

Caroline Simmons
Mayor

John R. Varamo Jr.
Program Manager of
Arts and Culture



**STAMFORD
ARTS & CULTURE
COMMISSION**
FOSTERING THE PERFORMING, VISUAL, & CULTURAL ARTS

Lynne Colatrella
Chair
Valerie Cooper
Vice-Chair
Marti Etter
Secretary

Members
Dennis Collins
Lisa Cuscuna
Angie Durrell
Michael Moran
Lou Ursone

**Arts and Culture Commission Meeting Minutes
Stamford Government Center, Stamford Connecticut
Wednesday, January 19, 2022**

1. Call to Order

Chair Colatrella called the meeting to order at 9:05am.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Lynne Colatrella, Marti Etter, Lisa Cuscuna, Valerie Cooper, Michael Moran, Lou Ursone
Commissioners Absent: Angie Durrell, Dennis Collins
Staff: John Varamo, Program Manager of Stamford Arts & Culture

3. Reading and Approval of Minutes

Chair Colatrella asked if all commissioners have read the minutes from the meeting held on December 8, 2021. She then asked for a motion to accept these minutes. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Ursone and was seconded by Mr. Moran. The motion passed unanimously with commissioners present.

4. 2022 Officer Elections

Mr. Varamo presented the slate as follows: Ms. Colatrella as Chair, Ms. Cooper as Vice-Chair, Ms. Etter as Secretary. Chair Colatrella asked for a motion to approve the slate as presented. Mr. Moran made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Ursone. The motion passed unanimously with commissioners present.

5. Staff Report – John Varamo

a. NEA Grant for Art Projects

- Mr. Varamo presented a grant proposal which would fund the construction of a mural on a wall as part of the new Stamford Transportation Center garage that is currently under construction.
- The commissioners felt that this project would be beneficial in welcoming people to Stamford that come off the train station.
- Concerns were brought up regarding proper lighting; the proposed budget being too low, no money available for maintenance, and the desire for community involvement.
- The commissioners decided to table the discussion until after the city knows whether Stamford is chosen as a recipient.

6. New Business

a. Commission Reappointments

- Chair Colatrella mentioned that she would reach out to Mayor Simmons' office to find out the process for appointing and reappointing members to the commission.

b. Meeting with Mayor Simmons

888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD, 10th FLOOR, STAMFORD, CT 06901
TELEPHONE: (203) 977-4693 • EMAIL: JVARAMO@STAMFORDCT.GOV

- The commission discussed inviting Mayor Simmons to come and talk with the commissioners regarding her plans and vision for arts & culture in Stamford.
- Mr. Varamo said he would reach out to the Mayor's Office to get the next commission meeting, March 19th at 9am, on the Mayor's calendar.
- c. Convening of SAC Grant Winners
 - The grant recipients expressed interest in being able to continue to meet together, share ideas, and collaborate going forward.
 - Ms. Etter mentioned she would send out an email with the strategic plan to the winners, as well as a general interest invitation to meet.
 - Ideas were discussed for an in person meeting at a large venue where people could socially distance, including The Palace Theatre.
- d. Website Dedicated to the Arts
 - Ms. Cuscuna mentioned that the city should have a website that lists arts organizations and events.
 - Mr. Varamo pointed to the website currently available: www.choosestamford.com/visit
 - Mr. Varamo also mentioned that the new administration was taking a deeper dive into the city's website, and that he believed a committee might be formed to make suggestions on how to improve the city's website. He suggested that a member of the arts & culture commission might make a good addition to that committee to represent the potential for an arts & tourism facet of the website.
- e. Committee Meetings
 - Chair Colatrella requested that the committee reports be added to the agenda going forward. The committees are Finance, Convening, Programming, Diversity.
- f. Showmobile
 - Chair Colatrella stated that she would be working with the Office of Operations and Matt Quinones to get the city's old showmobile up and running again in Scalzi Park.
 - This could allow small artists to perform in the park for a nominal fee, providing a more accessible venue in Stamford.

7. Adjournment

Chair Colatrella asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:09 AM. Mr. Moran made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Etter. The motion passed unanimously with commissioners present. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was concluded.

Respectfully submitted,



Marti Etter
Secretary
Stamford Arts and Culture Commission