

Cummington Cultural District Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 from 3-4pm

Held as Zoom Meeting/Meeting ID: Meeting ID: 821 7787 7805/Passcode: 834882

Attendees: John Bye, Ilse Godfrey, E. Maude Haak-Frendscho, Ms. Laura Sheridan, June Lynds

Late start due to weather. Begin 3:42pm

Approval of December Minutes:

December 2024 meeting minutes were approved for content unanimously and will be emailed to Town Clerk and Webmaster for recording and posting to the town website.

Public Speak:

Conversation about the feasibility report from the school, and upcoming Select Board meeting, which will be joined by Anne Gobi, Director of Rural Affairs, and Paul Mark and Lindsay Sabadosa to discuss and strategize.

Programming:

Last year, had a photo contest, stroll, visioning pancake breakfast in the spring. Expectation to do any of these again in the spring to kick off the programming year. Pancake breakfast late April, cost about \$800. Would need to get some ingredients and make sure that Amy is available.

- Can also be a committee outreach opportunity, as well as check-in visioning.
- Community outreach (feedback & suggestions)
- How are we going to reach folks who aren't already in the know? Need to build out a communications strategy, build in a save the date, use robocall, press releases, socials, hopefully a new mailing list
- First year was larger attendance than the second year, which was billed more as a celebration of designation and received less feedback then – would need to track attendance, all the donations for the pancake breakfast, if this will be an annual event
- Will folks come again to share feedback again? Do more than ask for feedback. Also report updates and news, introduce folks to the Cultural District Committee, become a vehicle for reporting back to the town on our annual activities, announce the coming year of programming offerings, as well as invite feedback
- Target date for Pancake Breakfast 4/20/24 from 10-12
- Save the Date in February: both a postcard mailer and social for save the date

Main Street Art Activations:

- For exhibits & public art, projects, and performances— maintain breadth from last few years. Do we want to do a theme like reflections?

- Announcement, deadline, award date, date for getting signed contract back - maintain the same format and outline as previous years
- Do save the date and announce for Open applications April 1, deadline May 13, have a CD meeting on May 14th to dedicate a discussion and review and make decisions, award notification in the following days / week, projects start as early as June 1 with desired completion date of June 1, 2025
- Responsibility of project organizers to decide on and reserve a space or venue for their project, whether it's outside public artwork or performance
- Goals include to ensure that there's variety of forms of work, tie to criteria of mission statement of the CCD
- Doing fewer than 15 grants this year would be ideal. As a recurring program should begin to get streamlined
- Use jotform to collect applications, use a QR code for print posters so folks can get to the application directly
 - Build out the form to collect project narrative, budget, support materials - both uploads and fill in the blanks
 - Look at platforms that can be online for signing contracts – Maude will look into jotform and see if that platform can be used for digital contracts, as well
- Ilse is going to put together materials to share around with everyone else, including program description, narrative, and agreement letter drafts

HOST 2024

- Kathy Ford is the new leader of the HOST tour for this year. What are their intentions for this year? Since there's new leadership there, let's have her meet with our committee and have her tell us their vision and to present to us, and then Maude will layer into outreach coordination thereafter, get in front of it instead of responding. Will want to know what this is going to look like as soon as possible this year. If we're going to be investing a lot in this significantly, let HOST do their own thing and organize our own Cummington-only tour program, and could select the timing
- Will speak with Dave Christopolis: interested in knowing the role, staffing and promotional, in the HOST Tour this year. Are the artists going to be able to step into this?
- What are expectations for artists? For Cummington? Any changes in funding structure that might affect Cultural District and our staffing capacities?
- Should ask for an attendance report, sounds like when Cummington was the hub last year there was strong attendance

Farmers Market / Makers Market in the District

- Saturday Ashfield Farmers and Artisans market is really well attended, moves inside during the winter.
- Maybe in front of the school? Or at the pavilion. We're right on rte 9 and would bring all sorts of very talented folks
- There was a farmers market at the school that was successful
- Could we survey our contacts from mailing list and see if they would support this?

- Let's talk with Dave Christopolis about this given the mobile market
- Also potentially talk with Creamery, which also supports a lot of local vendors
- Consider targeting timing of the market around other markets and events
- Perhaps lead with a more event-based market rather than an every-week production, join with the Fair or other events, for example
- Talk with other market managers and vendors who are in touch with the market landscape locally - each committee member reach out to contacts to do more discovery

Bryant Homestead

- Starting second week in July into August, for Historic Cummington – the dates when Kingman Tavern is open, need to follow up with Carla for the dates, both for Bryant connection and with the MSAA programs.
- Connect with the Rec Committee, too, about their programming, which mostly happens in September, to coordinate with them for programming through Halloween
- Send draft letter of interest to June, and once we get through LOI phase, if we get invited to apply, then we'll need to ask for Select Board approval

Other Business

Klez Cummington announced that it'll be held over the 4th of July weekend. Related to CCD membership, would be great to have someone connected to the Committee. They don't live in Cummington.

Could we create an advisory or associate level? Other committees have done this. A way to engage folks who are invested, like have a studio or land but don't live in Cummington.

Will change the committee from an ad-hoc committee to a standard committee in the next Select Board meeting to address committee appointments. Expected in June. Address on a June agenda.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 13 from 3-4pm – virtual meeting, link will be shared in agenda