

David R. Martin
Mayor

Thomas Madden, AICP
Director of Economic
Development

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
Jennifer McIntosh
Michael Moran
Lou Ursone

**Arts and Culture Commission Meeting Minutes
Stamford Government Center, Stamford Connecticut
Wednesday, May 19, 2021**

1. Call to Order

Chair Colatrella called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Lynne Colatrella, Marti Etter, Dennis Collins, Lisa Cuscuna, Valerie Cooper, Michael Moran,

Commissioners Absent: Angie Durrell, Jennifer McIntosh, Lou Ursone

Staff: John Varamo, Program Manager of Stamford Arts & Culture, Thomas Madden, Director of Econ Dev

3. Reading and Approval of Minutes

Chair Colatrella asked if all commissioners have read the minutes from the meeting held on March 17, 2021. She then asked for a motion to accept these minutes. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Etter and was seconded by Ms. Cuscuna. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Mayor's Multicultural Council Founders Day Event w/ Original Deed – Lyda Ruijter

Ms. Ruijter said there was great enthusiasm by the community to celebrate all cultures at the "Stamford Day" event, including for the Native American population.

At the event, Chief Vincent Mann offered up a prayer, spoke briefly and sang a song in Mill River Park. Chief Mann is chief of the Ramapough Lunaape Nation, the descendants of the original inhabitants of Stamford. The chief would like to do a sacred Native America gathering called a pow wow, in Stamford.

Ms. Ruijter is currently restoring and preserving the original deed for the purchase of the land that would become the City of Stamford. The 380-year- old deed is at the Northeast Document Conservation Center in Andover, Mass.

5. Prioritize Strategic Plan Initiatives – Lynne

1. Top priority is to seek funding for the commission to do programming and begin initiatives. A 1% for Art Fund for the city is a major goal to secure funding. Thomas sent a letter to the Mayor requesting he look at creating a 1% for Art Fund. It was also mentioned that the arts commission should request money from the American Rescue Plan stimulus package.

2. To incorporate programming, convening, and diversity, the commissioners discussed taking part in the pow wow that was discussed earlier by Ms. Ruijter, and would like to help in whatever ways they can to help facilitate a successful event.

6. Convening Letter – Marti

Ms. Etter mentioned that the convening letter is finalized, and that the commission should ask that other organizations send the letter out to their respective email lists to try and increase the number of people who would attend.

The commissioners decided to select 2 Zoom dates for the convening. The two sessions selected are Wednesday, June 23rd at 6pm and Sunday, June 27th at 4pm.

7. SACC Logo Regarding Grant Applicants – Lynne

John confirmed that all marketing materials for organizations that receive SACC Grant money, must have the Stamford Arts & Culture logo on their marketing. He also confirmed that grant recipients submit marketing materials with their final reports, confirming they are crediting the commission during their programming.

8. SAC Grant Requirements

Ms. Cuscuna brought up the fact that the arts & culture commission has now expanded the grant from strictly arts to include cultural programming as well. She mentioned that a separate meeting should be scheduled to clarify what the commission is looking for when it comes to the applications.

Chair Colatrella requested that Ms. Cuscuna review the current application and come back to the commission with changes that could be made to the grant to help clarify, to which Ms. Cuscuna agreed to do.

9. New Business

- Ms. Etter requested that the candidates for Mayor should meet in September or early October to set up a meeting to learn more about their thoughts on the arts. Mr. Moran mentioned that the Palace Theatre could be a good location to host this kind of event. The date needs to be put on all the candidates' calendars as soon as possible.
- Ms. Cooper mentioned that McKinsey and Co.'s ERG is sponsoring an exhibition for black artists, in partnership with Loft Artists Association. The juried show will have prizes including the winner being able to paint a large mural on the company's building.
- Ms. Cooper requested that her title be changed on the city's website from member to Vice Chair. Mr. Varamo informed her that he made the change.
- Mr. Moran suggested that the next commission meeting should be in person, which was agreed upon by the commissioners.
- Ms. Colatrella informed the commissioners that the public piano project by Stamford Downtown will be on display starting June 9th in the evening.

- Ms. Cooper mentioned that the BLM street mural project will be going on, but the date has not yet been confirmed. She mentioned that other organizations have stepped up to paint a letter including Stamford Pride, Stamford Art Association and the Stamford High Art Department.

10. Adjournment

Chair Colatrella asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 AM. Ms. Cooper made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Collins. The motion passed unanimously. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was concluded.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marti Etter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marti Etter
Secretary
Stamford Arts and Culture Commission