

Cultural Affairs Commission Meeting
June 2, 2025

Attendees: M. Cajigas, I. Gardin, M. Loter, R. Moore, K. Wuzzardo, L. Stanger

Absent: M. Monk Flake, K. Flores, A. Crutchfield, N. Gilson

Staff: K. Futrell, T. Rich, R. Fuller (Intern), M. Riley (NHFI, Inc.)

Meeting called at 5:41pm

I. Minutes

M. Cajigas called for a motion to approve the April 7th minutes. M. Loter motioned to approve minutes. Seconded by L. Stanger and K. Wuzzardo. Minutes unanimously approved.

II. Directors Report

K. Futrell announced that the City budget was approved. No changes to the Cultural Affairs funding amount. Futrell also thanked all who gave testimony and advocated for an increase in arts funding. The final budget is \$190,000.00; \$100,000 for Neighborhood Vitality Grants, and the remainder for other outward facing cultural festivities, public art, and marketing for the department.

K. Futrell requested the CAC to brainstorm ways to reinvigorate the cultural equity plan and engage the public. ARPA is starting to wind down.

M. Riley created a Cultural Affairs Sponsorship Request Form, which is published on the department website under sponsorships (located in the bullet point section of the homepage). At this time, sponsorships will likely remain within \$500.00.

America 250th Celebration planning discussions have begun; themes and festivities are underway. K. Futrell would like to see artists express their communal experience with democracy through scheduled performances and exhibitions.

Additional ARPA funding may be available. Audits are being performed to confirm. More to come.

III. Old Business

None discussed

IV. New Business

K. Wuzzardo mentioned Alder K. Flores will not be seeking re-election as she has graduated.

R. Moore and M. Loter agreed to collaborate on a strategy to provide educational forums for artists (marketing, grant writing, crowdfunding, etc.)

M. Riley announced upcoming Studio Haven programming in City Hall: Elm City Flow Open Mic (June 6th), Art Exhibition Opening Reception - “A Path to New Possibilities: Visioning New Haven’s Future” (June 11th), Elm City Flow (July 11th), and Photography Exhibition Opening Reception - “A Portrait of New Haven: Where We Belong” featuring Chris Randall (July 18th), and Art Exhibition Opening Reception on the history of equal education featuring Anti-Racism In Action, Inc. (September 4th).

V. Public Comment

The committee suggested hosting a collaboration forum to connect cultural vitality grantees with similar initiatives.

The committee also suggested publishing an “arts wish list” on the website to connect sponsors with organizations.

The committee discussed having more cultural events that require more collaboration and community partnerships versus funding. The committee also suggested tabling at various city events to promote the department and advise community members to support cultural events taking place based on their feasibility.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned 6:44pm M. Cajigas motioned to adjourn. Seconded by R. Moore.

NEXT MEETING MONDAY, July 7, 2025 AT 5:30pm at Possible Futures.