



MINUTES

October 29, 2014

City Hall Auditorium – 10 a.m.

Present: Kim McAllister, Jessica Hodorski, Ed Cannata, Jacque Williams, and Sharon Waagner. Also Jay and Kris Roberts, Ed Jaffe, and reporters.

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. on a motion by Kim Mc Alister, seconded by Jacque Williams. On a motion by Williams, seconded by McAllister, the meeting was open to the public. Minutes of the previous meeting had been read and were approved on a motion by Jessica Hodorski, seconded by Kim McAllister.

Ed Cannata reported that the order had been placed for the 2014 Christmas ornaments which feature UCONN Torrington and the Nutmeg Conservatory. Each ornament recognizes the special anniversaries celebrated by the organizations and will be available at local shops for purchase by November 28. Shops include the Nutmeg, Arts Desire, UCONN Torrington, the Hallmark store, and other locations.

Jess Hodorski reported that great progress was being made in preparing for the first annual Performer Showcase scheduled for April 17, 2015. Packets were being presented to both presenters and performers as well as program planners for schools, nursing homes, libraries, camps, etc. She and co-chair Fiona De Merell were building a database of groups for the mailings. This will be an ACT initiative for the first year and funding will be channeled through City Hall. It is the plan that the event will be turned over to UCONN Torrington and the Torrington Library after the first year.

Tim Waldron, Mayoral Assistant, reported on behalf of Mayor Elinor Carbone and EDC Director Erin Wilson who were unable to attend. He said that the mayor and Erin were working on a draft of a proposal for turning over MSMP to another group which will be brought to ACT on November 19 and after approval be sent to the public. There would be a special meeting in December to review the proposals and ACT would be able to make a recommendation. There was some discussion since this varied from what ACT approved during the special October 15 meeting. At that time it was agreed that Jessica Hodorski and Erin Wilson would develop a Request for Proposal which would be brought to ACT for approval today and once approved be promoted between now and November 11. A special meeting was to be held on November 12 to review submissions and formal acceptance of the group to take over MSMP would be approved at the regular meeting on November 19. At that time, an ad hoc committee would be formed to advise the new group during the first year. There was consensus that this new plan was creating a delay that would affect anyone interested in taking over the event since early planning is key to success, especially for a new group. Tim will take the commissions' viewpoints back to Mayor Carbone.

There was discussion about the defined purpose of the ACT Commission – Arts Culture Torrington. We have been asked to focus on tourism and there was some discussion about how increasing tourism has already happened due to ACT events and initiatives. Examples are Singer Songwriter Network and subsequent concerts; Five Points Gallery, an outgrowth of the temporary Artspace initiative; and Main Street Market Place's great success. Jess said part of our purpose is to foster economic growth and to market cultural and art. Steve Criss added that as a founding member of

the commission, he explained that our role is to promote arts and culture in Torrington which then brands Torrington as a destination. We had at a previous meeting discussed creating lists of events and artists and Jess suggested we link with the NWCT Arts Council since that work is already available on their website. Creating a survey and an annual report of our efforts was also suggested.

Steve Criss gave a presentation from the Center of the Creative Community with emphasis placed on the arts as a business concept. He identified four creative concepts for growth: 1 – Creative industries, 2 – Nonprofit development, 3 – Social entrepreneurship, and 4 – Placemaking.

Jessica motioned to place discussion of this subject on the December agenda. The motion was accepted following a second by Jacque Williams.

Sharon Waagner reported for Main Street Torrington and stated that businesses were preparing to be decorated in time for Light Up Main Street on November 28. MST had applied to be a Neighborhood Champion for downtown under the American Express Small Business Saturday/Shop Small program and had received a supply of promotional materials which will be distributed to downtown businesses. SBS is on November 29 and many businesses will be participating and offering special sales or events. In addition, MST is coordinating the First Annual Men's Shopping Night on Thursday, December 11 and will sponsor the Snowflake Scavenger Hunt and Holiday Sale downtown on Saturday, December 13.

Waagner also announced that under the direction of artist and shop owner Karen Rossi, a second evening Art Walk was being planned for Friday, December 5 which will coincide with the next gallery opening at Five Points Gallery.

The next meeting of ACT is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19 at 10 a.m.

A motion to close the meeting at 11:29 a.m. was made by Jessica Hodorski and seconded by Jacque Williams.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Waagner, Secretary