

## **Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission Minutes**

**1/20/2016**

**Peddie School**

**7:30 PM**

*Present:* Barbara Harrington, Ann Marie Miller, Catherine Rodrigue, Adam Welch, Jonathan Shahn, Sue Howard, Susan Maloof, Frank Rivera, Heather Lisk, Kim Boknoski

*Absent:* Paul Mordetsky, Mike Fabian

*Public in Attendance:* Eric Thomas, James Freeman, Jacque Howard, Steve Misiura

*Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, pursuant to Public Laws of 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice as advertised in the Trenton Times and Windsor Hights Herald, as required by law, and is posted in the Borough Clerk's office.*

Ann Marie Miller called the meeting to order at 7:38PM.

### *Jazz Proposal*

Steve introduced three guests, Eric Thomas, James Freeman, and Jacque Howard, and explained his first encounter with the group. He was impressed with the turnout and quality of the performance and brought the group to the Commission to pursue possible interest in a Jazz event for Hightstown. Eric thanked the Commission for its time. Eric explained his interest in the arts as an educator. He shared publications and marketing information with the Commission.

Surveys indicated their attendance in Trenton was coming from this area. Eric contacted the management at Tavern on the Lake and scheduled a performance in Hightstown. Eric said their Tavern performance was well-attended. Eric said they often give young people a chance to play with them. They have made it a part of their group's performance. He noted that the group includes artists from local communities and more distant places. Eric said they try to incorporate artwork and local vendors as part of their shows.

Eric said they have enough artists to do more than one show a month. Eric said the artists are willing to do a summer jazz workshop. Eric said he believes the businesses will benefit and people will come to a jazz festival.

Jacque highlighted their international following and media network. He said he thinks jazz is missing in this area, and they'd like to expand their performances. He mentioned Morgan's, 11 Farms, and Tavern on the Lake as three businesses with which they have worked. He said they have the capacity and vision to do things. He said they recognize they have to partner with another entity. He mentioned Hightstown as an arts destination. Ann Marie clarified that this is their third year.

Ann Marie asked what they see us doing. Sue mentioned the past success of Peddie's classical and jazz concerts. Jacque asked what the borough can provide in terms of space and permitting. Sue asked how large an area they need. He'd like to offer a concert in the parking lot of Tavern on the Lake. The borough owns the parking lot adjacent to the Tavern. Steve said Parks and Recreation should be part of this as well, and they can help identify possible venues. Sue asked

about the numbers they pack in at Tavern. Jacques said they average 50 at Tavern, but have had as many as 100. Barb clarified that they want to augment their current performance venues. Eric agreed. He emphasized the summer workshop opportunity. Eric mentioned the possibility of having a summer workshop and a performance at week's end that include the students who participated in the workshop. Sue agreed that the mini-master class for the kids is a good idea. Eric invited the group to the shows.

Jonathan asked about the pricing for shows. Heather asked a follow-up question on the pricing. Jacques said the Borough can offset costs for the police, permitting, location, etc. He said they can attract vendors and advertising for the festival. Jacques highlighted the quality of the artists. Sue asked about charging for a festival. He said they would expect an outdoor festival to be paid for through sponsorships. Frank asked Eric how he made the initial connection with Tavern. Sue asked why they don't advertise the performances at Tavern.

Eric welcomed the Commission to their February show.

Steve alluded to plans to put together a subcommittee at the next Borough meeting. Jacques mentioned that for intellectual property purposes this is something REJS Entertainment wants to do.

#### *New Commissioner*

Adam introduced new commissioner at Heather Lisk. Heather encouraged the Commission to make use of the Borough.

#### *Empty Bowls*

Adam said he volunteered to create 200 bowls for the empty bowls initiative, and he has finished that. Ann Marie is working on the soup donations. Adam said we need to figure out the logistics of which restaurants. Adam said we would ask RISE to pre-sell the tickets. Adam said prices range from \$25 to \$40 per ticket. All of the money would be donated back to RISE. Sue asked about how best to promote this. Ann Marie has talked to 12 Farms and they are interested, as is RISE. Ann Marie said she isn't comfortable going to the restaurants until we have a date and place established. Adam suggested February 27.

Heather said the firehouse has a new president and mentioned the Monday meeting about the rug mill project. Adam said the Tavern might be a better space if it's free.

Adam asked if February 27 is too early. Ann Marie suggested March 12 as an alternative. The Commission talked about the pricing. Barbara asked what the CAC gets from this. Ann Marie and Adam said sponsorship. Adam suggested \$35. He suggested advanced ticket sales.

Adam suggested delegating responsibilities. Ann Marie and Barbara volunteered to contact local restaurants. Frank suggested the Americana.

#### *Harvest Fair (Scheduled for Saturday, October 8)*

Ann Marie said we received an email asking if CAC wants to be involved. She said they plan to start meeting. Ann Marie said we want to talk about where we might be placed. The Commission said the street only and grouped together, rather than the bank parking lot. Barbara said we can be together on the street. Barbara asked about membership to expand CAC personnel for events.

Jonathan raised the question of funding, specifically funding for CAC. Ann Marie said she is going to a grant meeting in March. Conversation continued around the Fair, funding, etc.

Adam moved we adjourn. Catherine seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:45.