



**Amesbury Cultural Council**  
**14 Cedar Street**  
**Tuesday, November 12, 2019**

Members present: Ceryl Desjardin (CD), Delia Rinaldi (DR), Louisa Wilson (LW) – Secretary, Shannon Carroll (SC) – Co-Chair, Caitlin Thayer (CT) – Treasurer

Members not present: Kate Currie (KC) – Co-Chair, Bonnie Brady (BB)

Non-voting attendees: Lainie Senechal (LS), Stephen Wagner (SW) – Poet Laureate, Susan Wagner (SuW), Courtney Jordan (CJ)

**I. Call to order at 7:02pm (SC)**

**II. Secretary's Minutes (10/9/19)**

CD made motion to approve. DR seconded. Unanimous approval.

**III. Poet Laureate Support Committee Update (LS & SW)**

LS: the committee has selected Ellie O'Leary to be the 2020-2022 Poet Laureate of Amesbury. She writes a lot about her childhood in rural Maine. She has also promoted poetry a lot: a radio program and poetry workshops. She has grandchildren in the Amesbury school system, so she's invested in the town. She also knows incoming mayor Cassandra Gove. There will be an inaugural reading event at the Whittier Home on January 12th January 12<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. ACC members will receive a formal invitation.

LS: O'Leary will be receiving her \$500 stipend at the Jan 12<sup>th</sup> event. ACC to write \$250 portion. CT will arrange for City Hall to write the check.

SW: To date, part of Poet Laureate's mandate has been to attend every ACC meeting. The support committee decided that that wasn't necessary. So O'Leary will probably attend many of the ACC meetings but, maybe, not all of them.

LS: SW's last library event will be on Nov 26<sup>th</sup> at 6-7:30pm.

CD will share social media posts from library and Lainie's page about the SW event.

**IV. Treasurer's Report (CT)**

CT: Most of the ACC's expenses are related to the Studio Tour. CT is tracking down individuals and business who haven't yet paid. DR, SC, and LW have receipts to turn in for reimbursement.

CT: There are three outstanding grants reimbursements, and they need to send in forms by January in order to get paid. Committee members to remind contacts to submit their forms. The remaining money (\$244) is leftover program grant funds. If grant recipients do not submit for reimbursement, those grant funds will roll over for the 2021 grant cycle. The ACC be getting \$9,000 from the MMC for the 2020 grant cycle, though we may have \$3,000 additional once the ledgers are reviewed by the City's Chief Financial Officer Angel Wills.

**V. Studio Tour Debrief**

SC: Trolley driver was great and went above and beyond.

Some businesses with deals were only open on Saturday, and that was not listed in brochure.

Hedgehog didn't hang the poster in their window. Moving forward, we need to provide more explanation of our expectation of sponsors to promote the tour.

Did we not fully convey to Joan Gessner that we eliminated the trolley stop near her studio. She felt that moving the stop was negligent on our part.

Cider Hill is saying that they didn't want to pay the business fee.

In Home Design was upset that they didn't get a lot of traffic. BareWolf not being involved might have hurt the foot traffic.

18 Friend Street was upset that the trolley stop wasn't right at her shop, even though there was a trolley stop on either side.

Potlatch – only 1 of the 7 artists registered, but after brochure as printed the 6 other artists wanted to sign up and complained that they weren't a trolley spot.

Maybe we start sending out paper notices of registration instead of just social media.

Cedar Street does very well during the tour. Barbara did contribute \$500 for both Cedar Street and Tradesmill, but there are a lot of artists that don't register but take advantage of the weekend to open their studios. Maybe we have a closer partnership with the artists, get to know them more. If they get to know us, maybe they'll more likely to pay to register.

SuW: Include a Cedar Street map in the brochure.

CT: maybe we charge a building rate, that's more money, but that comes out to less per artist.

