

FINAL

**CITY OF LEBANON
ARTS & CULTURE COMMISSION
MINUTES, DECEMBER 22, 2020
REMOTE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
LebanonNH.gov/Live
6:30PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jessica Giordani (Chair; Citizen Rep. Ward 3), Devin Wilkie (Citizen Rep., Ward 2), Nick Gaffney (Arts Org. Rep.-AVA Gallery), Ben Van Vliet (Arts Org. Rep.-UVMC), and Karen Zook (City Council Rep.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Clifford (Vice Chair; Arts Org. Rep.-LOH), Rebecca Foster (Citizen Rep., Ward 1), Bill Dunn (EDC Rep.), and Sherry Fiore (Alt.)

STAFF PRESENT: David Brooks, Planning & Zoning Director; Paul Coats, Recreation and Parks Director; Kristine Flythe, Recreation Program Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Giordani called the meeting to order at 6:31pm

A. Review of meeting procedures and NH RSA 91-A "Right-to-Know" requirements.

Mr. Brooks shared the State directive and participation details for the online meeting in Microsoft Teams. All speakers identified themselves.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 24, 2020

***A MOTION by Ms. Zook to approve the November 24, 2020 Minutes as presented.
Seconded by Mr. Gaffney.***

Roll Call Vote:

***Members voting in favor included: Chair Giordani, Ms. Zook, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Gaffney,
Members abstaining: Mr. Van Vliet***

****The Motion was approved (4-0-1)***

3. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Discussion Re: REC Graffiti Art in the Park project update

Ms. Flythe noted that the graffiti walls have already been used even prior to a soft opening. It was noted that one of the first graffiti messages was "Thank You, Parks & Rec".

Mr. Coats noted the Recreation Department's intention was to post the rules and complete the construction last week, but it was postponed due to the snowstorm. He indicated there was not much left to do and that the Commission could set a soft opening date.

Mr. Gaffney said he could reach out other artists to begin using the walls, but wasn't sure if weather conditions would keep people away. Chair Giordani asked if there was interest in setting a soft opening date now or waiting until the next meeting. Ms. Zook recommended communicating with the City Manager about organizing potential gatherings in light of the current pandemic situation as the guidelines continue to change.

Other members agreed to hold off on setting a soft opening date until the rules are posted, installation is completed, and more information is obtained regarding potential meetings. This should be a discussion item for the Commission's January meeting.

Mr. Coats noted that by waiting for more information, the Commission may effectively bypass the opportunity for a soft opening and end up having a more formal grand opening once the gathering guidelines are clearer in the spring. Members agreed that it would be okay to not have any specific date for a soft opening and just let people start using the space. Chair Giordani will share a recent photo of the existing artwork.

Mr. Coats suggested a press release with photos to media outlets to announce a virtual soft opening of the graffiti park and that it's open for use. It was suggested the discussion be continued to the next meeting. Mr. Coats noted that the temporary rules banner should be nearly ready to be posted. Ms. Flythe thanked Mr. Wilkie and Ms. Foster for helping install the graffiti art panels.

B. Discussion Re: Tunnel project update

Mr. Brooks noted that City Engineer Brian Vincent indicated that the schedule remains the same with construction work anticipated for completion in early to mid-May 2021. It is still not clear whether there will be any funds remaining once construction is substantially complete.

C. Discussion Re: Planning and Goals for 2021

Chair Giordani asked members to comment on goals and potential projects that could be worked on in light of ongoing restrictions on in-person gatherings for the foreseeable future.

Ms. Zook mentioned working to get the sidewalk poetry project off the ground as a project that could be undertaken without in-person meetings and would help with community buy-in and awareness of the arts.

Mr. Gaffney mentioned continuing to think about and plan for doing something in the tunnel should be a primary focus for the commission.

Mr. Wilkie seconded both ideas and also wants to see the commission continue to develop the brand awareness and recognition of the commission's work. The goal should be to associate Lebanon with the arts and associate art projects with the commission.

Mr. Van Vliet agreed with all prior suggestions, especially the idea of strengthening brand awareness and championing all of the arts that are already occurring in the City. That could serve a dual purpose of strengthening the brand and building coalitions with arts organizations.

Chair Giordani suggested getting started with building public/private partnerships, particularly with potential fundraising opportunities since funding is expected to be tight in the coming year. She noted that the necessary paperwork should be wrapped up in early 2021 to help facilitate fundraising. She noted that other commission members will be asked to think about goals and projects for further discussion in January.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Chair Giordani suggested taking an opportunity in the new year to revisit the concept of the subcommittees, how they should function, and whether they need fine-tuning. She noted they were originally set up with the idea of creating opportunities for public activity, which may not now be possible for a period of time. Refocusing the subcommittees could allow them to be more effective for the Commission.

Mr. Coats asked if there was a work group focused on the tunnel planning. Chair Giordani noted that the subcommittees should be more project focused rather than broad umbrella topics. Mr. Coats suggested setting up a meeting in January to start those discussions since the Recreation Department is tasked with planning the grand opening of the tunnel.

A. Exploratory Funding and Processing: (K. Zook, S. Fiore, B. Van Vliet)

No report.

B. Civic Art: (J. Giordani, S. Fiore, B. Dunn)

No report.

C. Programming: (K. Zook, D. Wilkie, R. Foster; N. Gaffney)

No report.

D. Publicity/Marketing: (J. Clifford, J. Giordani, R. Foster)

No report.

E. Data Collection: (D. Wilkie, B. Van Vliet)

No report.

5. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Chair Giordani thanked Mr. Brooks for helping get the Commission started over the last year and a half. Ms. Zook thanked all of the commission members for persevering through a very challenging first full year.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

***A MOTION by Mr. Wilkie to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Ms. Zook.***

Roll Call Vote:

Members voting in favor included: Chair Giordani, Ms. Zook, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Van Vliet

****The Motion was approved (5-0)***

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
David Brooks
Planning & Zoning Director