



CITY OF DANBURY CULTURAL COMMISSION

256 Main Street
Danbury, Connecticut 06810
203 797 4508

January 22, 2024

Minutes of the Meeting

Meeting called to order by Chairman Harvey Center at 6:35 pm with Commissioners: John Cooke, Alma Faham, Ed Moore, Deepti Nagaraja, Gregory Smith and Coordinator Gregory Wencek. Absent: Mary Burke, John Cherry, Cheryl Hill, and Perry Price. Attending from the public: Siubhan Fallon and Jan Maria Jagush.

Presentation of Minutes

The Minutes of the November meeting were presented. A motion by GSmith to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by JCooke. Passed by unanimous voice vote.

Correspondence:

EMail: various Commission projects (Poet laureate, State Grants disbursement),

Mail:

Phone:

In person: Tiaa Candy TiaaCandy@Gmail.com Nathalie Feliz-Dipre 718 600-6446

Reports on DCC sponsored events

- Danbury Music Centre
 - * The Nutcracker - Danbury Music Centre
 - Friday, December 8 7:30 – 9:30pm
 - Saturday, December 9 3:30 – 5:00pm
 - Sunday, December 9 3:30 – 5:00pm

Danbury events not sponsored by the Commission [17]

- Danbury Music Centre
 - Community Band: Holiday Concert Sunday, December 3 4:00 – 5:30pm
 - Danbury Community Orchestra in Concert Friday, December 15 7:30 – 7:30pm
 - Handel's "Messiah" Sunday, December 17 4:00 – 5:00pm

EMoore: The event was packed. An excellent program. Siubhan: It always is well attended.

- Danbury Museum
 - Guided Tours of 4 Danbury Museum Historic Buildings on our Main Street campus
 - Guided Tours of the Ives Homestead
- Danbury Railway Museum
 - Ride "The Husking Bee" Pumpkin Patch Train October 7-8, 14-15, 21-22, and 28-29 beginning at 10:00 AM
- The Danbury Concert Association held a fundraiser out of City. Siubhan: The band was good
- Music at the Ridge - Ce Songbird December 3 Claudia Schmidt Sunday, January 7, 2024 4:00 – 6:00pm
- City Center Danbury
 - Light the Lights - CityCenter Danbury Saturday, December 2 1:00 – 7:00pm
- Palace Theater Danbury
- 7 at Seven Saint Peter Parish Vivaldi's "Gloria" Friday, December 15 7:00 – 8:30pm
- Galleries
 - Trailer Box Gallery
 - Gallery of the Visual and Performing Arts Center WCSU Westside campus, 43 Lake Ave. Extension
 - Gallery at Still River Editions 128 E Liberty St.



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- INSIDE JOB Runs through December 22, 2023 Photographs by LYS GUILLORN, MARK SAVOIA, AND CATHERINE VANARIA
- in VIEW project Main Street Danbury
- WCSU
 - Sip & SCULPT - Friday, December 1 · 7:00 – 9:00pm
 - WCSU Theater *Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov - Friday, December 1 · 8:00 – 9:30pm Runs December 1 - 3,
 - Orchestra and Concert Chorale - Saturday, December 2 · 3:00 – 5:00pm
- Percussion Ensemble - Sunday, December 3 · 3:00 – 4:30pm

Upcoming events

See addendum.