LS: Partnership with Health Matters owner, David, worked out really well. They worked closely together on the window displays and on marketing the event. He gave away chocolates. It was one of his best sales days ever. And he had a deal of \$5 off every \$25 spent. Example of how an artist and a business can work together to help each other.

CD: We should do a social post on how that collaboration works and the benefits of the partnership.

SC: Send out a package of support opportunities, that includes ways to maximize the artist/business partnership, ways to promote the event, ACC expectations of business supporters. We could even do a video interview to promote how it's done.

CT: Biggest suggestion is putting together a packet so that efforts aren't duplicated (sponsorships, raffle, etc). Says she could have done a better job tracking payments and reporting out in advance.

Heard from a lot of businesses that this is a good weekend for them.

Conversation with Chamber next year – have them suggest to businesses that they be open both days of the Tour.

SC: Maybe the ACC should do an email of Chamber members to make recommendation of hours both days.

SW: A good number of people on trolley both days. But one issue - if people get on at Stop A, very get off at stops B & C. Most people just got off at Sparhawk and Cedar Street.

SuW: If we had two trolleys, we could do a scavenger hunt that encourages people to visit each stop. And if we have a viable prize, people might like that.

The Wagner girls' cocoa stand was popular. Free cocoa but donations accepted. Raised \$150 – 1/3 went to Our Neighbors Table, and 2/3 went to the girls who ran it. The girls also kept track of how long it had been since the trolley left Stop A. Helpful to visitors. Good energy in City Hall, lots of space to move around. Good music.

CD: Music was fantastic, just the right decibel level, good energy. Next year, encourage other people to do demonstrations, like the silk scarves.

SC: Weaving artist didn't show up, so we're not going to invite her back anymore.

SW: We should we have a firm deadline of making sure artists paid. No payment, no booth.

SueW: Would like to see more food on the tour, maybe a food truck. If you want to draw people to a certain location, have a food truck. Suggested a kids craft area where kids can sell their own crafts.

SC: Could have a food truck at City Hall. Or at Tradesmill, to draw people there.

CT: Zach Fields said that he definitely wants to have a food truck next year.

CD: Most of what she does is pre-tour: social and graphic design. That all went smoothly. We need to have something more at the front of City Hall, to make it more exciting. As an exhibitor, the space was perfect. There was enough room.

Should have more parameters for business sponsors. Make it clear what we expect.

Businesses and artists have to do their part to promote the Studio Tour.

CT: We can provide some cut-and-paste social posts to distribute to people.

DR: Raffle went well. We had \$3,400+ in raffle items.

CT: \$45 in donations, \$1,280 from the raffle.

DR: What is the protocol for people who don't claim items? CD: it can take a couple of weeks. DR has 4 items left, of 11.

CJ: They were busy from the time they got there until the time they left. They did make some sales, though not as many as they had hoped. Heard from a number of people that it was refreshing to see their contemporary art in Amesbury. Talked to some people for a while. Collected a lot of email names and passed out a lot of business cards.

LW: We should examine the registration process to make sure we're maximizing the opportunity to collect as much info/photo as possible, to reduce the number of follow up communications we do.

## **VI. New Business**

### Recruitment:

SC - Kate can no longer serve on the ACC. The December meeting will be her last meeting, and our membership will be down to six voting members. If we go below six, we won't be eligible for state funding for grants. We can't have more than 12 voting members.

SC will send out emails to interested prospects. We need to decide what meeting we'll invite them to. Decision: give them opportunity to attend Dec and/or January.

### Retreat:

We need to pick a date for discussing bigger projects that we don't have time to discuss during the monthly meetings. SC will send around a Doodle poll to pick an offsite retreat date. Invite will go to all members, regular volunteers, interested prospects.

### Meeting Date Change?:

SC and CT would like to start attending City Council meetings, which also are on second Tuesdays. SC to send around another poll about possible days. Members should submit days of other committee commitments.

## **VII. Adjourn**

CT made motion to adjourn at 8:15pm. CD seconded. Unanimous.