



CITY OF DANBURY CULTURAL COMMISSION

256 Main Street
Danbury, Connecticut 06810
203 797 4508

August 28, 2023

Minutes of the Meeting

Meeting called to order by Chairman Harvey Center at 6:30 pm with Commissioners: John Cooke, Alma Faham, Cheryl Hill, Ed Moore, Deepti Nagaraja, Perry Price, Gregory Smith, and Coordinator Gregory Wencek. Absent: Mary Burke and John Cherry . Attending from the public: Siubhan Fallon.

Presentation of Minutes

The Minutes of the July meeting were presented. A motion by GSmith to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by CHill. Passed by voice vote, abstaining AFaham, DNagaraja, and PPrice.

Correspondence

Email: Siubhan Fallon's application for nomination to the Commission, State grant allocation, various Commission projects (Poet laureate, State Grants, Park(ing) Day, Federer Mural preservation, Sidewalk Chalk) Building security, inView project, Danbury Music Centre announces new Chorus Director

Reports on DCC sponsored events

- Musicals at Richter - The Music Man and Fairy Tale Theater

EMoore: It rained on *The Music Man* so the second act was canceled. Patrons were asked to return another night.

- International Festival July 29 & 30

GWencek: Well attended by groups and the public. About 15 groups attended. Weather was Hot on Saturday and Warm on Sunday.

DNagaraja: The turnout was good.

- Charles Ives Music Festival at the WCYO Orchestra Concert - Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra Aug 10

Danbury events not sponsored by the Commission

- Danbury Music Centre
 - The Legacy Quartet in Concert - Danbury Music Centre Tuesday, August 15 6:30 – 8:00pm
 - Silent Movie Night - Danbury Music Centre Saturday, August 26 7:15 – 9:15pm
- Danbury Museum
 - Music in the Garden August 25 5:30 – 6:30pm
 - Guided Tours of 4 Danbury Museum Historic Buildings on our Main Street campus
 - Guided Tours of the Ives Homestead
- Danbury Railway Museum
- Music at the Ridge
- City Center Danbury
 - Concert on the Green
 - Dancing Under the Stars
 - Farmers' Market
- 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.



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- Flag Bearers: jennie carr, Keisha Rollins, Roxy Savage, Mark Savoia, and Rita Valley Five artists' take on flags and flag-like motifs July 8 - September 29, 2023
 - Italian Festival Friday - Sons of Italy, August 4 – 6 Amerigo Vespucci Lodge 10 Christopher Columbus Ave, Danbury, CT
- EMoore: Excellent. There was lots of food, more than the International festival.
- San Gennaro Festival Danbury' 2nd Annual, August 23 until Aug 28, 2023 1 Ives St, Danbury, CT 06810
 - in VIEW project Main Street Danbury
 - A Storefront was available near Main and Crosby
 - WCSU

Upcoming events

See addendum. There is at least 1 event every weekend day to November.