Coordinator's Report

1. The 2024-2025 budget submitted Jan 17, 2024
 - a. I suggest \$68,000 based on the actual amount requested from groups last year
 - i. This is the amount ACTUALLY requested from groups for assistance, plus the cost of projects proposed by the Commission.
 - ii. Since 2001 the City has reduced some line items of a number of cultural programs, such as First Night and the Danbury Music Centre. The Cultural Commission had tried to make up for those reductions within its own budget. The early part of the 2000's saw an increase up to \$105,000, which helped absorb the increased requests for grants but since 2014 the amount has overall decreased until last year when it was increased by \$2,500.
 - iii. This year the Cultural Commission is asking for an increase of the budget to \$84,000 which reflects the actual requests for funding support from many of the cultural/artistic organizations in Danbury. This request does not take into account any new groups who might look to the City to support expansion of programs to benefit the citizens quality of life and economic growth. Nor does it incorporate any growth in the number or scope of projects produced by the Commission itself, such as scholarships and recognition awards for cultural accomplishments.
 - iv. The Commissioners will continue to exercise restraint in awarding grants on behalf of the City. The 11 volunteer Commissioners meet regularly and act for the best outcomes for Danbury.
2. Shout Out for Danbury one request received January 17
3. Newsletter reaching 171 addresses
4. Final draft available of onboarding document for new Commissioners and city officials
5. Video research with Alma TABLED, until February. 1st script finished, ready to record
6. Invitation to the Mayor and the Finance Director for the January meeting were declined
7. Poet Laureate
 - a. Committee named a poet laureate, We are waiting for the Mayor's office participation
8. Two applications for nomination for appointment to this Commission are in process.
 - a. The Commission may need to ask for a resignation from members on leave.
9. Meeting the goals stated in the Finance budget document
 - a. Provide Equalable advocacy, and increase Diversity - supporting the Danbury Museum
 - b. Explore participation with the CT Office of Film, Television & Digital Media - Continuing research on this project with filmmakers.
 - c. Continue to increase the participation of younger audiences - research social platforms
 - d. Sponsor events - work on Poet Laureate, membership in Make Music Alliance
 - e. Expansion into the community - with Center City to assist Downtown autumn decorations



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Appeals from Community groups:

1. Saint Peter Danbury \$500 Glen Segger Music Director
 - a. Silent Film - *The King of Kings* February 9 in St. Peter Church, with its majestic Peragallo pipe organ, and large 10' x 14' screen. This presentation is part of the 7 at Seven series.
 - b. Boston-based organist, Peter Krasinski, will be providing live pipe organ accompaniment to this film, joined by the St. Peter Parish Choir (providing music and sound effects). In other words, this epic silent movie will feature both organ and choral accompaniment!
 - c. This is a return to the program following the COVID-19 pandemic. The church received some feedback about the secular nature of the previous films so they decided to present a Cecil B. DeMille epic. Attendance for the previous films was about 150 people from the parish and from outside the parish. Seating capacity is over 500.
 - d. Admission is free but a good will offering is asked to defray costs of projector and screen rental. Promotion will include email to other churches in the area.

Old Business

1. Federer mural preservation quote
 - a. From Peter Brown Architectural Photography: Viewed the space January 17. "I anticipate a fee of \$1,300 will cover both the initial photo session and the digital post production processing."

Moved by DNagaraja, seconded by AFaham to authorize \$1,300 for an archival photograph series of the Charles Federer mural from Peter Brown Archival Photography.

DISCUSSION: GWencek: The recommendation to use Peter Brown came from Still River Editions gallery on East Liberty Street Danbury, which was recommended by the Danbury Museum. Commissioners want to know if the photos can be displayed on our website - Yes. Commissioners want to know if the Museum will be offered a copy of the file - Yes.

CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

New Business

1. Authorization to pay scholarships and literary contest

Moved by GSmith, seconded by AFaham to set aside \$5,000 for scholarships.

DISCUSSION: JMJagush asked why Immaculate and Wooster students are not eligible. Scholarships should be available to all Danbury students. HCenter answered that the awards have been for public school students. The topic may be revisited in the future.

CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

Moved by AFaham, seconded by EMOore to set aside \$1,200 for literary awards

DISCUSSION: GWencek points out that the amount for literary awards is for prizes only and some additional funds will be needed for the awards ceremony in May.

CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Rules for literary contest

Moved by GSmith, seconded by AFaham to approve the rules for both literary contests.



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DISCUSSION: GWencek: the only change from last year is no works generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI). Commissioners wanted to know how the Commission will detect AI use. Answer is reliance on the honor system.

CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Danbury Museum annual gala fundraiser - DNagaraja

Moved by DNagaraja, seconded by EMoore to purchase a \$150 ticket to the Danbury Museum gala.

DISCUSSION: DNagaraja said the event is a good way to have the community interact with the Commission. EMoore said that attending will promote the existence and work of the Commission.

HCenter: The Commission has not previously paid toe tickets to this event. The Commissioners asked that DNagaraja have a report for the next meeting.

CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

4. Approval of On-boarding document for Commissioners, City Council and Mayor's office

Moved by GSmith, seconded by AFaham to approve the On-boarding documents

DISCUSSION: GWencek: The purpose of the onboarding document is to give newly appointed officials a reference for the past and ongoing work of the commission, to provide contact information, and to provide context for the Commission within City Government. This document will be available for all appointed commissioners and to City officials. The differences between the two versions are in discussion of reports and the inclusion of a list of current officials.

CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

5. Shout Out for Danbury

- a. The one request for consideration came from "The American Prize" for seed funding to start two scholarships. Consensus is that this request is outside the scope of the contest. The Coordinator is instructed to notify the "American Prize" that they should submit a grant request for this program.

Action on Grant Requests:

1. Saint Peter Danbury \$500

Moved by EMoore to approve \$500 for the presentation of the silent film - *The King of Kings* on February 9 at Saint Peter Church. Seconded by JCooke.

DISCUSSION: This series has been well received by residents of the City and the area. The addition of a chorus with the organ should make for an interesting event.

CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

Other Business

1. Jan Maria Jagush residency status is being vetted by the Mayor's office.
2. GSmith and JCooke have been attending the legislative Council meetings. Expect the nomination of Siubhan Fallon and Jan Maria Jagush from the Mayor at the February 6 Council meeting.
3. Mrs. Cooke is a member of the Garden Club and is inquiring about funding for a beautification project. She should submit a grant application.
4. JMJagush would like to see a unified calendar of events for the City so residents can have a single point of contact for activities. All of the current calendars should be consolidated.



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- 5. JMJagush would like to see a municipal/private partnership to bring more festive/decorative lighting to downtown. EMOore and JCooke suggest she bring this idea to the Savings Bank of Danbury.
- 6. EMOore suggests that the Commission invest in pop-up signage to be placed at all events the Commission funds which would read: Partially funded by the Danbury Cultural Commission". HCenter showed two of the existing signs, one sandwich board and one lawn sign, which the Commission has used in the past. Consensus is to get prices from Bethel Graphics (who has printed the programs for the Literary Awards for free), Sign-O-Rama, Iovino Brothers, or other Danbury businesses.

Motion to adjourn at 7:56

Made by JCooke. Passed by Unanimous voice vote.

NOTE:

Corporation Counsel has provided the Clerk's office with the following... Current as of 3/16/20:

Effective with Gov. Lamont's Executive Order No. 7B issued on 3/14/20, the requirement of public attendance at all meetings of public agencies is suspended. Meetings are to be held remotely by conference call, videoconference, or other technology, provided that (in summary):

- 1) the public has the ability to view or listen to each meeting or proceeding in real time by phone, video or other technology.

Therefore the Commission office had set up a video conference call which started at 6:15 on Monday evening. Commissioners and the public connected to Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 847 1732 0377 Passcode: 816120

One tap mobile: +19294362866,,84717320377# US (New York) Meeting ID: 847 1732 0377 Passcode: 816120	Dial by your location +1 929 436 2866 US (New York) Meeting ID: 847 1732 0377 Passcode: 816120
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If the Zoom video connection is lost, call the backup phone conference at 1 605-475-4120 Access Code: 816120

The meeting started at 6:33 and was not recorded by the Commission.



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Upcoming events Addendum

ELVIS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION STARRING MATTHEW BOYCE - The Palace Danbury
Sunday, January 7, 2024 · 3:00 – 4:30pm
165 Main St, Danbury, CT 06810

Concerts 2023-2024 Lui Collins - Music at the Ridge
Sunday, February 4 · 4:00 – 6:00pm
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury
24 Clapboard Ridge Rd, Danbury, CT 06811

Silent film "The King of Kings (1928) with live organ accompaniment by Boston organist Peter Krasinski - 7 at Seven Saint Peter Parish Friday, February 9 · 7:00 – 8:30pm
St Peter Church 104 Main St, Danbury, CT 06810

Still River Editions
MOM UPDATES: The Photographs
January 13 - March 29, 2024
Where: 128 East Liberty Street, Suite 3, Danbury, CT
Description: Photographs by Bruce George Wingate
128 East Liberty Street, Danbury, Connecticut

Trailer Box Gallery
12 Francis J Clarke Circle- Bethel Ct.

