**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF THE ARTS**

**Connecticut Arts Council Meeting
November 9, 2020
1:00 pm
Via Team Video Conference Call**
 **DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present:** Fritz Jellinghaus, Chris Bruhl, Helen During, Mary Ellen Eckels, Min Jung Kim,
Ted Yudain

**Absent:** Pedro Bermudez, Jan Dilenschneider**,** Jack Rosenberg

**Staff:** Elizabeth Shapiro, Tamara Dimitri, Kolton Harris, Bonnie Koba, Rhonda Olisky, Jane Schneider

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 pm.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of September 14, 2020.

Motion: Chris Bruhl
Second: Ted Yudain
(Y-6; N-0)

**III. Chairman’s Report**

Mr. Fritz Jellinghaus lead his last meeting as chairman of the Arts Council. Mr. Jellinghaus submitted his resignation to Governor Lamont, effective January 1, 2021. He has served as an arts council member for 35 years. Mr. Jellinghaus stated what an honor and privilege it has been to work in this capacity along with each of our dedicated members.

Mr. Jellinghaus inform that he submitted a letter to Commissioner Lehman proposing several amendments to legislation: 1) To expand the Arts Council from 11 members to 16 to assure racial, ethnic, geographic representation across the state. 2) To create the position of Vice Chairman to assist the chairman and to create a larger executive committee. 3) Create the position of Chairman Emeritus to be first occupied by Mr. Jellinghaus. 4) To fill the current vacancies arts council positions appointed by the Governor and Representative Looney. 5) To separate the CT Arts Council Foundation from the CT Arts Council.

**IV. Director’s Report**

Ms. Elizabeth Shapiro thanked Mr. Jellinghaus for his leadership, grand plan in his vision for this group, and his great sense of humor. Ms. Shapiro stated the proposed legislative amendments propose by Mr. Jellinghaus have been submitted for consideration to the legislature and DECD’s new legislative liaison will follow up once the legislative session begins in January 2021.

Ms. Shapiro informed that she is working with one of the Governor’s assistants who works on council appointments to fill the arts council vacancies and will provide updates.

Ms. Shapiro reported that 159 applications have been submitted for the $9m from the CARES Act Fund and she and COA staff will begin review to determine eligibility. The goal is to have contracts executed and money out the door by December 30th.

Ms. Shapiro informed that The Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) wanted to fund the arts but could not fund COA; so COA facilitated for CHEFA to partner with CT Humanities and $5,000 grants will be granted to Connecticut arts organizations that do work with both humanities and the arts for a total of $85,000.

Ms. Shapiro shared that staff member, Kolton Harris and herself, virtually attended the Arts Administrators of Color conference and expressed that it was an amazing learning experience. COA will continues to have conversations on equity and social justice and acknowledge that it is hard work and must be intentional. Ms. Shapiro encouraged council members to read the document she sent “Equity Choice Points” which is a grantmaking reflection tool for state arts agencies and also invited council members to join as COA rethinks and reimagines what grant strategies can look like.

Ms. Shapiro reported that WindhamARTS will no longer be working in the capacity of Designated Regional State Organizations (DRSO) effective immediately. Ms. Shapiro stated that COA has had concerns about WindhamARTS for many years; in the last two COA has been working hard with Windham on some deep organizational issues but decided that until they continue to work with their hired consultant to decide who they want to be before they take on the responsibilities of being a partner. COA will make sure that the folks in the Windham area continue to be served for the next year.

Ms. Shapiro informed that the Tremaine Foundation awarded a grant to the Pratt Institute to take a look at what mindfulness means, how it intersects with arts, arts management and what part mindfulness plays in the development of arts leaders. COA has joined as Connecticut’s cohort and we have about 32 participants that will do intensive mindfulness training for three weeks.

Ms. Shapiro reported that DECD Deputy Commissioner Glendowlyn Thames reached out to FEMA Region One to talk with them about potential service to cultural organizations. Ms. Shapiro along with her colleague at FEMA, Dawn, will be offering three different webinar programs from December 7-10 between 9:00 am and 11:00 am. Topics include: Envisioning A Future; Cooperatives and Collaborations for Resource Sharing and Cost Efficiency; Creative Borrowing for Recovery as well as financial and business strategy principles. These workshops will be hosted on our zoom platform.

Ms. Shapiro also reported that staff member Bonnie Koba and herself, have been working with FOX 61 on how to promote careers in the arts; promote arts education and spotlight Connecticut artists.

Ms. Shapiro reported that another partnership COA is working on is with the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts (VLA) national group to develop a VLA chapter in Connecticut to serve artists and arts organizations.

**VI. Action Items**

No action items.

**VII. Other Business**

Mr. Kolton Harris reported on the Poetry Out Loud Program stating that it has been evolving and innovative in using digital platforms. Students will not only be able to participate in the POL competition but will be able to participate in a creative writing based program called Poetry Ourselves. Both curriculums are available a website as well as videos participants can view. Videos were pre-recorded by teaching artists in the state as well as accomplished poets both to become familiar with the criteria an get some tips. We hope this will influence students to be engaged with their teachers as well as teachers to facilitate the process, especially accommodating remote learning.

The Arts Council members gave a salute to all the staff members for their hard work and commitment to the arts.

**VIII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Ted Yudain, seconded by Mary Ellen Eckels, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lu Rivera
Administrative Assistant