

Brattleboro Town Arts Committee
9-9-14 Draft Minutes

Members present: Kate Anderson (Chair) Doug Cox (recorder pro-temp), Hugh Keelan, Nicholas Biddle, Kathryn Turnas, John Wilmerding, Donna Macomber (Selectboard Liaison)

Guests: David Potter, Karen Cribari, Sandy Rouse

The Meeting convened at 4:05 in the Hannah Cosman meeting room. It was confirmed the meeting was warned. A quorum was present.

Minutes: of 8-5-14 were approved

Public Input: none

ADA Compliance: Sandy Rouse of the Brattleboro Literary Festival (BLF) reported on an audit of American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance recently completed by Andrew Crane of Vermont Accessible Environments, Sheldon VT. The audit was the result of complaints of BLF's use of the non-accessible Hooker Dunham Theater that reached the attention of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). *As a result*, The Vermont Arts Council (VAC), which receives funding from the NEA, refused to accept a grant application from BLF for 2014. VAC provided that the unpaid \$400 balance of their 2013 grant be paid to BLF as funding to help pay for the audit which was conducted July 31, 2014 at a cost to BLF of \$560.

BLF owns no facilities and uses many down town venues for over 40 events over three days in early October, paying over \$5,000 for their use and over \$10,000 for hotel and meal expenses for its presenters. The audit found many venues with physical ADA compliance issues and also recommended additional accommodation for the visual and hearing impaired. The venues have been given the audit and most have responded, but few can bring their facilities into full compliance. It is not clear at this time what level of compliance with ADA is required for VAC or other grant funding, and what legal liability issues might be involved for presenters and venues.

As the ability of Brattleboro to host arts and culture festivals and events is an important part of our economic and cultural life, and as much funding is now contingent on ADA compliance, this is an issue of interest to TAC and the Town. Access to the arts is specifically addressed as a goal in the current Brattleboro Town Plan: Policy 8.5 and Action 8.5.1

Anderson will research and contact Town or community committees or organizations concerned with handicap access.

Other possible actions:

- Use some of the current \$7,000 town arts funding for an ADA compliance coordinator.
- Hold an informational meeting for arts venues and presenters

Mural in Harmony Place: Cribari is in conversation with Steve Barrett and Patrick Moreland. Moreland views the design changes as minor and not requiring Selectboard approval. We affirmed our July 8 approval and endorsement of the project.

CoreArts: Anderson read a prepared statement on the request that she step down from the CoreArts Leadership Team. The request is from the other two Team members: Rod Francis representing Town Management, and Zon Eastes representing the Arts Council of Windham County. Anderson was appointed by the Selectboard to represent TAC on the Team. Anderson is contesting the request to step down.

Appreciation was expressed for Anderson's leadership in bringing the NEA funded CoreArts project into existence and shaping its content. Macomber will accompany Anderson in conversation with Patrick Moreland on resolutions.

There was no report on progress on the CoreArts Findings Report discussed at our 8-5-14 meeting.

Extra Meeting: TAC voted to hold an extra meeting Tuesday, September 23, 4:00 in the Hannah Cosman room.

Meeting adjourned at 5:36

Next regular Meeting: October 14, 4:00, Hannah Cosman Room.