WCSU ART ALUMNI EXHIBITION
THE GALLERY at the Visual & Performing Arts Center
WCSU, Westside Campus

Western Connecticut State University

NEXT TO NORMAL - WCSU
Friday, February 23 · 8:00 – 10:30pm
Daily, until Mar 5, 2024
Visual & Performing Arts Center
43 Lake Ave Ext, Danbury, CT

*Events sponsored by the Commission



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Available Grants:

Walmart Overview

Community Grants range from a minimum of \$250 to the maximum grant of \$5,000.

Organizations must submit an online application to be considered for funding.

The 2024 grant cycle begins Feb. 1, 2024 and the application deadline is Dec. 31, 2024.

Applications may be submitted at any time during this funding cycle. Please note that applications will only remain active in our system for 90 days, and at the end of this period they will be automatically rejected.

Organizations may only submit and/or receive 25 applications.

Areas of Funding: (Partial list)

Quality of life: **Improving access** to recreation, **arts or cultural experiences for low income** individuals and families in the United States

Education: Providing **after school enrichment**, tutoring or vocational training for low income individuals and families in the United States

<http://giving.walmart.com/walmart-foundation/community-grant-program>

State of CT

[Artist Fellowship Program](#) Closed until spring

- Program guidelines and application available in late spring or early summer 2024.
- Application deadline in late summer 2024.

Every Child Art Experience - CLOSED

The Every Child Art Experience grant is a \$2,500 award given directly to schools to support taking students to an out of school art experience. Experiencing and participating in art is an essential part of creating strong communities and developing healthy, engaged, and creative students. Understanding that not all students have equal access to the arts, this program seeks to close the gap in access and prioritizes school in Alliance and Opportunity Districts. More information on Alliance and Opportunity.

Connecticut Arts Endowment Fund (CAEF) - CLOSED

Funds may be used for operating expenses, to ensure the long-term stability of Connecticut's arts industry by providing funding to organizations.

The Supporting Arts grant program CLOSED

General operating support to help Connecticut's arts organizations and municipal arts departments cover programmatic costs associated with their mission-related work. This type of grant is flexible and gives the grantee the ability to use the funds where they are most needed.

[The Connecticut Arts Endowment](#) currently closed
[The Elizabeth L. Mahaffey Arts Administration Fellowship](#) is currently closed

[EMPOWER Grant Program](#) is currently closed

[The General Operating Support for Theaters and Performing Groups program](#) is currently closed

[Strategic Partnership Grants](#) are currently closed

[The Artists Respond program](#) Closed until 2025

- Program guidelines and application available in late spring or early summer 2025.
- Application deadline in late summer 2025.

American Theater Wing

The American Theatre Wing Training Scholarships

Deadline Jan 24, 2024

Public Middle and High School students who come from populations historically marginalized in our industry, who demonstrate talent and ability in the theatre arts but lack the economic resources to receive high level training prior to college. The student's area of focus can be from any aspect of theatre from performance, to design, to writing, to stage management.

The Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative CLOSED

Grant funding can be used for:

Essential resources and equipment fundamental to arts education, specifically focused on enhancing learning in the area of theatre.

Classroom Resources Grants CLOSED.

Teachers can apply directly for resources they need to build and enhance their program in order to best nurture young talent in their schools. This can be musical instruments, lighting equipment, sound equipment, or costumes, to name a few examples.

Songwriting Challenge Closed

National Theatre Company Grants Closed

Jonathan Larson Grants CLOSED

The grant is awarded to musical theatre composers, lyricists, and librettists, or writing teams, early in their career, to support artistic endeavors and safeguard long-term music writing careers.

Americans for the Arts

Creative Spirit Fund Closed

US Congress

Congressional Art Competition Closed (Spring)

CT Humanities Upcoming Grants Deadlines

March 1: *Sponsorships* up to \$2,000

February 23: *Quick Grants* \$250-\$4,999

April 26: *Planning Grants* \$5,000-\$25,000

April 5 *Implementation Grants* \$5,000-\$35,000

April 5 *Capacity Grants* \$1,500-\$9,999