Coordinator's Report

1. Ideas for Danbury
 - a. Wording changed to remove "Copyright" and replace it with "Creative Commons License" Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0)
 - b. Creative Commons gives pre-permission to use the submissions
2. Marketing - Banners for events. The Commission might consider having on hand promotional material which can be used for promotion at sponsored events i.e.: International Festival
 - a. Apparel - expect delivery (Not a Commission project. Commissioners using their own funds.)
3. Park(ing) Day Sept 15
 - a. Cooperation from the Parking Authority and the Parks Department
 - b. Brochures and maps received from the Parks Department
4. Jane Jacobs walking tour Sept 23th or Sept 16
[\[https://docs.google.com/document/d/17oKmqmQmWU_G51zSToWVQgBdu_ILMLLWumlxNRIzifErl/edit\]](https://docs.google.com/document/d/17oKmqmQmWU_G51zSToWVQgBdu_ILMLLWumlxNRIzifErl/edit)
 - a. Information from Brigid Guertin at the Museum, partner: there is no trolley available
 - b. I can do a "Old Theatre location" tour - but it is mostly the same locations as the last one
5. Sidewalk Chalk day Tentative date Sept 30
6. Personnel changes around the Mayor's office affects this commission noted
7. Richter Association for the Arts
 - a. ALL RICHTER ARTS EVENTS FOR THE FALL 2023 SEASON WILL BE HELD AT THE DANBURY MUSEUM, 43 MAIN STREET, DANBURY.
 - b. The Richter House renovation project will begin this fall. Many improvements are planned and the City has awarded a contract to Rosa Construction to perform the work. Richter Arts already had planned a full schedule for the fall. The Richter Association for the Arts was given 10 days to vacate the building. Richter House will not be available for use until the project ends, some time in 2024. The Danbury Museum has graciously agreed to be the venue for the entire Richter Arts Fall Performing Arts Program. Richter Arts regrets there will not be a Juried Art Show this year.
8. Poet Laureate
 - a. Reached out to find more judges and increased publicity - will continue
 - b. Notice is on the website and emailed to the press. (Patch picked it up.)
9. FY 22-23 Budget modifications



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- a. City finance has requested and received an extension of the supporting arts funding through 12/31/23 (vs 9/30/23). The operating grant expires 12/19/23.
 - b. I have worked with the Danbury Museum, and as we knew, it is not possible to use the State Grant funds for the "America250"/ Museum in the Streets refurbishment project. Museum Director Brigid Guretin and I knew that the completion of the project was many months away but I was sure that once the funds were encumbered into the Museum's account it would have been considered "Spent". I was, apparently, incorrect.
 - c. I propose that the Commission return to the original use of the funding as stated to the state on the original applications. The Commission requested to use the funds to award additional grants to those who came to the Commission for financial assistance. It was the Mayor's office which indicated the funding must be spent on a specific project. We were approved by the state to spend the funds as part of the 'established' grant making process.
10. Building security There have been 'homeless' and drug paraphernalia at the building. No City funding available.
- a. Consider adding security cameras to record people who come to the 3 doors of the building.
Secondary coverage for Music Centre front office door and Marian Anderson recital hall stairs.
Suggestions
Ring, Blink, Current Doorbell is "SkyBell Video Doorbell" owned by the Music Centre and is not maintained.
 - b. Security film for Glass front door
3M Safety & Security Window Films
i.e.: Amazon's Choice for "security window film" \$44.99 (\$1.73 / Sq Ft)
Secondary security film for interior doors
11. The Supporting Arts grant program Application Deadline passed without the Commission applying due to lack of support from the City Finance, the Mayor's office, and City Council.
12. Meeting the goals stated in the Finance budget document
- No update from last month
- a. Provide Equalable advocacy, and increase Diversity - see grant requests for this month
 - b. Explore participation with the CT Office of Film, Television & Digital Media - I have begun to research this project again. Gathering information from the state's program and from New Milford and Southbury. Question Mrs. Rotillo (Councilman's mother)
 - c. Continue to increase the participation of younger audiences
 - d. Sponsor events - work on Poet Laureate July through September, Walking tour with Museum deferred and Chalk Art in October
 - e. Expansion into the community - with Center City and Museum on multiple projects

Appeals from Community groups:

1. Pre-Halloween Concert - \$500 Alan Raph, Danbury Brass Band Director
The annual pre-Halloween concert will be basically the same as past years. Half of the band



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members write and/or arrange music so there are many premieres included in the program. Concert attendance averages 60 people. The Band rehearses each week and performs about 6 concerts a year. The players are volunteers.

