

Minutes  
Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission  
April 19, 2017 – Caspersen History House, Peddie School

**Present:** Sue Howard, Barb Harrington, Andrew Harrison, Adam Welch, Heather Lisk, Dan Trent, Michelle Jordan, Susan Bluth, Ann Marie Miller Guest: Kerrie Peterson

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm. A slight change to minutes from February were noted, along with minutes from the March meeting. Adam motioned for approval, seconded by Sue Howard and the minutes for both meetings were approved unanimously.

Ann Marie noted with regret that Frank Rivera resigned via email from the Commission and acknowledged Frank for his service—his input, advice and hard work on the successful January pop up exhibit. She said she would reach out to Frank personally to thank him.

**Empty Bowls Recap** – Adam was thanked for his invaluable contribution of beautiful ceramic bowls, and the work of the HHS students was acknowledged along with Scott Belgard’s coordination and supervision of the kitchen at the firehouse (and his delicious soup donation). Ann Marie noted that the Cultural Arts Commission share of the net proceeds was \$5,943.33. The event raised in total a net of \$11,866.65. We will seek to set up a trust fund with the Borough for the proceeds with an account titled according to the Master Plan guidelines.

Sue Howard noted that traffic slowed down getting to the soups and also at the bread/utensils table. It was suggested to set up 2 stations of soup with bread to alleviate traffic. Dan Trent also suggested 2 seatings to allow a separate seating for families and couples that might attract a younger crowd. Adam noted that there is a feeling of excitement from the critical mass attending that might be diluted by extra seatings, but acknowledged this was a good idea.

Ann Marie said that both Peddie School and Meadow Lakes indicated interest in holding next year’s Empty Bowls at the gym/cafeteria or the auditorium at ML. Consensus was that Peddie School would be the better venue (parking lacking at ML) and if we plan on holding Empty Bowls again at the same time of year, that may fall during Peddie’s spring break. Andrew said he could start that conversation with others at Peddie, and that he would follow up with the students who videotaped the event. Kerrie said that the HHS coffee house could offer student performances and those students have already undergone an audition process and have their “act” together, and would be delighted to participate.

Ann Marie said the commission really needs to solicit volunteers since our only volunteers were commissioners and several were not available that day.

**Hightstown Business meeting** – Ann Marie attended the meeting held on April 10 and reported back that there are plans to launch a Community Day around May 9 when parents are visiting Peddie. There is also interest in a “Taste of Hightstown” event featuring local restaurants in September with ways to link to other local businesses (coupons). The Harvest Fair is looking to upgrade craft vendors and she will contact Trish Egan to help with potential craft vendors.

**Summer/Fall activity/project planning** – Michelle and Susan said the “Fun Fridays” project by Parks & Rec was not gaining a lot of interest in town. This was proposed as a new project to replace the farmers market. The prospective dates are June 23, July 21, August 25, and Sept. 8.

**Mariboe Gallery Exhibit** – Andrew previously proposed Dec. as an open exhibit spot at the gallery but has been in discussion with Diana Weymar about a community stitching project for that time slot similar to the one coordinated by the Arts Council of Princeton (Interwoven Stories). Instead, he suggested that an open slot is available late May-August 2018, giving the Commission time to plan an open call or guest curated exhibit.

**Update on Theatre in the Park** – Kerrie said this year’s focus is more on the evening program and permission was granted for use of Association Park. Students in grades 7-12 will participate and many are seasoned veterans who will meet 3 times a week. A new program called “Park Lane Players” will be for students in grades 4-7 and they will meet 2 times a week preparing a pre show performance of about 20-25 minutes before the older students perform. Kerrie said that the alternate rain sites will most likely be at the First Aid Squad and the Firehouse hall.

Kerrie is working with Greg Ciano (sp?) to coordinate a brief play for younger students with puppets and songs about the John Bull locomotive and its relationship to Hightstown’s history. This production would happen in the fall and could transition to the Harvest Fair for special performances.

**Other Business** – Adam noted that the Hightstown Tricentennial is coming up in 4 years and we should consider what role art will play in any celebration planned by the Borough. He also asked if the Public Art Master Plan needs to be approved by the full Borough Council and Susan assured us that since it was approved as part of the Borough’s Master Plan, it didn’t need to be approved further. Susan suggested, though, that the Cultural Arts Commission invite Ryan the redevelopment developer to an upcoming Commission meeting.

Dan Trent asked what the Arts Commission’s plans were for Halloween activities and it was suggested that a committee form to proposed some ideas and plans. Dan agreed to lead that team and will report back at the next Commission meeting.

Heather reminded everyone that the Artist Union at HHS has an exhibit planned for May 11, and Ann Marie noted that the Art Station has an open house this Sunday on April 23.

There being no other old or new business, Adam motioned for adjournment, with Dan seconding and the meeting was adjourned at 8:35.