

**CITY OF LEBANON
ARTS & CULTURE COMMISSION
MINUTES, JANUARY 26, 2021
REMOTE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
LebanonNH.gov/Live
6:30PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT (8/10): Jessica Giordani (Chair; Citizen Rep. Ward 3)
Bill Dunn (EDC Rep.)
Devin Wilkie (Citizen Rep., Ward 2)
Rebecca Foster (Citizen Rep., Ward 1)
Nick Gaffney (Arts Org. Rep.-AVA Gallery)
Sherry Fiore (Alt.)
Joe Clifford (Vice Chair; Arts Org. Rep.-LOH)
Ben Van Vliet (Arts Org. Rep.-UVMC)

MEMBERS ABSENT: (2/10) Karen Zook (City Council Rep.)
Mimi Hains (Heritage Commission Rep.)

STAFF PRESENT: (2/2) Kristine Flythe (Program Coordinator, Leb. Rec),
Paul Coats (Director, Leb. Rec.)

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Giordani called the meeting to order at 6:35pm

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

Mrs. Flythe shared the State directive and participation details for the online meeting in Microsoft Teams. All speakers identified themselves prior to speaking and if anyone is present with them or if they are alone.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 22, 2020

Chair Giordani opened review and discussion of the December 22, 2020 meeting. Taking any corrections or discussion. Hearing none Chair Giordani opened the approval of the minutes for a ***MOTION by Mr. Wilkie to approve the December 22, 2020 minutes as presented. Seconded by Mr. Gaffney.***

Chair Giordani hearing no discussion moved to a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote: Members voting in favor included: Vice Chair Clifford, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Van Vliet, Mr. Dunn, and Chair Giordani. Abstaining from the vote Ms. Fiore and Ms. Foster.

****The Motion was approved (6/0) and recorded by Mrs. Flythe.***

3. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Discussion Re: Welcome to Arts & Culture new Heritage Committee Rep. Mimi Hains

Chair Giordani welcome new member Mimi Hains. Ms. Hains was not in attendance, but we are still happy to have her join us.

B. Discussion Re: Vote: Election of Chair & Vice-Chair

Chair Giordani moved forward with voting to discuss at the annual January meeting to seat the chair and vice chair for the upcoming year. Chair Giordani opened the discussion and nomination to the commission.

Mr. Dunn can I ask a question? Can we hear from the Chair and Vice Chair to speak to continuing in their rolls and if they would like to continue?

Chair Giordani would be happy to continue but if the commission would like others to step up that is ok, and it is at the choice of the commission.

Vice Chair Clifford is also happy to stay as Vice Chair and work alongside with Chair Giordani if the commission feels that is a good direction.

Mr. Dunn since I asked the first question. I would like to know what others are feeling. I've enjoyed the leadership and we've had a lot accomplished with the abilities of our chair and vice chair.

Mr. Gaffney, I concur leadership is great.

Mr. Van Vliet, I think if they are willing to serve, we should take them up on the offer.

Mr. Wilkie, I agree with all of that.

Ms. Foster, I agree as well

Mr. Wilkie I am assuming that we need to officially nominate Chair Giordani and Vice Chair Clifford.

Chair Giordani that is correct Mr. Wilkie. We will need to nominate and take a roll call vote for both the Chair and Vice Chair and either do a double roll call vote or put the two nominations together for one vote.

MOTION by Mr. Wilkie to nominate J. Giordani as Chair and J. Clifford as Vice Chair. Seconded by Mr. Dunn enthusiastically.

Chair Giordani no further discussion and move to vote.

Roll Call Vote: Members voting in favor of the nomination as J. Giordani as Chair and J. Clifford as Vice Chair included: Ms. Fiore, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Foster, Mr. Van Vliet, Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Wilkie, Vice Chair Clifford, and Chair Giordani.

****The Motion was approved (8/0) and recorded by Mrs. Flythe.***

C. Discussion Re: Graffiti Park Soft Opening – Jan. 15th at noon

Chair Giordani retroactive reporting of the soft opening of the Graffiti Park. Chair Giordani opened it up to Ms. Foster or Mr. Wilkie to report back.

Ms. Foster is excited about the park and what is to come. Shared that Mrs. Flythe asked for Ms. Foster and Mr. Wilkie to attend on Friday. There was a short video done and it was great. It will be nice to see how it goes when the weather gets better.

