

Minutes – November 13, 2023 -- Portsmouth Arts and Nonprofits Committee

Russ called the meeting to order at 12 PM

Members in attendance: Russ Grazier, Robin Albert, Jason Goodrich, Genevieve Aichele, Councilor Kate Cook, Linnea Grim. CPS: Tom Kaufhold, Karen Rosania, Allen Chase, John Mayer, Karen Battles, Robin Luri-Meyerkopf, Ben VanCamp. Remotely: Barb Massar, Jeff Cooper, Courtney Perkins, Ellen Fineberg, Prospective member: Sachiko Akiyama.. Not present: Renee Giffroy, Tina Sawtelle, Beth Falconer, JerriAnne Boggis.

Non-members in attendance: Sean Clancy, Stephanie Seacord (recording secretary)

Due to lack of in-person quorum, no BRC minutes were approved and no other votes were taken.

Russ reported that the report from the Finance/Tax Assessors office on non-profit taxing is on hold until 2024.

1. AFTA Update (Robin Albert):

AFTA reported its national data on October 12. NH State Council on the Arts has released some data. Portsmouth is holding until December presentation to City Council – except for information sent to financial data participants with the request that they use the information only internally (i.e. no press releases). The committee is finalizing the draft of a rack card (print and electronic) to share with those participants. Subcommittee will send the Portsmouth data link to the BRC.

Lauren, Stephanie and the AFTA committee will draft a press release intended for distribution as soon as the BRC makes its report to City Council on 12/18. AFTA VP Randy Cohen's visit Jan 11-12, 2024 includes:

Thurs 11 Jan – Chamber breakfast, 8 an, Portsmouth Rotary lunch at 12 noon

Fri 12 Jan – Nonprofit morning workshop at 3S – with more emphasis than last time on best practices for sharing the data in an effective way.

2. End of the Year Report

Russ and Barbara are working on the draft for presentation at the final City Council meeting on Dec 18 (deadline Dec 13) and will consult with Councilor Cook, Sean and the Mayor on expectations for the 5-8 min report. The Cultural Commission ordinance forms the backdrop. The report will summarize what's being turned over to the Commission.

Powerpoint report will cover accomplishments since the Dec 2021 report:

- Timeline of how committee evolved from Covid Relief Task Force in May 2020 to now
- AFTA – top line results
- Cultural Plan highlights – not the full report.
- Ordinance creating Cultural Commission
- Cultural Commission members (proposed for consideration 11/13 and voted 12/4)
- Marketing pilot
- Public Art Review Committee
- Request for ARPA funds

Members of the BRC and subcommittee are encouraged to attend the 12/18 City Council meeting to be recognized by Russ and Barbara. The report should be heard near the 7 pm start of the meeting, which is also traditionally a festive one with holiday music.

3. Cultural Plan Subcommittee Update:

First Karen accepted a motion from Alan, seconded by Tom to approve the minutes of the October CPS meeting. Approved unanimously.

Karen then introduced the work group plan for completing the draft of the Cultural Plan. (Sean to determine if ACG is taking a more active role in writing and recommendations.)

Five work groups were formed around these themes (paralleling the 6 themes of the 2002 plan):

- Cultural Resources: Sean, Jason, Ellen, Jeff, Barbara
- History and Preservation: Tom, Karen B., Linnea, Alan
- Communications: Genevieve, Ben, Emma, Stephanie
- Diversity, Equity, Accessibility: Kate, Robin LM, John, Courtney
- Education: Robin A, Karen R, Russ, Sachiko

After initial discussion centered on whether the Plan should have a mission or vision statement. While a mission statement seems more of an organizational concept, a vision statement would help articulate the advocacy and agency to ensure the creative environment we all want. An overall vision of what the Commission wants to encourage and support. Not telling the Commission “how” to do their work but suggesting “why” the plan covers “Arts for All.” Members of the committee also noted a vision statement is a reference point to keep the commission on its path and avoiding mission creep.

The key takeaway is that the Cultural Plan needs to be actionable, and the Commission accountable for its goals.

Russ introduced a template for the work groups to complete:

- Goal Areal:
- Short description
- Subgoal(s)
- Bullet points for tactics.

Russ encouraged all of the work groups to include a wide range of thoughts, even if they overlap with another group’s focus, to ensure nothing is missed. The 2002 Cultural Plan is a model but 2023 plan is not locked into that template.

4. **Committee Gathering** – Consensus that a social gathering in January 2024 is preferred. Potentially including members of the Arts and Culture Commission – who can attend social gatherings as long as no business is discussed without being considered a quorum.

5. **Cultural Commission Applications**

Application form available on the City Clerk’s page and on the Arts Committee page.

Councilor Cook reported there’s still time to apply by Nov 17, but more applications have been received than the 12 positions to be filled:

- 4 cultural organization – nonprofits or for-profits – representative for the organization does not need to be a Portsmouth resident and should note s/he is applying as the organization delegate and use the organization’s address
- 4 members of the community (Portsmouth resident)
- 4 artists (Portsmouth resident)
- 1 Alternate
- 1 City Councilor/1 staff

BRC meeting adjourned at 1 pm into discussions among members of the five work groups. **Next meeting, Monday December 11 at 12 noon, depending on holiday observance and need for joint meeting with Subcommittee.**