

**Somers Cultural Commission    Meeting Minutes**  
**February 13,2023       7:00 p.m.       Piedmont Hall**

**Present:** Pat Bachetti, Neil Connell, Ann Levesque(chairperson), Dave Marti, Terri Schmidt, Tim Simoes, Gail Tishler.

**Absent:** Eileen Fedorowich, Dan Fraro, Giselle Genece, Bob Hall, Lynne Goss, Ann Murphy.

**Call to Order:** Ann called the meeting to order at 7:05. Members saluted our flag.

**Secretary's Report:** Report presented with no corrections or additions. Terri motioned to accept as read and Dave seconded. Approved.

**Correspondence:** there was no correspondence at this time.

**Treasurer's Report:** Report was presented by Ann along with a letter from Brian Wissinger, Asst. Financial Director. Report didn't show number from last year for a bench mark. Brian acknowledged that the commission was doing well financially. Some discussion regarding concert series and maybe need to look at and possibly cutting down a bit? Further discussion at a later date. Pat motioned to accept the treasurer's report and Terri seconded. Approved.

**Bills for payment:** One bill for approval. Terri motioned to approve and Tim seconded. Approved.

The second Coffee House was well attended on February 12 and donations received totaled \$144. The entertainers were well received and the evening was very enjoyable.

The outdoor concert series (spring, summer and fall) is a total of 16 concerts. With the exception of two dates, Memorial weekend and Juneteenth the artists have been contacted. The commission received a very kind bequest from a long time supporter and follower of our concerts and six of the concerts have been paid for by her estate. Possible artist for the Juneteenth is needed to firm up and one more to complete the series. Another exciting series with some great artists!

The commission is in need of one more member and also someone to fill the role of treasurer. Neil spoke of the upcoming Photography Show in May. This year the entry form has been revised some due to a new process used (AI), artificial intelligence, which is not accepted in the show. Neil requested a budget of \$2100 to cover such expenses as the juror(Sue Fenton-last year's juror), \$1425 for awards, paper goods used for displaying photos/certificates given, refreshments. Dave motioned to approve the budget and Gail seconded. Approved. Thank you Neil for the many years you have chaired and hung this very successful show.

Planning for the yearly Holiday Festival will begin before we know it. Dave Marti suggested we invite the KC Sisters, a wonderful entertaining group he went to, to sing at Piedmont for the festival that day. Perhaps host at 3:00 to kick off the festival as there is a special display of decorated wreaths and gingerbread houses (very festive) and would provide a great atmosphere. Ann will approach Maureen (chair of festival) and report back to members. Thanks Dave for a great idea.

The yearly sponsorship campaign has begun. Ann Murphy sent her report and we are off to a great start! As of February 12 we have received \$5250. Commission members were encouraged to reach out to neighbors, businesses for a sponsorship. We are so appreciative of the community support we have received each year.

A stipend increase was discussed. \$100 added to each artist? Suggested a range from \$600, to \$700 with the maximum being \$800? This year is already committed so would begin next year. Sponsorships would have to offset \$1600 more, to cover 1/2 would have to raise \$800 or take out one of the concerts. Dave motioned and Tim seconded. Approved.

Tim did a great job videotaping the Coffee House concert. Thanks so much Tim. He mentioned he will be away for our next Coffee House March 12. Also his concern for protection with the amount of texts regarding concerts(advertising) and scamming. There should be two administrators for this and he is suggesting a new system. There are a couple groups, Mail Chip and Check Text(text aps). Some have monthly fees and you don't pay for texts and others you pay per text. Tim said he would be willing to take the lead on this and Terri said she would be the back up. Tim will check further into this and report back to members. It's all about protection he said.

A further note: Neil will be having his own art exhibit March 2 for the whole month at the Longmeadow Adult Center, 211 Maple Road, Longmeadow, MA. It is open from 5:00 till close.

The next meeting will be held on March 13 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Pat Bachetti, secretary

Minutes not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.