



CITY OF DANBURY CULTURAL COMMISSION

256 Main Street
Danbury, Connecticut 06810
203 797 4508

January 23, 2023

Minutes of the Meeting

Meeting called to order as a video conference (due to inclement weather), by Chairman Harvey Center at 6:30 pm with Commissioners: John Cooke, Cheryl Hill, Ed Moore, Gregory Smith, and Coordinator Gregory Wencek. Absent: Alma Faham, Mary Burke, Perry Price, and John Cherry.

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. There is no December meeting.

Correspondence

EMail: CT Arts Council grant setup

Mail: Irene Sherlock re: appointing a Poet Laureate

Phone: Designs for Danbury counsel discussions

Reports on DCC sponsored events

- Danbury Music Centre
 - The Nutcracker - Thursday, December 8 through 10 · Various times

Danbury events not sponsored by the Commission

- Danbury Music Centre
 - Handel's, Messiah - Saturday, December 3 · 3:00 – 5:30pm
 - Danbury Community Orchestra - Friday, December 16 · 7:30 – 9:00pm
- Danbury Museum
 - Guided Tours of 4 Danbury Museum Historic Buildings on our Main Street campus
 - Guided Tours of the Ives Homestead
 - The outdoor exhibit panels are installed
- Mad Hatter Chorus - Holiday Concert Saturday, December 3 · 3:00 – 4:30pm

EMoore: The concert was fun.

- Music at the Ridge with Geoff Kaufman Concerts 2022-2023 - Sunday, Dec 4 · 4:00 – 6:00pm
- Noteworthy - Christmas Candlelight Concert Sunday, December 18 · 7:00 – 8:00pm
- Danbury Library - TUBAChristmas Performance Saturday, December 3 · 12:00 – 1:00pm

EMoore: Moved from the Library Plaza to the Marian Anderson Hall due to weather. Also a fun time.

- Danbury Railway Museum
 - The Snow Clipper for the First Gift Express Saturday, December 3 weekends until Dec 18
- City Center Danbury
 - 2022 Light the Lights – Winter Festival December 4 @ 1:00 pm - 7:00 pm
- Palace Theater Danbury
- Galleries
 - Gallery of the Visual and Performing Arts Center WCSU Westside campus, 43 Lake Ave. Extension
 - Gallery at Still River Editions 128 E Liberty St.
 - in VIEW project Main Street Danbury
- WCSU
 - Season's Greetings - Friday-Sun, December 2 · 8:00 – 10:00pm until Dec 3, 2022
 - Holiday Pops, Saturday, December 10 & 11 · 3:00 – 5:00pm



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Upcoming events

See addendum

Coordinator's Report

- Meetings among City finance, third party grant facilitator, and State grant award agency to get award into the City treasury
 - Working to solve an issue with receiving the payment for the CT Humanities grant
 - The Supporting Arts Grant Program awarded a \$6,708.00 grant. Check arrived and should be added to the Cultural Commission account.
- Meeting with Brian Walters regarding a popup gallery and his inView Project, displaying visual art in vacant storefronts on Main Street.
 - "Make Danbury Interesting to artists" - Brian Walters (Jan 9, 2023)
 - NEXT STEPS: Determine who owns the buildings
 - Coordinate with Mark Nolan & Joe DaSilva, landlords
 - Collaborate with WCSU MFA program
 - Offer windows to cultural organizations to display the art from their 'best' artists
- Commission response to the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) 12/1422 draft report
 - This Chairman noticed the Cultural Commission was noted as an "other cultural organization". During a meeting to review the Draft report, the report was updated to include most of the Cultural Commission observations of how the Cultural Commission enhances the City.
 - POCD Report as submitted <https://www.danburypocd.com/#Documents-Presentations>
- Started a discussion with City Parks and Rec. re: benches decorated by artists from the City
- Started a discussion with rMedia, a video production on Main Street, to make an outline for how to include Danbury in the State's Film and TV office
- Started a discussion with CityCenter for cooperation with planned potential projects
- CT Arts Hero Award - CT Arts Review team, including the Commission, had a Meeting and named the Western Connecticut Arts Hero - Jim Felice, a sculptor, musician and owner of the Trailer Box Gallery in Bethel Clarke Industrial Park
- Designs for Danbury
 - Discussions with Corporation Council review of the rules.
 - The Counsel does not prohibit going forward
 - If the Commission decides to continue: Proceed with caution
- Commission projects
 - Literary Contests - still need a short story judge
 - Audio Drama - Planning has been restarted
 - Podcast interviews - will resume in February
 - Sidewalk Chalk Art - partner with CityCenter
 - City walking tours each quarter starting in the winter partner with CityCenter
 - Public Gardens Week May 12-21, 2023 photo shoot request partner with CityCenter
 - Pothole art partner with CityCenter
 - Make Music Day Mini-Grant available \$1,000



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Appeals from Community groups:

Derek Piotr \$8,000 for filming a documentary including Danbury folk song memories as an oral history. The last component of the previous project was unrealized due to the inability to secure lecture dates from the Danbury Library and/or Western Connecticut State University. Other area Libraries did sponsor lectures including an A/V presentation. The website, <https://fieldwork-archive.com/>, has generated requests to document how traditional music is passed down.

The original idea for this grant proposal was to initiate an "outpost" of the Derek Piotr Fieldwork Archive (DPFA), accessible at the Danbury Cultural Commission office, for community members to be invited to visit and share their musical memories on record for both the expansion of the Danbury Cultural awareness, but also for the DPFA database. Commissioners would be invited to record Danbury residents on behalf of the DPFA. While working on this proposal, I was invited by Trevor Christensen to expand the project into a documentary on the work with the DPFA.

