

**Gloucester Committee for the Arts
Minutes of Meeting Held on 28 February 2023
Harbormasters Office**

In Attendance:

Karen Ristuben, Chair
Miranda Aisling, Secretary
Judith Hoglander
Rebecca Reynolds
Rebecca Nagle
David Calvo
Chris Griffith
David Fields, Community Development Coordinator
Zoe Venetsanakos

Called to Order at 8:30 am

January Meeting Minutes Approved

Arts, Culture, and Events Coordinator Update - David Fields

The posting has closed, whoever has applied is in the queue, and we're waiting to hear about next steps from HR. We're likely to have a decision before our next meeting. It was on the Mass Municipal Association, on the city website, sent to the Mass Cultural Council and Hireculture. It closed on February 7. The city generally puts up job postings for two weeks. There have been applicants from inside and outside the community. The Mayor is the appointing authority and generally committees don't have any say in who is being hired.

Several committee members had concerns about the link for the job posting since it wasn't working the whole time it was up, how many people applied, and whether the committee can be involved in reviewing the applicants. David Fields is going to check with HR and the Mayor. We have qualified candidates but we can repost.

CFTA Ordinance and draft CFTA Policies and Procedures

No movement, we need to set up a time for the subcommittee to meet. Karen will schedule that sub committee meeting. Rebecca wants to make sure that there's a process for approval around temporary art given an upcoming project she's working on with LuminArt around Tablet Rock. General discussion: anyone doing an art piece on

city owned property has to make a proposal to the committee that includes what is happening, when it is happening, how it will impact the city structure, and the city property. The committee should think through when we want to be involved in official approval and when we want to act as advisors but not required.

City Budget process/CFTA priority funding needs

Zoe Venetsanakos shared the following information: Apply through neighborly.com which is on the website under the Community Preservation Tab. Applications are a two stage process: first is for eligibility and then the CPC reviews, if it's deemed eligible then applicants are invited to apply. Next eligibility applications are due March 7, the final form is due May 2. From May - September CPC will review applications and make a recommendation to City Council. The approval process runs from September - February. If the award is made, the funding will be made available the following March. This year's application will be made available for March 2024. There is no match requirement. There is preference for a normal cycle funding, off-cycle funding is more often used for emergency funds.

Application for eligibility is pretty short, only 5-6 questions. Karen will take the lead on getting the request for eligibility filed by the application date next Tuesday.

Cultural Plan/City Master Plan

Update from David is that the bid opening to lead the master process got pushed back to March 14. Everything is still in the queue and still getting proposal responses.

Tablet Rock/Stage Fort Park

Rebecca circulated the RFP that she drafted. The next step would be to officially vote on the RFP. If we are all in favor. Assign Rebecca Reynolds as the point of contact. Moved by Judith, seconded by Rebecca NAgle.

Funding conversation: The project budget is \$25,000. Roger Armstrong would like to donate \$11,000. Rebecca has suggested that Roger get in touch with David Fields to process the gift. It will need to go in front of city council. The Mayor has set aside ARPA funding for the rest of the project budget. Anything outside of this RFP could be asked for from the CPA at a future date. Voted in by the city.

Frank E. Davis Portrait

The next step is to draft a letter to the Mayor recommending that the city accept the portrait which will cost \$1,400.

Miranda and Chris raised a concern about how projects are being brought and evaluated. We've discussed \$25,000 to Tablet Rock and \$1,400 to the portrait and haven't had conversations about whether that funding could be more equitably spent in other spaces. While it is important to clear out past projects, moving ahead the committee should find a process for recommending projects with priorities in mind. We hope to have a list of priorities and a cultural plan that would help us decide what to recommend and not recommend to the city. This will be part of the CFTA Policies and Procedures.

Judith gave an update on how the Mayor's portraits need to be rehung in City Hall. The most important is to make sure there is space for a new portrait of former Mayor Sefatia and the new Frank E Davis Portrait. David Calvo has been asked to serve on the City Hall Renovation Committee as a voice for the Committee for the Arts.

WPA Murals

A former committee member got a CPC award to bring in a consultant from Williamstown to look at all the WPA murals in the city. Several murals have already been looked at: one in the Visitor Center, the Mayor's Office, and several murals stored under the stage in City Hall. CPC has always been interested in funding the preservation of the murals. Judith spoke with Jill Cahill who shared that the city has received another grant for WPA mural restoration that has not all been entirely used. There's \$11,992 still sitting for mural restoration.

Karen shared a list of current projects drafted by Rebecca R. and Judith that could be eligible for CPC funding. Discussion about whether we could add other projects to the list for this year and the current ask to the CPC. Could we include an ask for recontextualization and re-interpretation of historic markers. David reviewed the CPA website which does include historic inventory.

Could the part-time person hired for the Arts, Events, and Culture Coordinator be hired for other projects? Yes, but it would be outside the city process and an individual conversation with the person. Need to make sure they're not being paid by multiple places from the city.

CFTA Funding Memorandum

Karen has drafted a letter arguing for more funding for the CFTA which the committee reviewed. David F. raised the awareness that the current examples in the job are all in the Planning Department not the Community Development Department. Need to clarify about whether we're asking for funding for an expanded Events Coordinator in the Community Development Department or an Arts Planner in the Planning Department, which are different areas of focus for a job. The general committee was interested in getting funding for a full-time Arts Planner in addition to the Events Coordinator.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:00 am

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 28 at 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM