

FINAL

**CITY OF LEBANON
ARTS & CULTURE COMMISSION
MINUTES February 25, 2025
City Hall Council Chambers & LebanonNH.gov/Live
6:30PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: (4/6)

Jessica Giordani (Chair; Citizen Rep Ward 2)
Nick Gaffney (Vice Chair; Citizen Rep Ward 3,)
Stevens Blanchard (Ward 1 Citizen Rep)
Claire Geno (Arts Org. AVA)

MEMBERS ABSENT: (2/6)

Devin Wilkie (City Council, Heritage Commission & DEI Rep)
Ben Van Vliet (Arts Org. Rep-UVMC)

STAFF PRESENT: (1)

Kristine Flythe (Program Coordinator, Leb. Rec)

Kristine Flythe gave the RSA 91-A announcement.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Giordani called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

They welcomed Claire Geno as a full member.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 28, 2025

Nick Gaffney MOVED to approve the January 28, 2025, Minutes, as presented in the packet with amendments.

Seconded by Jessica Giordani.

**The Motion was approved (3-0-1).*

Claire Geno abstained because she did not attend the meeting.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

A. MIRO BOARD DISCUSSION

The members discussed the 2026-2029 Strategic Plan. They focused on the strategies and objectives to enhance the vitality of Arts & Culture in the City in cooperation with the arts community in the Upper Valley. This includes energizing the arts economy as well as opportunities for public art.

In recent years Arts and Culture has generated the arts inventory for the Master Plan, created an arts policy, installed a graffiti park in West Lebanon, initiated Soofa Signs with an art walk, started the annual poetry contest that created the poetry sidewalk stamps, put up banners in Lebanon and West Lebanon, used rain works which is a water repellent product showing fun messages on the grass that remain dry during the rain. They supported public installations on the Mall, Girl Scouts on the Rail Trail, the rail trail itself, ensured the arts are present in recreation events, like working with AVA at the Market, the full

moon festival, the Christmas lighting festival, incorporated art in tunnel installations, fountain covers, LOH Public art and at Three Tomatoes. All these are things that have been accomplished over the last several years and many will be ongoing. Public announcements social media, and the branded LebArtways have advanced some of the most influential digital presence.

A large percentage of these things will continue to be listed on the Miro Board. Many of these things will continue in upcoming years.

The work of the committee is not to create all the art. It is a source of information about the arts in the community. They could create additional digital resources, or a pamphlet such as: here is what there is to do in the City for people interested in the arts. Another idea is to provide a resource about the arts policy for the City, or a sample RFP, or suggest how a local company can bring art into the community. The resources could be a source of ways to engage with the arts for all community members, suggestions that are easy and accessible to anyone in the community. Such as, here is a walking tour of the poetry stamps, or here is a map to find the art on the Rail Trail, and different access points for the arts.

They reviewed the original five directives from the City regarding the Arts & Culture Commission. This prompted the desire to inspire and influence and encourage an art space in the areas of development within the City. The members would like to reestablish a connection with the EDC. For example, the developers of Spencer Street included some potential areas for artist space, artists housing, sculptures on the premises, or art galleries. These private buildings have encompassed some of the City's vision for the arts in the City, there is some element of the arts in the development.

They feel they have expanded resources for children but there is limited opportunities for adults to have arts related events and spaces to spend time. They do not always have to involve food and alcohol. It could be something like a cornhole lot.

Signage for Welcome to West Lebanon would be a great image. Perhaps there is an opportunity to get support from local residents and businesses in West Lebanon. It may be possible to get help from Timken or Hypertherm with signage for not much expense. West Lebanon has suffered in recent years, it can use redevelopment.

They discussed possibilities for grants and could expand some of that work. But there are many restrictions for grants that make them unavailable to the City. State grants are more accessible than federal grants

The members discussed where there could be more public art, such as the new roundabout at the hospital. Art in that setting could be encouraged and a partnership between the City and the hospital could be considered. It is a large piece of real estate for visual interest, like a sculpture as well as landscaping. They talked about how things could be done with the Home Show and with the Airport, such as a mini gallery at the airport.

They hope to fold more arts in the NEXUS celebration, and to support more arts festivals beyond NEXUS. They could have a space to show artwork, like a tent at Colburn Park during NEXUS. It could include voting for best piece or it could manifest in many ways. They hope to form more collaborations with the Upper Valley Arts Alliance. Information will be available on a calendar in the future and on the website. Something like this week in the Arts in Lebanon and West Lebanon would provide opportunities. There are so many local artists in all art forms in the community. Kristen will update the MIRO Board based on the ideas generated tonight for the upcoming years.

There is one section of the tunnel wall that is not going to be completed. The High School is not engaged. They could reach out to the Lebanon School of Arts or the Charter School to see if there are other schools interested in working on a mural.

They discussed the lower parking lots for artwork between the CCBA and the tunnel. It could be a community effort rather than a specific artist.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. City Council, DEI, Heritage

No update.

B. AVA, UVMC, LOH Update

The AVA high school exhibition is open. It includes work from 12 area high schools. All were encouraged to attend.

5. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

No comments.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Giordani Adjourned the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Billings
Recording Secretary