2. Parent Leadership \$1,000 Katherine Tucker, Parent Leadership Coordinator with Patti Packerton *A Journey*, is a single performer telling the story of 7 African women through music and speech. The program teaches history as well as entertains. There is backing from the Danbury Museum and Danbury Schools and multiple in-kind contributions. Additional expenses may be the School's requirement to hire an auditorium tech and Police for security. The program runs about 90 minutes with audience questions.
3. Danbury Museum - \$7,108 Brigid Guertin, Director
"Equitable Access Tours" will extend free access to the Museum's programs through the end of the calendar year. Due to increased public participation, the Museum has called on 4 additional docents to guide people through the buildings of the Main Street campus and the Ives Homestead. This increased access also allows the Museum to include the Richter Association for the Arts programs as the Richter Art Center undergoes a much needed and anticipated renovation.

Old Business

1. Designs for Danbury

Moved by AFaham to approve the updated rules draft. Seconded by GSmith and PPrice.

Discussion: When should this program begin? Suggested October 2023.

CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Sidewalk Chalk again in the fall
 - a. CityCenter and the Coordinator would like to host another event September 30.

Moved by AFaham to approve \$60 to purchase chalk to be given away at the event. Seconded by PPerry.

Discussion: GWencek - this will be the same chalk used previously.

Called: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Poet Laureate for the City
 - a. The Coordinator will continue to reach out to Western Connecticut State University and the Danbury School system to solicit participation and potential candidates.

Applications will be accepted from **July 15, 2023 through September 15, 2023**

New Business

1. Federer mural restoration, EMoore: Sydney Nikolaus, a paintings conservator and research associate, has been invited to view the mural and offer her opinion on restoration in September. GWencek: Met with Brigid Guertin of the Museum and after hearing about the additional water damage to the walls, wonders if the mural can be stabilized and/or restored. Her observation is that not everything can be saved. Her recommendation is to have a High density scan made of the mural. She suggested starting the search with Still River Editions. Mark Savoia, of Still River, suggested Peter Brown and Mark reached out to make an opening introduction.
2. Disposition of the CT Grants of FY 2022/23.

Moved by CHill to allocate the Connecticut Humanities CT Cultural Fund Operating



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Support grant and the CT FY2023 Supporting Arts Grant using the formula presented by the Coordinator. Seconded by PPerry.

Basically the Humanities grant will be used to fund the “Equitable Access” proposal from the Danbury Museum and the CT Supporting Arts grant will be allocated to organizations who did not receive full funding from this Commission in past years. This was the proposal to the State when this Commission applied for the Grants. Details of the financial breakdown will be included in Appendix B, and will be sent to Finance for review.

Discussion: GWencek had reviewed this with City Finance and they had no objection. Finance has reviewed the proposal with the Mayor’s liaison.

CALLED: Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Action on Grant Requests:

1. Pre-Halloween Concert - Alan Raph \$500
Moved by CHill to allocate \$500 for the Pre-Halloween concert. Seconded by JCookel.
Discussion: This is always a good program.
CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.
2. Parent Leadership \$1,000 Katherine Tucker, Parent Leadership Coordinator
Moved by AFaham to allocate \$1,000 for “A Journey”. Seconded by CHill.
Discussion: HCenter - this appears to be a good program and should be supported by the Cultural Commission. It reaches for an underserved audience.
CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.
3. Danbury Museum - Equitable Access Tours \$7,108
Moved by CHill to allocate \$7,108 using the CT Humanities grant and other CT grant funds with \$600 from the ‘usual’ account. Seconded by PPerry.
Discussion: DNagaraja requests additional information from the Museum regarding the increased attendance at the Museum. The Coordinator will follow up.
CALLED: Passed by unanimous voice vote.

Other Business

1. AFaham asks the Commission to consider creating a recognition program for people or groups who are making positive changes in Danbury. Look to Maker Space, Kennedy Flats, or inView as examples. A plaque could be awarded annually to show appreciation of positive artistic planning. Tabled to September. The Coordinator is asked to work with AFaham to develop documentation.

Motion to adjourn at 7:49

Made by EMoore. 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 ID: 843 0075 3536 Passcode: 816120

One tap mobile: +19294362866,,84300753536# US (New York) Meeting ID: 843 0075 3536 Passcode: 816120	Dial by your location +1 929 436 2866 US (New York) Meeting ID: 843 0075 3536 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.

