



NCC Meeting  
March 27, 2023

Present:

Paula Gannon, Chris Pitts, Emily O’Neil, Candy Gold, Sam Belisle, Robert Linsky, Glenda Fishman, Marie Longo, Halcyon Mancuso, Clara Chan, Livia Aber, Susan Friedman, Lisa Rucinski, Cheryl Weber, Timothea Pham

### **Discussion with Timothea Pham, Massachusetts Cultural Council**

Discussion about MCC guidelines and upcoming changes to guidelines that might impact LLCs and whether these processes are out of sync. Timothea said that they didn’t anticipate major changes but are working on an overall diversity plan for vibrant communities and what that means. It might be possible to incorporate some of the questions we submitted.

*Benchmarking discussion:*

Other LCCs of similar size and best practices:

Berkshires: large number of applications, similar to Newton, estimated around 75, All council members read all proposals, however, they have committees that review the applications and make recommendations to the full council.

Everett: Staff presents to Council. Otherwise, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary moderate the discussion and then everyone votes.

Somerville: The local LCC also receives additional funds from the City. They are not a 501c3 but they have paid staff of about five. The LCC is the Board. They also have an artists’ fellowship program. They use panels—unpaid but ask people to sit.

Cambridge has its own 501(c )3 that receives the LLC funds.

Each LCC is allowed to take up to 20 percent of the grant amount to do their own programs. Examples of programs sponsored with these funds: Agawam does a program for seniors. Wenham hosts a festival on the Common. Belchertown did a community survey, which identified an interest in more variety of food so got food trucks to come on Fridays which has evolved into Food Truck Fridays.

Timothea will put together a document with the different models.

### *Size of Grants:*

Question about tendency toward smaller or larger contributions. Benchmarking how other communities decide to allocate funding could be helpful.

### *LCC Funding and Impact on specific community*

How to define Impact on Newton—public benefit—should be based on priorities and community input. How do we collect information and what do we do with it? Final reports and a year-end analysis from the reports are useful: what was done, number of people serve, etc. Numbers of people not necessarily the most important criteria.

Timothea suggested potentially organizing a greater Boston convening of LCCs.

### *Deep dives*

If there are specific questions, it is possible to reach out for clarification and also possible to do conditional approvals. The MCC discourages interviews because some people can't make an interview.

### *Applicants seeking funds from multiple LCCs*

It is possible to reach out to the other LCCs listed as income sources as it might impact the decision

### *Specificity regarding past work and work samples*

There are a number of councils that don't emphasize the need for work samples or past work. Newton can emphasize it if aligned with our council priorities.

### *Council priorities by LLC and how they align with overall priorities.*

MCC website could direct people to local councils

Suggestion to allow more characters in application responses—applications might be too short.

### *Diversity*

Newton demographics are 76% white, 15% Asian, 4% 2 or more races, 3% African American and 22% foreign born.

Possible to think about diversity in terms of perspectives and projects. A suggestion for the LCC to work with Housing Authority. Also, a suggestion to undertake community asset mapping—activity for LCC members—think about different types of cultural assets and resource sharing.

### *Marketing*

What do other LCCs do to help publicize the activities? Cable, flyers, community events. Town bulletins. Getting people to share on their social media. Worcester does a raffle.

## **Live versus Zoom Meetings**

Chris would like to make the next meeting in person. Request for Council members to email Chris in the next few days about preferences/ability to meet in person.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Glenda motioned to approve. Halcyon seconded. Unanimously approved.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Glenda has been producing a report showing gross amount awarded and number of grants, what has been disbursed and what remains. The report was attached to the meeting agenda along with the minutes.

## **Grant Modifications**

There are two grants that were modified that needed to be reported out to the full council. Two projects were modified: Dance and Cake and Dance Caliente. Susan went to the Dance and Cake event. Susan also went to the Lindy Hop event. Anne Marie and Chris voted on Dance Caliente—minor changes due to reduced funds.

## **Council Member Survey Discussion ct'd**

Pursuant to the discussion with Timothea, suggested that we reflect on the discussion and how it might impact our decisions. Susan suggested we talk about whether or not the Council might want to take on an event, as some other LLCs do. This should be done in conjunction with community input.

## **Family Festival, May 13**

Saturday—looking for people to volunteer to be at a table.

## **Other Items**

*Halcyon:* There is a grant writing workshop at Framingham State and the professor might be interested in having the students work with applicants on their grants.

*Marketing:* Discussion about possible ways to help with marketing. Items included how we list events, whether there might be a monthly list, managing and owning the NCC facebook page, and also completing the workbook of grants with the event dates requested by staff. Question about how we list events.

Meeting Adjourned 7:03 PM