Mr. Van Vliet, I saw the video on my social media and props to who put it there.

Chair Giordani yes that is the magic of the Recreation Department. I don't think we heard back from Valley News. Is that right Mrs. Flythe?

Mrs. Flythe yes valley news had no response. We did get the video out on our social medias and that hit quite a few folks and it was shared and commented on quite a bit.

Chair Giordani we did our own thing and when the weather turns getting warmer, we will see some excitement down there.

Mr. Coats will be speaking to Lebanon Times and would love to see someone make a big splash about the park as its unique to the area.

Chair Giordani I wonder if Susan Apel would be interested in writing about the park and folks follow her writing.

Mr. Gaffney that's a great idea as I subscribe to her newsletter.

Chair Giordani we can put a bug in her ear to see if she will pick up on it.

Mr. Wilkie we can reach out to junction magazine and could have an ideal audience for this.

Mr. Coats send contacts over to Mr. Coats or Mrs. Flythe.

Mr. Gaffney will send Susan Apel and send over.

Mr. Wilkie will do some research and send over what he finds.

Ms. Foster mentioned Vice Chair Clifford knows daybreak and to reach out and send over some photos.

Vice Chair Clifford will reach out to daybreak.

Chair Giordani we have a short list of local media influencers that may pick up on this and with the weather turning it will remind and keep it open and in the minds of the community to start using it.

D. Discussion Re: Establishing working groups in place of committees.

Chair Giordani moves to establishing working groups in place of committees. At our meeting in December talking about our goals, plans, visions, and points of focus for 2021 even with the challenges and restrictions of COVID. Chair Giordani to open this discussion to the group specific to the members that were not present in December. However, looking at the established committees and the initial task force work were; Exploratory Funding & Processing, Civic Art, Programming, Publicity/Marketing, and Data Collection which are these big, vague, and high level concept committees and I feel these are not the most functional for us and now how we are forced to work in the time we are in. However, this past year we've done extensive work with a graphic designer, and the graffiti park and have found an effective and targeted focus to our work. I have a feeling for this next year we can fine tune and do project-based work and I'd like to propose in dissolving those committees and establishing targeted groups and a focus/clear vision on what's ahead for us. I open this to all of you to develop those working groups. Thoughts?

Mr. Van Vliet, I think it's a great direction to go. When it's necessary to come back to the committees below we could always go back. I think it's a good idea on focus on what we want to get done now and organize ourselves around it.

Mr. Wilkie, I agree with that. I think while our previous committees help setup and visualize what we want to do there was enough overlap that items didn't always fit into that 1 committee. Having a target/informed working groups would help achieve goals much more efficiently and agree with that plan.

Mr. Gaffney I basically also agree with what has been said. It's not a concern but weary of creating working groups for every little thing and keep it in mind that we have 10-12 working groups and particular on what gets chosen as a working group.

Mr. Dunn curious for those who are more connected to city government if we are stepping outside of the ordinance 2018-09 establishing working subcommittees in detail the items below. Is there a mechanism to change the specific task or is it just guidance?

Chair Giordani we may need to look at that specifically. I want to clarify my intention here that the language the dictates the Arts & Culture commission doesn't necessarily outline the 5 standing specific committees we have. Chair Giordani is asking a bit of rebranding of the group and a specific to focus on the tunnel. This would be the civic art group. The combination of the people in this group has worked. However, saying ok Civic Art group work on this and it's been broad and nebulous and if we can put a pin in it for what folks need to focus on.

Mr. Dunn philosophically it makes sense. Our successes have come from very focused project goals and made a difference. In agreement and in support but checking to see if we need to do something else to put into effect what you want to do.

Chair Giordani asked Mrs. Flythe and Mr. Coats if we know off hand. We would need to defer to clerks. Mr. Coats my hunch is the establishment of working subcommittees is offered as a duty and responsibility and how those are defined. I believe there is wiggle room to define that and I don't believe the clerk will exercise a restriction here that is not written within the ordinance.

Chair Giordani we will look into more before the next time we meet. Do we feel comfortable moving forward and fine-tuning committee focus? If that feels good to the committee.

Mr. Dunn the type of targeting in the past has been highly successful so yes.

Chair Giordani Let's do it. On our agenda we have 3 points of focus. I'd like to add two more branding & outreach and coalition building amongst Arts Organizations.