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 2022 grant cycle begins Feb. 1, 2023 and the application deadline is Dec. 31, 2023. 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.

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

The Artists Respond program Application Deadline: October 25, 2023 at 11:59pm
Artist-led projects use the arts to inspire, empower, educate, and transform Connecticut communities.

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



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Upcoming events Addendum

* Performing Arts Fall 2023 - Richter Arts
Sunday, September 3 3:00 – 4:30pm Weekly on Sunday
through October 22
Danbury Museum & Historical Society
43 Main St, Danbury, CT 06810, USA

Music in the Museum - Danbury Museum & Historical
Society
Friday, August 25 6:00 – 7:00pm
Main Street, Danbury, CT 06810

* Cecile Licad, Piano - Danbury Concert Association
Sunday, September 10 3:00 – 4:00pm
Veronica Hagman Concert Hall 43 Lake Avenue Ext.
Danbury, CT

Music at the Ridge
Jim Scott in concert
Sun, Sep 10, 4:00 PM
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury
24 Clapboard Ridge Rd, Danbury, CT

2023 Nutcracker Auditions - Danbury Music Centre
Friday, September 8 & 9

*PARK(ing) Day with Parking Authority & CityCenter
Friday, September 15
Main Street, Danbury, CT 06810

* TENTATIVE * Jane Jacobs Style Walk
Saturday, September 23 11:00am – 1:00pm
BY TROLLY

Greater Danbury Irish Festival
Saturday, September 23 & 24
CityCenter Green 2 Ives St, Danbury, CT

* TENTATIVE * Sidewalk Chalk Art contest with Farmers
Market

Saturday, September 30
Ives Street Green, Danbury CT

Dancing Under the Stars - CityCenter Danbury
Thursday, July 28 6:30 – 8:30pm, until Sep 30
Rooftop of the Patriot Garage (21 Delay St)

Farmer's Market - CityCenter Danbury
Saturday, July 1 10:00am – 2:00pm until Oct 29
Ives Street Green Danbury, CT 06810

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

Still River Editions
Flag Bearers: jennie carr, Keisha Rollins, Roxy Savage,
Mark Savoia, and Rita Valley
Five artists' take on flags and flag-like motifs
July 8 - September 29, 2023
128 East Liberty Street, Danbury, Connecticut

Western Connecticut State University

WCSU ART ALUMNI EXHIBITION
Oct 5 – Nov 12, 2023
Opening Reception: Thurs, Oct 5, 2023, 6-8 pm
THE GALLERY at the Visual & Performing Arts Center
WCSU, Westside Campus

*Events sponsored by the Commission



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Addendum B

Disposition of Grants received from Connecticut during FY 2022/23

Allocation of Connecticut Humanities CT Cultural Fund Operating Support Grant parts 1 and 2 total of \$6,500:

This entire amount (\$6,500) will go toward the partial funding of the Danbury Museum Equitable Access Tours. [This project will continue free access to programs at the Museum through this calendar year.]

In addition: \$8 for the Equitable Access Tours will be taken from the other Grant: FY23 Supporting Arts Grant Program.

To complete the Grant award from the Cultural Commission to the Museum, \$600 will be taken from the Commission's account 002.7005-5870.3292

NOTE: The total grant to the Danbury Museum is \$7,108.

Allocation of FY23 Supporting Arts Grant Program \$6,708.00:

\$804.00 to Danbury Concert Association

\$268.00 to Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra

\$134.00 to Danbury Brass Band

\$1,474.00 to Richter Association for the Arts

\$1,206.00 to Danbury Music Centre

\$670.00 to Deepti Nagaraja, artist display and education program with the Danbury Library

\$536.00 to Danbury International Festival

\$1,608.00 to Musicals At Richter

[AND the \$8 to the Museum noted above]