

Minutes – January 23, 2023 -- Portsmouth Arts and Nonprofits Committee

Russ called the meeting to order at 12:02 PM, and asked for a moment of silence in memory of Dr. Geoff Clark and Courtney Perkins' sister.

Members in attendance: Russ Grazier, Jason Goodrich, Genevieve Aichele, Renee Giffroy, Larry Yerdon, Councilor Kate Cook. Remotely: Barbara Massar, Robin Albert, JerriAnne Boggis, Beth Falconer, Ben Van Camp. Not present: Tina Sawtelle, Nihco Gallo, Martha Clark Courtney Perkins. Also attending, 8 members of the new Cultural Plan Subcommittee, including former Plan co-chair Ellen Fineberg, all introduced below.

Non-members in attendance: Sean Clancy, Stephanie Seacord (recording secretary)

August and October 2022 minutes remain held over for approval.

AFTA Update: As of Jan 23: AFTA has processed 719 Portsmouth surveys, 162 on paper, 552 digital. 800 goal by April 30, 2023. AFTA committee must file a report including the types of nonprofits participating. Word on the new financial reporting for smaller organizations forthcoming.

Discussion centered around the visit by AFTA's Randy Cohen (\$1950 fee paid, airfare and hotel TBD) after results are published October 23, 2023. Robin noted the important of messaging even if the economic impact is down as this is evidence of how much the cultural economy still needs support.

Schedule last time included community educational Chamber breakfast (at 3S), Portsmouth Rotary lunch, SMG editorial board, next morning workshop with nonprofits on using the data (at Strawberry Banke).

There are four additional AFTA survey locations in NH: Dover, Sullivan County, Monadnock and Nashua. Ellen suggested Cohen's visit be collaborative and include a presentation with NH State Council on the Arts to NH Tourism and NH Legislature in Concord. If Portsmouth has a 24-hour visit, by collaborating with other destinations, maybe a week?

Next steps: identify the public/arts/business/philanthropic (NHCF) audiences. Offline Russ and Ben coordinate dates for Chamber and Rotary. Ben will work with the other four Chambers. Russ to discuss at NHSCA meeting with Ginnie Lupi Jan 25.

Cultural Plan and Subcommittee

Russ introduced the topic explaining the origins of the COVID Recovery Task Force in Spring 2020 designed to help the City identify assistance for the arts and cultural community disproportionately affected by the pandemic with the suspension of mass, indoor gatherings. In Jan 2021, Mayor Becksted created the Portsmouth Arts & Nonprofits Committee to help that community navigate ways out of the pandemic. The Committee reported its recommendations in Dec 2021 to the City Council. Mayor McEachern appointed the current Committee in Jan 2022 with a charge to be accomplished by Dec 2023 for adoption (the end of the current Council's term) to advance the arts and nonprofits economic recovery. One element is to update the City's 2002 Cultural Plan that was adopted as part of the City's Master Plan.

The Subcommittee was created to lead the bulk of the work in 2023 in order to recommend a new Cultural Plan to the Council in Dec 2023 for adoption during their term. The Arts & Nonprofits Committee determined that this effort deserved a dedicated Subcommittee of 10 with 3 alternates (alternates are non-voting members who attend and participate in all meetings and thus can step in if a regular member has to step down), composed of interested applicants with different backgrounds and perspectives along with several Committee members.

Barbara noted that the Subcommittee is not starting from zero:

- 2002 Cultural Plan exists as a template

- Identify a successor to that plan's ArtSpeak arts commission – not the charge of the Arts Committee whose work concludes in Dec 2023

Russ also noted the Subcommittee will enjoy the experience of the 2002 Plan co-chair Ellen Fineberg

Subcommittee Member introductions:

Ellen Fineberg – have lived in Portsmouth 40 years with career in the arts and nonprofits sector. Member of group creating Cultural Plan and of ArtSpeak. Excited about this opportunity to rethink the 2002 Cultural Plan, what's different in 2023 and where we might be in 2033.

John Mayer – unaffiliated, retired from a career with history museums. Have lived in Portsmouth 25 years. Former member of HDC. As a community member am a grassroots advocate for the arts, supporting visual arts and the need for places for artists to live.

Alan Chase – retired from US Navy after 24 years, including 19 yrs assignments overseas. Wanted to get involved in the community.

*Jeffrey Cooper – Portsmouth artist (furniture maker) and resident for past 40 years. Participant in Portsmouth Listens and interested in the input process, including from working artists, for the Cultural Plan. Why isn't there public art all over city?

Gerard Gonzalez – lived here 1988-89 and returned in 2018 from San Antonio to consulting firm at Pease. Interested in community and contributing, experience with working with City Councils in St. Paul.

Mary Battle – moved 3 yrs ago, husband grew up here. Mixed media artists and ran graphic arts co for 20 years. Wants to help arts community.

Karen Rosania – new (2022), started arts studio. Passion for destination for 20 yrs. Thrilled to help.

Tom Kaufhold – LGBTQ History Project. 30 year resident. Make sure all of our stories, history and cultural contributions of many groups are included. Working with historical groups, worried about space for storing artifacts.

Also, unable to be present:

Amanda Kidd Kessler – NH Art Association

Robin Lurie-Meyerhoff – former ArtSpeak Board

Emma Stratton – Executive Director of Portsmouth Historical Society

*Alternates: Suzanne Danforth and Ed Simeone.

Arts & Nonprofits co-chairs Russ and Barbara determined the Subcommittee should meet once a month (1st Mon, starting Feb 6, to differentiate from Arts & Nonprofits 3rd Mon meetings). Held in different locations e.g. Button Factory so Subcommittee can connect. Subcommittee asked to let Barbara know if anyone is interested in a leadership role or in serving as recording secretary. Councilor Cook reminded the Subcommittee that as a publicly appointed body they need to observe all rules on open meetings, etc.

Barbara and Russ will attend the Subcommittee kickoff meeting Feb 6 and explain the framework for the process, including a consultant (TBD by Sean Clancy, Economic Dev.) Committee will help access resources, surveys, listening sessions.

Meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm. **Next meeting, Monday February 27 at 12 noon.**