Tunnel Group (Civic Art/Programming)

Chair Giordani moves to discussion on the tunnel group and civic art. Which members would like to focus on the tunnel? Once monthly meeting. Mr. Gaffney, Chair Giordani, and Mr. Wilkie apart of this group.

Chair Giordani asked Mrs. Flythe any updates and confirmed that late June will be the mall area.

Mr. Coats confirmed that end of May/Early June for completion of the project. There are no big updates and unsure of when Arts Commission can get inside. Firm on the end of May/Early June and there are concerns for certificate of occupancy for the tunnel and when public can actually go inside. It's unclear if we will get permission if we can go in prior to completion. Continue to ask the engineer what options we will have to get in early to accomplish things.

Chair Giordani any information is helpful and if you hear more please share.

Sidewalk Poetry Project

Chair Giordani everyone here is familiar with the project. Ms. Zook has asked to be put in this group.

Mr. Gaffney do members in the group have to members of the commission or can the public be involved.

Chair Giordani we can definitely have public being involved and it would be great to have 2-3 members on the commission to be involved for accountability.

Ms. Foster I'd like to be on this.

Mr. Dunn, I wear 2 hats and the west Lebanon revitalization in the process of what they are considering, and sidewalks are being dug up and replaced. I'm happy to be an ad hoc member and keep people apprised of what is happening.

Ms. Foster, I want to represent West Leb and a big part of why I want to be part of this one. River Park a lot happening in a year or two.

Chair Giordani we will have Mr. Dunn be an ad hoc member and the nature of this group having community involvement and a jury to select the poetry for the sidewalk panels. This will be on going and annual thing and there will always be repairs and a very fluid group.

Fundraising

Chair Giordani anyone comfortable with reaching out to people and with good interpersonal skills this is your place.

Ms. Fiore, Mr. Van Vliet, and Mr. Wilkie will serve on this working group.

Mr. Coats a question thinking of fundraising would have a host agency receive fundraised dollars and there is an effort already going on to setup this new non-profit associated. What is the overlap of this commission and the board with the new non-profit?

Chair Giordani we are finalizing the board and paperwork with Lauren Whittlesey and have their own entity and won't have to ask another non-profit to be our own fiscal agent.

Mr. Coats it's great to hear that progress and in our cooperative town. I don't think we can imagine a conflicting situation. We want to think ahead of fundraising work team and a separate entity, and what if the non-profit board and the commission have different ideas and if there were conflict and know ahead of time what the collaboration will be. I can't imagine there will be a conflict but something to be cautious of.

Chair Giordani the person putting together the board/paperwork for the non-profit there is the expressed intent to support the arts in Lebanon. It is always good to be cognizant of potential issues but the goal of this is to support public municipal art and not create their own projects but to support this art. Invite Lauren to attend the next meeting to explain the non-profit in a clearer language.

Branding & Outreach (Publicity/Marketing)

Chair Giordani a bit of extension from publicity and marketing and having a focused body that will let the community know we exist. Chair Giordani, Vice Chair Clifford, and Mr. Van Vliet to serve this working group.

Coalition Building amongst Arts Organizations

Chair Giordani bringing this part of our mission as a commission and anything anyone can do to support arts organizations will be valuable.

Ms. Fiore happy to be on the group.

Mr. Gaffney happy to be on this group.

Mr. Dunn can you clarify what connections you'd like to establish?

Chair Giordani this came out of our December meeting that Mr. Van Vliet brought up that not only strengthen our brand but building coalitions with arts organization. Finding ways to inventory collect and finding ways for us to be working together. Not on the operations sides but opportunities like invite in local arts organization, and ways to bring groups together.

Mr. Van Vliet my original thought was branding and the side of highlighting what's happening and appreciate what's here. Shine the spotlight.

Mr. Dunn it could be simple as reaching out to folks, and we can be a tool to help promote their cause, event, functions, calendar.

Mr. Van Vliet yes and it goes both ways and becomes more visible to others.

Mr. Dunn I'd like to have a conversation with Tommy as well and can put my name down and recruit him as necessary.

Mr. Van Vliet while I'm interested 2 groups may be my capacity. I may share my input in the branding group.

Chair Giordani yes certainty and as we move forward I'm hoping that each group will be able to appraise each other on what's happening, what we are doing and all of us to engage in further conversations on some level and additional involvement is lovely.

