

## Minutes

**Public Body:** Cultural District Committee

**Date:** February 2, 2023

**Location:** Remote via Zoom

### **Members Present:**

Caitlin von Schmidt (Chair)

Steven Goldsher

Gretchen Green

Stephen Hussey

Rachael Katz

Ellie Mandell (Clerk)

Charlotte Treiber

Jackson Williams

### **Members Absent:**

Christy Moore

Heidi Weeks

**Also in attendance:** MJ Adams, City of Greenfield Staff Contact, and Christian LaPlante, City of Greenfield Grant Program Assistant.

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Heidi Weeks has expressed her intention to resign from the committee.

### **Approve Prior Meeting Minutes**

Caitlin made a motion to approve the prior meeting minutes and Ellie seconded. Roll call vote to approve the prior meeting minutes: Caitlin, yay; Steve H., yay; Steve G., yay; Gretchen, yay; Ellie, yay; Charlotte, yay; Jackson, yay. The prior meeting minutes were approved. Rachael joined the meeting shortly after this vote.

### **New Business**

Rachael provided an update on the reorganization of the BeeFest organization and staffing. The BeeFest group is looking for new people to be involved. Caitlin said that perhaps this committee could become more involved in supporting BeeFest.

Caitlin gave an update on what she and Christian have been learning in the context of their Making it Public grant, about best practices for Requests for Qualifications. This is knowledge that we can use for our own project funding cycle.

In the context of our own mission and goals, different members presented various ideas about how to make the downtown area more appealing and pedestrian-friendly. Rachel suggested artistic wayfinding.

Steve H. would like to see things for children to climb on. Jackson mentioned sandwich boards and similar setups for wayfinding. Rachael suggested events and programming, not only visual art.

After “Old Business and Updates” Ellie presented an idea for how we choose projects to fund. In the spirit of ranked choice voting and with the aim of giving all voices a chance to be heard during our project approval process, this idea involves three steps. During the first step, the committee members indicate by a show of hands which projects from among those submitted to us, we would like to see receive money. During the second step, the amount of total funding available is divided by the number of members present, and each member votes their dollars among the projects selected in step one. During the third step, the committee votes to formally finalize the selection and allocation.

### **Old Business and Updates**

Caitlin and Rachael have continued their conversations about setting up a new organization which will be the Arts Council of Greenfield. In their vision, this committee’s funding and mandate would roll into the new nonprofit and become only one part of the new Arts Council’s overall activities and funding. Caitlin and Rachael see as primary advantages the ability to support more historically-marginalized artists through funding flexibility, and the ability to fund-raise more flexibly. Committee members had questions about the process whereby the elimination of this committee would be enacted. Caitlin said she thought the mayor would decide and that in fact the mayor supports the idea of this change. Ellie said that she would not support the creation of a new non-profit to take on the mission and money of this committee until she saw more heavy lifting in terms of specific planning. One upfront nut is setup costs and it isn’t yet clear whether or not the new organization can recycle the EIN of the dormant Progress Partnership organization, which would save a lot of money. It also isn’t clear what portion of the initial or ongoing administrative costs for the new nonprofit can be paid for by this committee’s funding from the Mass Council.

### **Adjourn**

Steve H. left the meeting at around 7:00 and Gretchen left at 7:05. Caitlin made a motion to adjourn and Rachael seconded. Roll call vote to adjourn: Caitlin, yay; Steve G., yay; Rachael, yay; Ellie, yay; Charlotte, yay; Jackson, yay. The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.