

Wayland Cultural Council

Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2020

Remote Meeting

Note: In compliance with the March 22, 2020 Massachusetts Office of the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 20, this meeting was livestreamed on local broadcast on WayCam. Public comment was received by telephone during the time designated for public comment.

Council members in attendance: Rachel Sideman-Kurtz (Chair), Louise Reck, Susan Warren, Richard Lee, Sean Ahern, Adam Gutbezahl, Rebecca Ahmed, Ashley Fuller, Lynne Lipcon

Council members not in attendance: Kathy Trogolo

Members of the public in attendance: Jane Purser, Luis Cotto (Massachusetts Cultural Council)

Meeting materials: Draft 6/5/2020 minutes; Draft 5/6/2019 minutes; Notes from 2/3/2020 Subcommittee meeting; Upasana Odissi Inc. letter dated 6/24/2020

I. Introductions

Introductions were performed to better acquaint the new members, Ashley Fuller and Lynne Lipcon and prospective member Jane Purser.

II. Vote on Minutes

Ms. Ahern moved to approve the Council's outstanding minutes. Ms. Reck seconded. The Council conducted a roll call vote. The minutes for the June 5, 2020 meeting were approved 6-0-1 with Ms. Reck, Ms. Ahmed, Mr. Ahern, Ms. Warren, Mr. Gutbezahl, and Ms. Sideman-Kurtz voting in favor and Mr. Lee abstaining. The minutes for the May 6, 2019 meeting were approved 6-0-1 with Ms. Reck, Ms. Ahmed, Mr. Ahern, Ms. Warren, Mr. Gutbezahl, and Ms. Sideman-Kurtz voting in favor and Mr. Lee abstaining.

III. Discussion and Vote of Project Change Request – Sublime Odissi

Ms. Sideman-Kurtz provided background on grant recipients submitting requests to the Council for approval of changes to events. The Council then considered a letter submitted by grant recipient Mouli Pal/Upasana Odissi Inc. dated June 24, 2020 for the Sublime Odissi Concert. By and through this letter, Mouli Pal requested the Council approve a modification for the event to be held via Zoom. Mr. Gutbezahl moved the Council approve the grant recipient's request. Mr. Ahern seconded. The Council conducted a roll call vote. The request approved 7-0-0 with Ms. Reck, Ms. Ahmed, Mr. Ahern, Ms. Warren, Mr. Gutbezahl, Mr. Lee, and Ms. Sideman-Kurtz voting in favor. Ms. Sideman-Kurtz stated she would inform Ms. Pal of the Council's decision.

IV. Discussion and Vote of Subcommittee and Minutes of 2/3/20

Ms. Sideman-Kurtz provided background on the history of WCC having a subcommittee. She noted that the nature of the subcommittee's work was adding meetings for work that could be accomplished by the

Council as a whole. Ms. Sideman-Kurtz also mentioned that she and Mr. Gutbezahl asked representatives in the Town about the formation of a subcommittee and how it would conduct its business and relayed that the Council could request a few members to meet and accomplish these one-off tasks. Ms. Sideman-Kurtz then opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Gutbezahl asked whether the Council ever formally established the subcommittee. Council members agreed that a vote to disband the subcommittee was unnecessary because it was likely never formally established. Ms. Sideman-Kurtz asked what the Council should do concerning the minutes from the subcommittee meeting. Ms. Lipcon recommended submitting them as notes rather than meeting minutes. Council members agreed to follow this course of action.

V. New Meeting Dates

Ms. Sideman-Kurtz provided background on the Council transitioning from scheduling meeting dates by Doodle poll to holding the meetings every other month on the second Tuesday of that month.

VI. Massachusetts Cultural Council Update

Luis Cotto from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (“MCC”) addressed the Council. Mr. Cotto welcomed the newest members of the Council and provided background on his role with the MCC. Mr. Cotto discussed how the COVID-19 situation has altered the landscape of the budget and grant process. He also noted that the MCC Director announced her retirement and MCC staff met today with a search firm to assist in finding the next MCC leader. Mr. Cotto also acknowledged steps taken by MCC following the murder of George Floyd and the response by the Black Lives Matter movement.

Ms. Sideman-Kurtz asked Mr. Cotto to discuss what other cultural councils have been doing beyond just considering and approving grant applications. Mr. Cotto provided examples such as Northborough conducting an art festival as part of the Northborough Applefest for the past three years, and Westford fundraising and holding a big festival. Mr. Cotto noted the benefit of the festival grant; however, he also acknowledged the likelihood that MCC will see a reduction to its budget, which will likely affect this grant.

Ms. Lipcon mentioned the opportunity during the pandemic to engage in public art projects. Mr. Cotto talked about the opportunity to facilitate public art but also noted that this may require managing a fair amount of red tape within the town and requires an understanding of the bylaws and policies, which vary by town. Ms. Purser and Ms. Sideman-Kurtz asked what Wayland’s policy was on public art. Mr. Cotto noted he reviewed Wayland’s bylaws and did not find anything specifically addressing public art. Ms. Fuller asked if the absence of any bylaws meant that the Town could conduct an event in public. With respect to conducting events in the town Mr. Cotto talked about the importance of speaking with town representatives, such as the Select Board and the Town Administrator.

Mr. Lee asked whether the MCC expects future funding allocations to be the same or similar or whether towns and cities should expect to take a budgetary hit. Mr. Cotto stated that he could not speak with certainty but does expect to see a hit.

Ms. Purser noted the lack of art around Town. Ms. Lipcon asked whether the Council could be advocates for establishing a policy in town. Ms. Fuller noted that in light of COVID-19, an opportunity exists to promote public art. Mr. Cotto noted endeavors in other communities and used Milford as an example of

making great progress in establishing a town-wide art policy. Mr. Cotto offered to provide the Council with examples of policies in other communities.

Mr. Lee talked about the opportunity for temporal art by using chalk on asphalt throughout the Town. Ms. Lipcon noted this was currently happening on the rail trail. Mr. Cotto provided examples of other communities that were supporting members of the community creating art. The Council then engaged in a discussion about the use of temporal art in cities across the country and within Massachusetts regarding Black Lives Matter. Mr. Cotto noted how this has provided individuals with a way to express themselves and hold an important conversation.

Mr. Ahern asked if there is a way to include diversity and inclusion into the Council's process of considering grant applicants. Mr. Cotto noted MCC is presently engaging in that conversation. Mr. Cotto mentioned local councils have the ability to set and establish council priorities, so long as they are established by September and posted publicly so grant applicants are aware of them when submitting an application.

Ms. Sideman-Kurtz asked about MCC's expectations for the community survey in light of the present public health situation. Mr. Cotto reassured the Council to not stress about having it completed but also advocated for conducting it when possible in order to promote the Council's existence to the community. Mr. Cotto also provided examples of what other towns do to conduct the community survey in a manner that obtains feedback from a cross-section of the Town.

VII. Adjourn

Mr. Gutbezahl moved to adjourn. Ms. Lipcon seconded. The Council conducted a roll call vote. The motion passed 9-0-0 with Ms. Fuller, Ms. Lipcon, Ms. Ahmed, Mr. Ahern, Mr. Gutbezahl, Ms. Warren, Ms. Reck, Mr. Lee, and Ms. Sideman-Kurtz voting in favor.