

Poughkeepsie Public Arts Commission

Minutes | November 16, 2023 | 6:30pm | City Hall

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Members of PPAC in attendance: Jeff Aman, Tim McQueen, Carrie Decker, Harrison Brisbon-McKinnon, and Art Jones,

II. APPROVE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2023 MEETING

Tim McQueen moved to approve the minutes of October 19, 2023; Carrie Decker seconded.

The minutes were approved by unanimous ayes.

III. CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

PPAC chair Jeff Aman spoke about Battery Dance and its expressive dance program operated through Vassar College at Poughkeepsie High School. Jeff announced that they will have a performance at Poughkeepsie High School on December 8, as well as a performance on the Vassar College campus.

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

RESUME OPEN DISCUSSION ON ARTS COMMISSION ADVOCACY

Overview of the role of the Public Arts Commission, as discussed previously during the October meeting.

There was an open discussion among PPAC members about the role of the arts commission going forward this year, as well as the appropriate role of the City of Poughkeepsie in the public arts.

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IV. OLD BUSINESS: Overview of the role of the Public Arts Commission, as discussed previously during the October meeting (continued)

The following questions were under consideration:

- Is the City of Poughkeepsie a regional “destination” for arts, culture, and tourism?
- What physical and cultural assets does our city have that could be exploited?
- What could our City government officials accomplish that the Public Arts Commission cannot accomplish on its own?
- Can we establish the arts as a priority in our City?
- Kingston (and several other cities) have a “Department of Art and Cultural Affairs.” Should our City have one too?
- How can progress be sustained across Administrations and Common Council members?

The question arose as to whether the City of Poughkeepsie is taking the arts seriously? We questioned whether the City’s budget adequately sets funds aside to promote the public arts. Because there is about to be a new City administration with a new Mayor, we recognized that it was unclear as to how arts funding might be considered in the near future. We also realize that the PPAC needs to provide evidence to the City that the arts can provide positive benefits to improve the overall quality of life for residents and also help boost the local economy.

In the past, prior to the COVID pandemic, “First Friday” events were important as a way to bring people of diverse cultural backgrounds together in the City of Poughkeepsie. We discussed how such events might be brought back.

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IV. OLD BUSINESS: Overview of the role of the Public Arts Commission, as discussed previously during the October meeting (continued)

Another matter discussed was the idea of having a position created in the City of Poughkeepsie government to represent the arts. This position could serve as a point person for the PPAC.

In our open discussion, the members of the PPAC also addressed the fact that we have already presented a public arts vision plan to the City through our public arts policy document (which is currently posted on the City's website). We recognize that we as an arts commission need to establish good communications with the incoming City administration in order to be able to promote their support for our vision plan.

Jeff Aman also mentioned that after our Public Arts Policy document was officially approved, he had taken the initiative as the PPAC's chair to create an outside task group (composed of non-PPAC members) to create possible action plans for developing the City's public arts. He also requested that the PPAC consider these plans for our possible approval. This led to some questions from a couple of PPAC members regarding whether to go forward with this request. Questions arose regarding who specifically had served on the outside task group and whether they were paying enough attention to the PPAC's approved vision plan (in our official Public Arts Policy document) when they developed their own documents. Following discussion of these questions, we (as a group) decided to allow further consideration of the matter at our future meetings.

V. RESOLUTIONS:

1. RESOLUTION 9: REVISION OF PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION MISSION STATEMENT

Tim McQueen moved to approve and Carrie Decker seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

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VI. NEW BUSINESS: None.

VII. PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATION: None.

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: 3 minutes per person

Brad New, Administrative Director of En.J.inn Arts, spoke about his organization and an event coming up on December 21 called "Make Music Day, 2023." He announced that his organization had received a grant from the State to support their operation.

IX. CURRENT EXHIBITS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Winterfest Family Services Festival of Trees at the MJN Convention Center, November 18**
- **Gallery 40: "The Way We See It" exhibit by Dan Burkholder,, Jill Burkholder, Mary Ann Glass, and Christine Irvin**
- **WomensWork.art: Diva Diosa exhibit and artist talk November 4**
- **New York Academy of Ballet: Upcoming Master Classes at <https://www.nyaballet.com>**
- **Fall Kill Creative Works: Classes and workshops at www.fallkillcreativeworks.org**
- **Adriance Memorial Library: Exhibit by Stephen Connelly**
- **Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center: exhibits by Arlene Robin Seymour, Lijah Friedman, Rachel Williams**

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X. CURRENT EXHIBITS AND UPCOMING EVENTS (continued):

- Majed J. Nesheiwat Convention Center: www.midhudsonciviccenter.org
- Bardavon 1869 Opera House: www.bardavon.org

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Art Jones moved to adjourn the meeting; Carrie Decker seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The next PPAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by Art Jones, PPAC Secretary