

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

**Connecticut Arts Council Meeting**

**February 7, 2022**

**1:00 pm**

**Via Zoom Video Conference Call**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Jack Rosenberg, Mary Ellen Eckels, Adriane Jefferson, Ted Yudain, Sofia Lewitt, Judith McElhone, Calida Jones, Fritz Jellinghaus, *emeritus*

**Absent:** None

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

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:08 pm.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of January 10, 2022.

Motion: Ted Yudain

Second: Mary Ellen Eckels

(Y-8; N-0)

**III. Chairman's Report**

Mr. Jack Rosenberg thanked the council members for their time and expertise to work with the CT Office of the Arts. Mr. Rosenberg greeted Mr. Jacob Padron, who although not officially confirmed, has been nominated to serve as council member.

At the request of Mr. Rosenberg, the Governor's Arts Awards committee gave a report on the planning progress for this event. Ms. Sophia Lewitt reported that she has reached out to the awardees to determine a preferred date of either June 2<sup>nd</sup> or June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022; but has not received a response from all the awardees.

Ms. Elizabeth Shapiro reported that she reached out to the Governor's office to make them aware of this event and the request to have the Governor present; but until the date is determined his commitment to attend cannot be confirmed.

Ms. Judith McElhone stated that Five Points Visual Arts Center is anxious in confirming the date of the event but are ready and excited.

Mr. Rosenberg informed that if needed he has a couple of individuals that he can ask to serve as emcee.

Mr. Rosenberg reopened the conversation of creating a new entity composed of auxiliary members who will serve in an honorary capacity but available to us as a resource. This group should not only be committed to supporting the arts but also advocating for us where they can and with whom they can.

*A motion was presented to approve the new entity with the draft structure of purpose pending a name that Council member will come together to determine via a doodle poll.*

Motion: Mary Ellen Eckels

Second: Judith McElhone

(Y-8; N-0)

#### **IV. Director's Report**

Ms. Shapiro reported that nominations for the State Poet Laureate opened last week. This is a statutory program. Candidates need to be nominated. Those who have been nominated will be contacted by COA to apprise them of their nomination and then asked to complete an application. The panel review will be conducted in May. Both the State Poet Laureate and the State Troubadour will begin their duties in July, 2022.

Ms. Shapiro also reported that working in alignment with Poetry Out Loud and Poetry Ourselves, both programs are from the National Endowment for the Arts and are held throughout the United States. Staff member, Kolton Harris, manages these programs and has been working to develop a Youth Poet Laureate Program for young people 21 and under.

Ms. Shapiro informed that COA in partnership with the Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston presented last month the first webinar: Legal Entities 101: Legal Entities for Creative Businesses. The webinar was very well attended. The follow up webinar: Legal Entities 102: Charitable Nonprofits will be presented on February 14th, 2022.

Ms. Shapiro also informed that in terms of telework, due to the decline in COVID numbers, Commissioner Lehman has requested that DECD report to work once a week. The arts staff will be in the office on Tuesdays, starting on the week of February 14th.

Ms. Shapiro reported that the art staff continues to meet and work on the Strategic Plan. Staff is very excited on the conversations they are beginning to have and hope that by the beginning of April they will have a frame

## **V. Action Items**

### **FY22 Connecticut Arts Endowment Grants**

It is recommended that the Connecticut Arts Council approve one hundred seven-one (171) Connecticut Arts Endowment grants in the amount of \$861,472.

Motion: Mary Ellen Eckels

Second: Calida Jones

(Y-5; N-0; Recuse-3 - Recuse: Jack Rosenberg, After School Arts Program; Ted Yudain, Curtain Call; Judith McElhone, Five Points Visual Arts Center)

### **CT State Troubadour**

It is recommended that the Arts Council approve Kala Farnham of Pomfret Center as Connecticut's 18th State Troubadour. Kala will serve a three-year term – July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025 and receive an annual stipend of \$2,500 for a total of \$7,500.

Motion: Ted Yudain

Second: Mary Ellen Eckels

(Y-8; N-0)

## **VI. Other Business**

No other business.

## **VII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Ted Yudain, seconded by Sophia Lewitt, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 1:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lu Rivera

Grants Administrator