



Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture

Date: Thursday, August 1, 2024

Time: 7:00-8:30p

Location: Zoom

Attendees: Stewart Ikeda, Christine Noah, Jessica Chao, Laurie Bodgan, Greta Mastro, Shelley Chhabra, Sarah Morgan-Wu

Absent: Tom Formicola, Nicole Cuff

Guests: Terry Holt, Katie Luczai, Cecily Miller

1. **Welcome** 7:00p-7:05p
 - Welcome to **Shelley Chhabra**, new acting co-chair of the Grants Committee, who will be representing the Grants Committee on the Commission (for now).

2. **Grants Committee Update** 7:05p-7:15p
 - The Grants Committee is distributing their priorities survey, part of which is gauging whether people are on board with the 250 themes. Another question is the type of programming people are interested in. Please help circulate!
 - <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScRpqYNsTterjQlrH1ksVY78Yco0bbhbDeX3BJNzVwP6H0gG/viewform?pli=1>
 - We'll include the survey in the ACAC newsletter and Katie will post it in the Town communications email listserv.
 - They have 3 potential new members for the Grants Committee, and they're working on onboarding those people now.
 - They're working on the accounts / paperwork for the upcoming grants cycle. Applications open September 1st, and they're trying to publicize that starting now. The deadline is mid-October.
 - They will likely attend Town Day and could team up with the ACAC booth to help publicize the grants cycle.
 - If there's an opportunity for the Community Engagement Committee or the Commission at large to collaborate on an event to celebrate the new grantees in the spring, let us know. We can help with promotion, live arts, etc.
 - They could also potentially partner with the library if they're having a public event.
 - If you want to do something at the beer garden, you have to ask the Historical Society.
 - Grants are also open to schools. Greta could potentially help send something to the arts faculty there.

- ACMi is another potential avenue. They might invite the committee in to do a segment or something similar.
 - Their next meeting is August 12th.
3. **Minutes & Secretary** - For Approval: [June Minutes](#) 7:15p-7:20p
- The minutes were unanimously approved as is. Christine and Shelley abstained.
4. **DPCD & Chair Updates & Commissioner Votes** 7:20p-7:30p
- Welcome to our new commissioner: **Laurie Bogdan**. We need a new co-chair for Community Engagement.
 - Congratulations to **Greta Mastro** on her detailed feature on [YourArlington](#).
 - [Need more commissioners and committee members!](#) Spread the word!
 - **DPCD Updates:**
 - New Town **Master Plan** process underway. We will have 18 months to update the Arts & Culture Plan.
 - The MP Committee and the director are putting together an RFP for a consultant for master planning for the beginning stages of the process. That will start to kick off in earnest this fall.
 - Once a consultant is suggested, we'll have to come up with our own arts and culture plan within the next 18 months. We've discussed undertaking a new strategic planning process, which would feed into this process.
 - **Town Day** updates: 2 spaces reserved. We need to buy a new tent roof. Lidia would still like to do **Plein Air Festival** and needs help. Who can volunteer to come?
 - Town Day is September 21st.
 - Katie is on the TD Committee. There has been discussion of a music group or a "music instrument petting zoo" in the garden. The idea is to do something peaceful or complementary to the Plein Air Festival.
 - Mr. D'Agostino runs the honors orchestra, so maybe they could play there.
 - Katie and Cecily have been working on murals.
 - DPCD has taken over the admin work for ACAC. The office administrator (Jennifer) is liaising with Jessica, Stewart, and Christine.
 - Next Thursday, there will be a visioning session for 21 Pond Lane. It's right off of the bike path, between the Center and East Arlington. There are a lot of possibilities for the space, including public art. It will be at Town Hall.
 - Artist live/work guidelines is a problem that came up with a specific property in the industrial district.
 - The idea is to allow by-right housing in the industrial district.
 - In the zoning bylaw, that included standards that were supposed to be put together by ACAC, as well as a certification process. That didn't happen at the time, so we are putting them together now.
 - Lidia is still interested in participating in this process even though she is no longer a voting commissioner.

- Pam Shandley and Adria Arch were working with Lidia and others previously. They may have some draft guidelines that were already developed.
- If anyone is interested in participating in this process, let Stewart or Katie know.