Goals include:

- Establishing an outpost for the DPFA at the DCC
 - Reach out to local media (Newspapers, blogs, socials) to raise awareness of the DPFA/DCC collaboration
 - Interview residents of Danbury and Commissioners for documentary film on DPFA
 - Film documentary on DPFA/DCC collaboration
 - Submit documentary to high-level festivals (Tribeca, Sundance), further promoting awareness of project
- GSmith: What are the direct implications for Danbury? DPiotr: There are currently no entries from Connecticut in the Library of Congress database for folk music. This would put Danbury on the LOC list. HCenter: how would the project be affected if the entire grant request amount was not awarded? DPiotr: There would be a more focused effort to get funding from other sources. The entire project is projected to cost \$40,000. This application would cover the expenses of the portion of the Project in Danbury.

Old Business

1. Designs for Danbury

DISCUSSION: Postpone going forward. Review this project closer to the end of the fiscal year. The Coordinator will look into partnering with another group: They provide the rules and the Commission provides the prize.

New Business

1. Discuss OBJECTIVES 2023 - 2024 as stated in the Budget request - JCooke

GSmith asks that the Coordinator report monthly on the progress of meeting these goals.

- Strengthen Danbury through promoting grassroots leadership in the Arts. Seeking out and including community organizations, provide Equalable advocacy, and increase Diversity.
- Explore participation with the Connecticut Office of Film, Television & Digital Media, as a way to consistently bring additional productions to Danbury.
- Continue to apply to State, Federal, and private agencies and groups for funding of projects to supplement the City Commission budget as well as finding and promoting additional financial opportunities and funding for Cultural and Arts groups.
 - Continue to increase the participation of younger audiences at artistic and cultural events and projects throughout the City.



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- Continue to sponsor events to encourage citizens to spend on Cultural and artistic events, such as Sidewalk Chalk Art day, Neighborhood Walk day, Park(ing) day, Make Music Day, Indoor and outdoor visual art projects, 'Radio theater' productions, Photography projects, Pop up art exhibits, Roundtable discussions with area [Danbury] Arts providers.
- Continue expansion into the community to promote awareness of the Cultural Commission and the services provided to aid artists and organizations, with clearly defined grant eligibility and conditions, allowing for greater citizen creativity driving financial growth.

2. Approve Scholarship amounts of \$1,000 each at DHS(3), ACE(1), HAT(1) for \$5,000 in total.

Moved by EMOore to approve \$5,000 for scholarships as described. Seconded by JCooke.

DISCUSSION: None. CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Discussion re: naming a Poet Laureate for the City

Tabled until February so the Coordinator can talk with Irene Sherlock, who requested the appointment.

4. Permission to proceed with Make Music Day 2023 \$1,000 Mini-grant from Connecticut

Moved by JCooke to approve the Coordinator to seek the Make Music Day grant. Seconded by GSmith.

DISCUSSION: None CALLED: passed by unanimous voice vote.

Action on Grant Requests:

Derek Piotr \$8,000 for filming a documentary including Danbury folk song memories as an oral history

Moved by GSmith to grant \$8,000 for Derek Piotr oral history documentary. Seconded by CHill.

DISCUSSION: A question - are there restrictions on spending? Does this request contain "administrative" costs? HCenter: There appear to be no restrictions in the budget. JCooke: An online search for the videographer shows he is established for this type of project. General: traditionally the Commission does not grant an entire request amount.

CALLED: Motion to grant \$8,000 for oral history documentary failed by majority voice vote.

Moved by GSmith to grant \$6,000 for Derek Piotr oral history documentary. Seconded by JCooke.

DISCUSSION: EMOore: This amount appears to be too high due to the amount left in the Commission's budget and the number of grant requests expected for the balance of the fiscal year.

CALLED: Motion to grant \$6,000 for oral history documentary failed by majority voice vote.

Moved by CHill to grant \$5,570 for Derek Piotr oral history documentary. No Seconded.

DISCUSSION: CHill: this removes the administrator's fee from the budget.

CALLED: Motion fails due to no second.

Moved by CHill to grant \$4,000 for Derek Piotr oral history documentary. Seconded by JCooke.

DISCUSSION: none

CALLED: Motion to grant \$4,000 for oral history documentary passed by majority voice vote.

Other Business

1. inView project appears to be worthwhile. The Commission should assist in a non-budgeted way.

Motion to adjourn at 7:43

Made by GSmith. Passed by Unanimous voice vote.



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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 <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86420970447?pwd=aUNRSWhiZjl0RjYrMGt1TlNOcnhqZz09>

Meeting ID: 864 2097 0447 **Passcode:** 816120

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| One tap mobile: +19294362866,,82233993719# US (New York) Meeting ID: 864 2097 0447 Passcode: 816120 | Dial by your location +1 929 436 2866 US (New York) Meeting ID: 864 2097 0447 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 6:30 and was not recorded by the Commission.



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Upcoming events Addendum

Concerts 2022-2023 - Music at the Ridge Sunday,
February 5 4:00 – 6:00pm
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury
24 Clapboard Ridge Rd, Danbury, CT 06811

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

Western Connecticut State University
Rodgers and Hammerstein's Allegro - WCSU Dept. of
Theatre Arts Friday, February 24 8:00 – 10:00pm
weekends, until Feb 26, 2023
Visual & Performing Arts Center, MainStage Theatre, 43
Lake Ave Ext, Danbury, CT 06811, USA

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/visual-and-performing-arts-center-at-western-connecticut-state-university-6275173871>
<https://www.wcsu.edu/art/category/art-events/>
<https://www.wcsu.edu/svpa/events/>

*Events sponsored by the Commission
