

NCC Meeting Minutes

July 22, 2024

In person: Sam Belisle, Clara Chan, Glenda Fishman, Susie Friedman, Paula Gannon, Anne Marie Stein, Cheryl Weber, potential new member Kay Sloane, and presenter Lily Weitzman
On Zoom: Jeff Davis, Lisa Rucinski

1. Introductions

Kay Sloane— has lived in Newton 2.5 yrs (Lasell Village), before that JP for 27 yrs. President of Mass College of Art & Design for 15 years, retired 12 years now. On MCC for some years.

Lily Weitzman— presenter from Newton Free Library

2. June meeting minutes approved

3. Treasurer's report

48 of the 53 grantees have responded, 2 of the remaining expect to be paid (Grey Held who wants the payment to be made later although project still happening in Fall 2024?, and the chess grantee for \$300, who has not responded at all), 3 will not be accepted (totaling \$3.5K which will be dispersed next year).

4. Newton Free Library presentation by Lily Weitzman

Library programmer since March 2024, replacing Ellen Meyers. Over the past year, held over 2000 programs at the library (storytelling to special events, book groups, craft programs, library technology, ESL, concerts, lectures, workshops for adults and all ages), all free and open to the public. Her role is bringing in presenters for special events for adults and all ages— lectures, workshops, performances, talks. Also handles communication, coordination, etc. emphasizing education, enrichment, community, culture. Previous job was similar, at Brookline Library. Focuses on a. Performing arts: music, concerts, dance; b. Introductory crafts; c. Intergenerational audiences, not just adults. Library programming has a modest budget. Hoping for NCC grant support for events which they could not afford otherwise. Most musicians are paid (though some still volunteer to perform for free). Program proposal form can be used to apply to present there, but they also have a long list of previous presenters that they draw upon. Current programming is mostly through December, with monthly concerts scheduled through March at this point. Perhaps the Library should write its own grant application for a series with a theme, rather than each presenter applying for a separate grant. Library can provide confirmation of venue reservations. Maybe some events will move to the Cooper Center (the old senior center on Walnut Street, being renovated, to open in 2025)

5. Community Survey

Feedback from Julie Fox – very detailed and helpful, but for this year we'll use what we used last year, defer consideration of her suggestions til next time. Paula will create a QR code to link to the survey, which we should all send to our email lists, Paula will send to Fig City and Beacon and City, will print cards for NCC members to pass out at Sunday evening concerts and around town. Paula will determine the closing deadline.

6. Grantee Reception

Paula will check Mayor's calendar to pick a date, ideally a Thursday evening in late September, again at the War Memorial or elsewhere such as New Art Center or Allen Center.

Cheryl and Sam will start planning with Paula and perhaps others who were absent today. Clara will volunteer that evening.

7. Next steps in Planning Discussion

Susan summarized our discussion with NCP and NCA. Themes: advocacy/working with city; help needed to produce citywide events; need for facilities/spaces; vision of what we'd like 5-10 years ahead. Information needs— marketing of events that are happening, funding options for artists... structural issues/ governance.

Ann Marie mentioned our discussion to the mayor, she seemed open to revisiting implementation of Create Newton.

Anne Marie will regroup with NCA and NCP and get back to us about what they think of how NCC can support arts and culture in Newton beyond distributing grant money.

Aside: West Newton Cinema has been saved. The developer will support it, but a lot of work is still needed.

8. NCD update:

NCC members asked to finish filling in dates for grantee events for their deep dives— in Lisa's spreadsheet— to help us write blurbs about events in the NCD newsletter. July newsletter will be out soon.

Associate director job has been posted, please spread the word to recruit applicants.

Gallery space in our NCD meeting room at 1294 Centre St. — Afghan painter currently exhibiting here for free (just like the 3 gallery spaces at City Hall) — artists are allowed to list prices but have to arrange all transactions themselves. One month for each exhibit, with receptions given.

9. Remaining meeting dates in 2024— always on the 4th Monday of every month, except that we will not meet in August. We will use August to get the survey distributed and plan Grantee Reception.