

Belmont Cultural Council
Minutes of Meeting – August 16, 2023

DATE: October 26, 2023
TIME: 2:06 PM

Via Zoom

In Attendance: Vicki Amalfitano (Chair); Annette Goodro; Evelyn Corsini; Sue Morris; Gloria Pimentel

Absent: Kate Creagh; Emily Kennerley; Nancy Quilter; Rebecca Richards; Vera Savage

Meeting called to order at 7:07 p.m.

Introduction of New Board Member

Vicki officially welcomed one of the new board members, Sue Morris. All attending members welcomed Sue to the board with brief introductions by all.

Vicki further explained one of the four new members, Karen Bauerly, has notified Vicki that she will not be a member of the Belmont Cultural Council. She has accepted a position with another board in the town. Thus a vacancy exists on the board and members were urged to recommend candidates.

AGENDA

Review of Annual Community Survey/Update on BCC Priorities and Guidelines (2023-2024)

With this first meeting of the 2023/2024 grant year, the BCC needs to reaffirm its priorities and guidelines in conformance with the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The BCC priorities and guidelines are driven by the results of the annual community input survey which was conducted during the summer. Vicki noted that 133 responses were received which would make this year's the second highest response.

Discussion on this year's community input survey in comparison to last year's was conducted. Of note, a high number of the 65+ population responded as compared to the higher number of persons between 45 and 55 last year. The order of interests for this year was a bit different; however, the same activities remained dominant (Porchfest, Payson Park Music Festival and the painted artistic transformer boxes). Community wide gatherings and performing arts activities topped the list. The one area that was disappointing was the increase in the number of people unaware of the BCC's granting of MCC funds. Also, most town residents learn about cultural activities via social media and word of mouth. Ways to publicize better were discussed, including putting flyers in the library. Through MCC increased fund allocation, BCC increased grant funding of programs celebrating community gatherings, performing arts, families, cultural diversity, seniors, persons with disabilities and immigrant communities among them. Members noted that BCC grants have been distributed to many of the identified groups. Vicki mentioned that in last year's survey teens came in very high. She contacted the high school principal in an

unsuccessful effort to see if a teen would be interested in joining the BCC. Sue offered a few suggestions which Vicki will pursue this year. Of note, seniors switched ranking with teens in this year's survey.

Members agreed that more BCC publicity is needed; however, the short time frame in putting out info, encouraging applications and deadline submissions makes it difficult. From August through January, the BCC calendar with meetings, paperwork submission and deadlines is particularly busy. Vicki continues to send out info to town agencies, newspapers, organizations to expand the base of grant applicants and participants throughout the year. All were encouraged to spread the word about BCC throughout the community.

Members reviewed the BCC priorities and guidelines. Suggestions on dates and changes in line with the recent community impact survey results were discussed. As noted by members, things are basically the same. The order just changed a little. Most of the survey's results remained consistent with last year's results with minor changes in priority. Vicki will make the approved changes to the BCC policies and guidelines within a week, update the town website and contact Timothea at MCC.

Motion by Vicki to accept the results of the community impact survey and use these to update our BCC priorities and guidelines as discussed. Annette seconded the motion. Motion carried

Minutes of the BCC June 28, 2023 minutes were discussed with a change. Motion to accept minutes with recommended change by Annette and seconded by Evelyn. Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.