

Hudson Cultural Council Minutes

Meeting Date: August 23, 2022

Location: Zoom Meeting
ID# 813 1303 7459

Members Present via Roll Call: Lawrence Fine, Lindsay Kelkres, Cheryl Lombardo, Patricia Luoto, Doris Monteiro, Debbie Papa, Donna Specian

Members Absent: Peter Fiske, Ellen Kisslinger

Others in Attendance: Stu Ervin

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Patricia Luoto, Co-Chair.

Approval of Minutes:

On a motion by Donna Specian, seconded by Debbie Papa, the members voted 7-0 by roll call to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2022 council meeting.

Treasurer's report:

Co-Treasurers Cheryl Lombardo and Debbie Papa provided an update on the status of the FY2022 grants.

- Ten out of the eighteen awarded FY22 grantees need to submit their final reports to the council.
- Based on their grant applications, the following grantees have completed their project/season and should have already submitted final reports: Nashoba Symphonic Band, Symphony Pro Musica, Virginia Thurston Healing Garden, and Matt York. Cheryl and Debbie will reach out to these grantees and ask that their reports be submitted ASAP.
- Four other grantees will complete their projects in September: Hudson Division of Recreation, Market Music, Mercedes Murphy, and Hudson Public Library. Cheryl and Debbie will reach out to these grantees at the appropriate time.
- The remaining two grantees will complete their project as stated: Henry Lappen in October and the Discovery Museums by the year's end.

At the time of the meeting, Debbie and Cheryl were not able to give an update on the fund and the new allocation. Cheryl has reached out to Bill Weagle at Town Hall to make an appointment to go over the council's account and to fill out paperwork for the 2023FY. This information should be available at the next council meeting.

When discussing the Direct Grant process, it was stated that the biggest glitch is the continued reminders that need to be sent to grantees regarding paperwork - first in regard to the grant agreement form and later the need for grantees to file final reports and supporting documentation. It was stated that since the treasurers took their positions at the time that the direct grant process came into use, they did not have extensive experience with the previously-used reimbursement process.

Pat Luoto reported that Mercedes Murphy was not able to partake in the September 17th Hudson Art Fest as outlined in her grant application and would be changing her part in it to an October date. Doris Monteiro pointed out that since this was a change to the original grant Mercedes should contact the council to let it know of her future plans.

New Business:

Donna Specian reported that there were 272 responses to the council's annual online survey. This number indicates that the community participation was greater than in 2021, but not as high as it had been in 2019 even with the bigger promotional blitz made this council year.

Donna led the discussion on the results under each survey question. What stood out in the overall analysis of the results is that there is a desire by the respondents to have more community-wide events such as concerts, festivals, art shows, etc. and to have more affordable events.

Respondents listed Social Media as the number one place they hear about cultural activities that interest them, followed by Word-of-Mouth and the Town Website. Facebook received 83% of the responses under social media used to access cultural information.

Under Question 7: *Please provide any suggestions about cultural programs or services you feel would be beneficial to the Town of Hudson* there were many comments that encouraged support for the Hudson Armory as a community-wide cultural center.

Under Question 8: *How can diversity and/or access to the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences be improved in the Hudson community?* what stood out was the need to do outreach in multiple languages and to provide better publicity of the town's cultural events.

Donna will look into who is in charge of the town's electronic board on Main Street in an effort to promote the council's timeline on grant applications and the annual survey. There was discussion on possibly using an app to translate information into various languages. It was noted that there can be different dialects and that may not work. Pat suggested that we create a list of events to be posted on our website. Lindsay reported that she had started listing a timeline and events on HCC's Facebook with a link to the organizations/individuals that had received a 2022FY grant and would continue this practice with the next grant cycle. It is hoped that in the future the Armory would be a central depository with all the town's cultural events posted on its website.

The next order of business was to review and possibly change the Hudson Cultural Council Guidelines and Funding Priorities based on the results of the 2022 community survey. The members went through each guideline and funding priority offering suggestions for changes to be voted on as a block at the end of the discussion.

The following sentence in the first guideline was changed from

1. *All applications for performances or exhibits must include a performance or exhibit **date** and **confirmed** venue, with a **letter** from a **local sponsoring organization** confirming the date and venue.*

To read as follows:

1. *All applications for performances or exhibits must include the **program date**, **confirmed venue**, with a **letter** from a **local sponsoring organization** confirming the date and venue.*

Guideline number six which previously read as:

6. *If a prior HCC grant was awarded to the applicant but the project was not completed, the new application will include a written explanation.*

Was changed to the following:

6. *When a grant is awarded, but the project has not been completed for any reason, **the funds must be returned to the HCC.***

Under the Council's Funding Priorities, #3 which previously read as:

3. Community-wide events such as, but not limited to concerts, festivals, art shows, etc.

Was reworded to:

*3. **Community-wide events** including, but not limited to art in public spaces, concerts, festivals, art shows, etc.*

Funding Priority #5 which had read as:

5. Under-represented or marginalized communities or cultural disciplines in the Hudson community.

Was changed to:

5. Programs supporting diversity in the Hudson community.

Funding Priority #8 was previously stated as:

8. Applicant's track record: whether the applicant's prior HCC-funded project was (a) completed according to the original grant application (b) was successful, and (c) the applicant completed the required paperwork in order to access their grant funds in a timely manner.

Now reads as:

8. Applicant's track record: Project was completed according to the original grant application and required paperwork was submitted in a timely manner.

All proposed changes were included in a motion made by Lindsay Kelkres and seconded by Debbie Papa. The members voted 7-0 by roll call to approve the motion.

There was a review of the upcoming grant cycle deadlines. Donna Specian will post the updated guidelines and funding priorities on HCC's page on the Mass Cultural Council in advance of the September 1st deadline. Doris Monteiro reported that the new grant cycle is scheduled to open on September 1st and will close on October 17th this year. She will be submitting a press release to area newspapers and to the town's website.

Lawrence Fine volunteered to help Lindsay Kelkres with posting on the council's Facebook account.

Pat Luoto shared a letter that the council issued for the Hudson Cultural Alliance to support their T-Mobile Grant application that benefits the Hudson Armory Project.

Old Business:

After discussion, the general consensus of the council was to not participate in Hudson's September 17th Business Improvement District Festival.

Next Meetings:

The council set its next meeting to be held on Tuesday, October 25, 2022. The purpose of the meeting is to review the paperwork associated with Direct Grants and to go over the reasons for the denial of grant funding. The November 1st meeting is scheduled as a grant voting meeting with the Reconsideration Meeting set for Tuesday, November 29th. These three meetings will be held at 7:00 PM on Zoom.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Donna Specian and seconded by Cheryl Lombardo. The council voted 7 to 0 via a roll call to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Doris Monteiro, Secretary