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Cultural Council Minutes 07-10-2003

Arlington Cultural Council

Minutes of July 10, 2003

Jefferson Cutter House

Present: Elinore Kagan, Michele Meagher, Suzanne McLeod, Mary Babic, Shari Craig, Cheryl Hemenway, Diane Connor, Leland Stein; Betsy Campbell, Jean Yoder (prospective members)

Absent: Amy Peters, Karen Dillon

Shari Craig called the meeting to order at 7:35pm. Introductions were made around the table; two new prospective members attending (Betsy Campbell and Jean Yoder). Betsy mentioned that she's interested in story-telling, and Leland responded with news of a story-telling event at the Regent Theater in the fall.

Congratulations were offered to Cheryl Hemenway, who is going to U.S. government-run Space Camp as an honored alternate for Massachusetts Teacher of the Year (!).

Item One: Minutes from June

Shari Craig moved that the minutes be approved, Mary Babic seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

There was some discussion about Karen Dillon's resume.

Item Two: Requests for Payment

2002-02 The Nature Journal project at St. Agnes school; \$400, all paperwork in order. Shari Craig moved that the request be granted; Elinore Kagan seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

2003-08 David Coffin's paperwork for his presentation to elementary schools may finally be in order. Elinore Kagan mentioned it may have been processed already.

2002-22 The Arts Collaborative project grant for \$822.07 was issued in pieces. The first request was for \$222; now requesting \$600; part to the Arlington Center for the Arts, part to the public schools. Shari Craig moved that the request for the \$822 be granted; Suzanne McLeod seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Elinore Kagan mentioned that all the 2002 grants are now paid, except for those applicants who've requested extensions.

She also reported that one of the recipients of the Gideon Cohen Award from last year was contacted about the fact that he never cashed his check for \$400. He said that he never got the check, and requested a new one. The Town has sent another check.

Item Three: Town Day Plans

A discussion of the Council's plans was held, but largely forwarded to the subcommittee, to be chaired by Amy Peters. The committee will meet separately; Shari Craig and Amy will convene and hammer out the details of the

Council's table and event. At the August meeting, everyone will find their task for the day.

It was agreed that the Chalk Art event was successful and relatively simple to pull off; and that we should avoid being overambitious in our plans. It was agreed that we will use the same location (Lamson Way), have the chalk drawings on the street (rather than the wall), offer prizes. Leland Stein suggested that we offer gift certificates to local arts venues rather than cash, and everyone agreed.

The Council table will feature grant applications; the new Arts Calendar; and the fabulous Cultural money created by Suzanne McLeod. There will also be a clipboard for people to sign up for Anyone Can Day.

[In the course of the discussion, it was mentioned that the Council is in need of an institutional memory. Shari Craig said she's in the process of setting up a binder that will keep records of all the Council's doings, including previous application forms and the like. We think she's swell.]

Item Four: Anyone Can Day

Once again, a brief description of the day: a multi-faceted event where anyone can come to learn how to do something new and cultural: paint, sing, build. Volunteers offer to teach these skills.

A discussion ensued about the details: the AHS gym? The Town Hall? In one place or several places? A day or an afternoon? Which weekend in April? Patriot's Day or Easter? When is school vacation week? How many volunteers?

It was agreed that the idea still needs to be fleshed out, and the amount of work involved considered seriously.

Item Five: Advocate column

The first Advocate article appeared in the new Arts quarterly section on June 5; Dave Silverman wrote the first article, about the Arts Council. The next article is due mid-August.

A discussion about who would write the new piece, and what it would be about. Choral groups in town? A promising topic: how to sustain oneself as an artist in this economic climate. Would be perfect to have someone do some research (talk to grant recipients), and piece together an article. Leland mentioned that Karen is a fine writer; he will ask her if she'd consider it.

Item Eight: Other Business

Need for a new Council logo and collateral. Mary pursuing this, to be discussed,

Michèle reported on the Planning Board meeting she and Shari attended on July 9. There is an Arlington Center revitalization project in process, to take place over the next four to five years. Funded through a Community Development Block Grant, it will focus mostly on upgrading/safety features such as sidewalks, traffic calming, and lighting. It does, however, contain elements that the Cultural Council may be able to have input into, such as revitalization of Uncle Sam Park (corner of Mystic and Mass Ave) and Broadway Plaza (there was also mention of a possible Peace Park, located near the monuments by the fire station). Michele and Shari mentioned to the planners that the Council might be able to raise funds for a public art project, or otherwise help in getting art into the center. We hope to continue to be part of their planning efforts; Michele will also be involved in her position as ED of Chamber of Commerce, and will keep us apprised of developments.

A discussion followed regarding ways to increase visibility of the Council. Betsy asked about Council's efforts to interact with grant recipients; we all agreed that more needs to be done regarding this. Perhaps we can hold a reception/brunch for the recipients once a year, or a showcase where we present the recipients to the community. We will discuss this further.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25pm.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Babic