Vice Chair Clifford I echo that, and I see branding as an extension of this outreach and on behalf of LOH we will have a vested interested in that coalition building piece.

Chair Giordani we will get a new list, so we know whose energy is going to go where and move forward and I'll check in with each group if clarity is needed. Once we find clarification, we will work to do an official motion in February if needed.

Mr. Dunn yes.

Mr. Coats we will follow up as well.

E. Discussion Re: Lebanon Artways and grand opening of tunnel

Chair Giordani don't have a lot for the grand opening but we do have a group dedicated to that.

F. Discussion Re: Planning and goals for 2021

Chair Giordani let us discuss planning and goals for 2021 and if folks have something to focus on and share now.

Mr. Dunn, I think we should set a goal of getting our new wordmark/logo out to the public in at least 3-5 events. That may have to happen in collaboration with another event, or a non-profit and if we say you are important to us and we are important to you and they use the logo, and invest with our logo, and create cross pollination and identity we want to create.

Ms. Foster since I represent West Lebanon and now with the west Leb. Revitalization going on. Having events and places to park and what can we do to help with that. I'd like to connect with a member of West Leb. Revitalization to keep arts in mind.

Ms. Fiore, I agree with Mr. Dunn's point and contributing money to other orgs for exposure. Partnering with real estate companies. Vested interest with this kind of work.

Vice Chair Clifford well in terms for the opera house I have my eyes on a summer outdoor festival. In my grand design so I see a lot of overlap with this group. I'm trying to lean into a signature event idea, and it's got some traction with folks I've spoken with. I'm especially

interested doing something in or around the tunnel and this would be in late August. Natural overlap with LOH and commission.

Chair Giordani very exciting sneak peek.

Ms. Fiore Thinking of summer and optimistic is good but we need to be practical. We still must be aware and not attracting crowds and think about less gathering and more moving/roving events.

Vice Chair Clifford I am keeping social distancing in mind. Block party and spread out and pushing out towards August.

Ms. Foster there was further discussion on the area by spencer street and art involvement and we are tied in with that. There is a lot going on and how do we get involved with that.

Chair Giordani we need to connect with the developers and having art in their space as they are building things.

Ms. Foster, I feel there is a city ordinance and they have to focus on arts.

Mr. Dunn I am a member of the economic development commission is meeting with downtown TIFF commission, and information can be shared, withing a TIFF district the incremental increase in revenue is being spent within that area. Partnering with developers on what they will do.

Chair Giordani when we met with that group that was our last in person meeting

Ms. Foster I was vague but if we can meet with those developers in west Lebanon and Lebanon and the River Park site, and should we be getting with developers in both locations on board.

Mr. Coats part of this objective of city policy influence part of the design does the A&C need to be in every development plan and try to connect with the developer 1:1 to encourage to participate in public art that would be tough to sustain. The complete streets policy would be a good example and presented in front of a city council and this could be something the commission can focus on. This is the something the city council should approve to ensure that Public Art Policy for future development and exist into perpetuity.

Ms. Foster should we move that into a new group to start working on that.

Chair Giordani and I think we can find one of the above groups above to focus on that. That was a great way to think about it and frame it with the complete streets policy.

Mr. Van Vliet, I think this is a good goal for the year too as it is not an event.

Ms. Foster the West Leb. Revitalization and the charette and most of it was streetscape. How can Arts be involved in that committee and the mayor put together, and developers. How do we ensure a public art policy is part of that?

Mr. Dunn the West Leb. Revitalization is a subcommittee of the Economic Development commission and I can keep my finger on the pulse to keep the arts in mind.

Mrs. Flythe revealed and shared our new logo. Lebanon Recreation, Arts, and Parks Department.

Mr. Coats I'd also like to recognize Councilor Zook – recognition for 40 under 40 and that is a huge accomplishment.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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)

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:

No open discussion from the public.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

***A MOTION by Ms. Fiore to Adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Mr. Gaffney.***

Chair Giordani move to vote.

***Roll Call Vote: Members voting in favor to adjourn Vice Chair Clifford, Mr. Wilkie,
Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Van Vliet, Ms. Foster, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Fiore, Chair Giordani.***

****The Motion was approved (8/0) and recorded by Mrs. Flythe.***

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristine Flythe
Program Coordinator
Recreation & Parks Department