5. **Community Engagement Updates**

7:30p-7:50p

- The Friends and Neighbors of Arlington banners that were on light poles in the spring are now up in Town Hall on the second floor. Cecily has filed a request with the SB office to reserve April and May for ACAC to develop banners for the 250th. These would be part of the cyanotype project.
- We've been advising a project at Drake Village to do a mural and mosaic with David Fichter.
 - The last workshop was Tuesday. It's been residents and student assistants, including Greta! It was a great intergenerational opportunity for connection.
 - They're cut out in the shape of animals, and they'll go on the back of a brick building. Two smaller mosaics will also go out the front entrance.
 - At some point, David will add some painted panels as well, and there will be an opportunity to have a party.
 - The head of the Housing Authority was also very pleased with how it went.
- Cecily and Katie have been working on the Arlington mural project.
 - We got permission to put a mural on the Heights bus depot. Unfortunately, during site preparation, we have discovered that there is lead paint present on the site.
 - Katie is working with the MBTA and the Town to figure out our path forward. Cecily is working on a plan B.
 - Cecily doesn't think a big public announcement would be helpful as it might deter artists who are applying.
 - We anticipate other sites will want to be involved in artist selection and design. We're getting some good applications from artists now.
- Sophie Tuttle will be painting a mural in the last two weeks of August. It's a memorial to the eagle MK that was poisoned by rodenticide. It's hosted by American Alarm. They have been excited about this project, and they are funding an extension of the mural to wrap around the side of the building. Sophie will be using Golden brand paint, and they will be doing a blog post about the mural.
- The storm drains have been finished. They're all very different from each other.
 - There's one at AHS, Bishop School, Thompson School, Lake St. and Brooks, and Town Center.
- There are 2 utility boxes that are themed for 250 that are also done. One is near the Jason Russell House and one is at the corner of Brattle.
- We want to thank Ed Blundell for yet another successful Garage Band! We partnered with Mystic Open Studio on some family friendly activities.
- The Black Patriots Day / Prince Hall celebration took place on June 23.
 - We worked with AHRC, 250 Commission, Historical Society, and Town DEI on this event.

- We provided a poetry reading by Charles Coe and a DJ, and help with a sound system generously loaned by Dan Fox. There was a creole food truck and lots of lawn activities as well.
- Stewart thanks everyone who attended the June 11 nonprofit convening.
 - It was very well attended with lots of creative energy.
 - We've gotten lots of form submissions about different 250 activities that are planned.
 - We have a follow-up outreach letter we've drafted in partnership with the 250 committee to go out this month, so that we can start looking for partners and funding requests.

6. **Budget Update**

7:50-8:10p

- Jessica thanks Cristin for all of her help with transitioning the treasurer role. Jennifer in DPCD has also been very helpful in getting the accounts together.
- Jessica reviewed the FY24 closeout.
 - The projected expenses were \$150k versus actuals of \$99k.
 - The revenue was \$120k but there was about \$45k carried over from the previous year, so we have \$67k leftover at the end of the year.
 - We came in under budget in a few different line items. We also didn't spend as much on the murals project as we had projected.
 - There will be some expenses that roll into FY25 because the invoices didn't come in until after the fiscal year has been closed.
 - We didn't underspend in anything that was restricted. Everything that was able to be rolled over has been rolled over.
- The FY25 budget is just beginning to be drafted. We're aiming to have something to review by the September meeting.
 - We will be getting the Grants Committee allocation and the Cultural District funding from MCC soon.
 - Cecily applied for a Mass Humanities grant and the MCC Programs & Festivals grant, though we're not sure how likely we are to get those.
 - There's some state funding available for tourism for 250. There's an info session about it on Tuesday. Once we attend, we'll convene to discuss what to apply for.
 - The Fundraising Committee should convene soon to discuss our grant strategy as well as business and individual goals for the year.

7. **New Business**

8:10-8:30p

- Old Schwamb Mill indicated that they would like to contribute a gallery to us for a 250-themed exhibition next year.
 - Cecily has spoken to Rose Austin, who is on the board. They're talking about ways to collaborate on the 250th.
 - We'll have cyanotype source material from the banners and some cards from Nilou's project.
 - Let's discuss this at the next CE meeting; and consider how to make it collaborative with other 250 cultural efforts around town.

- Please get Terry anything for the newsletter by Saturday morning.
 - Shout out to Terry for all of the new stuff she's put up on the website!
- The murals have involved a lot of collaboration with Town departments, and they have been great to work with. Thanks to all involved, especially Katie!

Next meeting will be Thursday, September 5, 2024 from 7:00-8:30p