

MINUTES OF THE MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON CULTURE, ETHNICITY, AND THE
ARTS

EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM

March 13, 2024 - 4:30 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Councilor Nancie Cameron, Chair
Councilor Crystal Paradis-Catanzaro, Vice Chair
Councilor Paul Goodwin
Councilor Rick Michaud

Chair Cameron called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

APPROVE PAST MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

Councilor Cameron made a motion to approve the minutes of September 20, 2023. The motion was seconded by Councilor Michaud and passed 2-0-2. Councilors Goodwin and Paradis-Catanzaro abstained.

REVIEW ARTWORK SUBMISSIONS TO THE MAYOR

The Committee reviewed all submissions to the Mayor's Quarterly Art Contest. After committee voting, the three winners were determined to be: the Lighthouse, the pottery and the quilt.

DISCUSS POSSIBLE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Mayor Gerding had provided the Committee with a list of potential grants provided by the NH Council on the Arts. The Committee reviewed the various grant opportunities and discussed possible projects. Deadlines for applications are coming up fast, so we tried to pick one or two to focus on. Ideas discussed for potential Community Engagement projects included: Crosswalk art, sculptures and murals. Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro said she knew of a few Somersworth artists to reach out to to gauge interest. Councilor Cameron said she would reach out to residents planning a mural project. Councilor Goodwin said that he knew from his day job that sculptures typically cost much more than the upper limits of these grants, so sculptures were tabled.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro suggested the city could do some public outreach through newsletter and social media to see if any resident artists would be interested in joining with the City to apply for these grants.

MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Goodwin raised an idea he had discussed with Mayor Gerding, which was an oral history and listening event. The idea came from a desire to provide an outlet for residents to share stories of

“old Somersworth” and work through some past successes and challenges where the City government hadn’t been as engaged — this would demonstrate an openness to conversation and create an outlet at a time separate from a regular Council business or Committee meeting where the community could talk about what lessons we can learn from our past.

Conversation around this potential event continued collaboratively: Perhaps we could record the forum/event on Channel 22 and have it archived. We might reach out the historic museum for moderators, speakers, themes. We might call it a Community Forum. We might want a modest budget for snacks/water. Councilor Goodwin said he would reach out to the City Manager to determine what the cost was to record a meeting/event in the Council chambers.

Next, Councilor Goodwin shared an idea for a collaborative rebranding project. Could this include a public art/logo design contest, with winners’ designs informing the final creation of official branding by a professional graphic designer? The idea of a flag design was brought up, which everyone liked. Currently, the Somersworth flag is just the City seal — could we have a fun branded flag for Somersworth? Councilor Goodwin shared that the measure of success was a design/logo/brand that people would want to wear — on a hat/hoodie/T-shirt. The Committee agreed to continue this discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Michaud made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro and passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Crystal Paradis-Catanzaro, City Councilor, Ward 4