events/black-art-matters-festival->

and here is the recording of the program:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QeCYzUpCuW4>

Here is the link to the MCC Grants Management System:

[New Grants Management System Coming – What You Need to Know \(August\) \(mailchi.mp\)](#)

The Link to the Council Recruitment document:

[Board Recruitment Email - Google Docs](#)

The Link to the Poet Laureate Document:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XA\\_mHn7wWu1\\_9PvYKBvKFR9bFHZXozWTvQaBM7DP7nc/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XA_mHn7wWu1_9PvYKBvKFR9bFHZXozWTvQaBM7DP7nc/edit)