Montague Cultural Council
Sunday, February 3, 2019; 1 p.m.
Gill-Montague Senior Center
65 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, MA

Present: Kate Martineau, John Furbish, Pam Allan, Jen Audley, Dan Brandon, Shannon Coakley-Ramsey, Rachel Teumim, Anne Harding

Absent: Jan Atamian, Cindi Oldham

1. **Call To Order** – Kate called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

2. **Minutes** – on a motion by Jen and second by Shannon the minutes of December 16, 2018 were approved as amended. (In section 6 it was noted that several minor edits had been made to the review of awardee materials and the motion had covered all changes. In section 7, a number of award values were corrected from the original minutes which had been updated on the google docs version; the award decisions were reformatted similarly to the format of the denial decisions; additional stipulation information was added to ensure all stipulations were included in the minutes.

3. **Treasurer's Report** – Anne distributed a brief report as well as an excel status report showing which grantees had returned their grant materials. Eight have been received and processed to date. Edite Cunha had not received the initial notification. It was surmised there were too many attachments so Anne resent them individually and then called all awardees to ensure the grant notifications had been received. She also reminded awardees that MCC is part of the pilot program so the paperwork comes up front rather than at the end of the year. Recipients were reminded they could not receive FY19 funds if they hadn't submitted their FY18 reports or progress reports. She noted Gretchen Krull of *Voices Carry/Voices from Inside* had invited the council to the March Soup and Games fundraiser at Hope & Olive.

4. **Press Release and other Publicity** – John distributed a sample release for review by members. He had used a similar format to one he enjoyed reading about the Greenfield Cultural Council. Rachel had committed to working on this project and will complete a press release and issue it as soon as possible. She will seek feedback and review before sending and include information about the additional financial support we received from the Town/RiverCulture. There was some discussion about whether all the artists had accepted their awards but it was decided we are reporting on the awards we had granted and not whether they had been accepted.

5. **Young Shakespeare Players East (YSPE)** – there was a discussion about whether we could award a grant to this group based on the State's antidiscrimination policies. Jen provided a brief history of past discussions and members had already read an article in the New York Times about the issue. Three years ago MCC had consulted the Massachusetts Cultural Council for guidance about awarding grants to YSPE when it

became known there was a lawsuit alleging discrimination by YSPE relative to a food allergy. Since that time the US Department of Justice found in favor of those filing the complaint and a settlement had taken place. The group's website now contains statements, policies and procedures on the topic and the issue appeared to be resolved. Shortly after Montague Cultural Council awarded its FY19 grants the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) found YSPE had been both discriminatory and retaliatory and set a settlement deadline of Tuesday, February 5, 2019 for the case. It is not clear what will happen if a settlement is not reached. Anne moved that Kate (as Chair of the Montague Cultural Council) bring the matter to the Massachusetts Cultural Council to ensure we can legally award a grant under these circumstances. There was a second by Rachel and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. **Public Input – survey**. Following discussion some changes were made to the prototype. The questions will appear in reverse order (5,4,3,2,1). Question 3 will be reworded to "In general, what cultural programs do you attend?" Our goal is to have it printed prior to the Special Town Meeting. The on-line version will be published as amended but Anne will try and reduce the paper version to a two-sided one page survey. It is hoped it can be ready for the special town meeting.

7. **Annual Report** – using the 2017 version as an example, Kate will submit the 2018 Annual Report to the Town Hall. Jen will send Kate the relevant information on the Worcester Forum that MCC participated as a panel member. Anne to send Kate the grant information from FY18.

8. **Logo (Re)design** – Pam had asked for this to be on the agenda as there had been previous discussion of designing a logo specific to our council (possibly incorporating some elements of the Town's logo and RiverCulture). In the past it was not uncommon for local councils to have a unique logo but it doesn't seem to be happening too much these days. Jen reported there had been some discussion with RiverCulture on the subject but it doesn't seem to have a lot of support at this time. It was noted that Lynn Rudie had designed the RiverCulture font and given it to the Town for future use. The RiverCulture logo has been redesigned to take out Turners Falls and be more in keeping with Suzanne's new job as the Town's Cultural Coordinator. No further action was taken.

9. **Next Meeting Date** – there was some discussion that an extra meeting might be necessary pending results of Kate's consultation with the State council on the YSPE issue. Kate will notify the council if that happens. The next meeting was set for March 24, 2019 at the Senior Center at 1 p.m.

10. **Topics Not On Agenda** – Anne suggested MCC might want to work with the Shea Theater on a film series (someone noted this was already being done by RiverCulture) or a World Music Series at Peskeomskut Park, Montague Center Common or other public outdoor venue. No decisions were made but it was requested that "Council Sponsored

Events" be on the next agenda. Term expiration dates will also be on the next agenda so they can be discussed prior to the June appointment schedule.

On a motion by Anne and second by Rachel the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Submitted by Anne Harding, treasurer