

**FINAL**

**ARTS & CULTURE TASK FORCE  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA  
THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2018  
WEST MEETING ROOM, CITY HALL  
7:00 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Karen Zook (City Council Rep.), Susan Weber Valiante Public Rep.), Joe Clifford (Local Art Rep.), Sherry Fiore (Public Rep.), Jessica Giordani (Local Art Rep.), Devin Wilkie (Public Rep.)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Robert Welsh (Heritage Commission Re.), Chip Brown (Economic Vitality Rep.)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Suzanne Prentiss (Mayor/City Council Rep.), Paul Coats (Director, Rec. Dept.), David Brooks (Director, Planning & Zoning)

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**1. CALL TO ORDER –Mayor Suzanne Prentiss called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.**

**2. Approval of Minutes: None.**

**3. Discussion Items:**

An Agenda packet was passed out at the beginning of the meeting that included:

- Names and contact information for the members of the Task Force,
- Minutes from the March 21, 2018 City Council Meeting establishing the Arts & Culture Task Force and all relevant information,
- An Arts & Economic Prosperity Report from the Americans for the Arts, which included a summary reports on how the arts are creating jobs, generating commerce and driving tourism.
- The Task Force Membership Composition: (2) City Council Members, (2) Members of the Public, (1) Recreation Dept. Member, (2) Local Arts Representatives, (1) Planning Dept. Member, (1) Heritage Commission Member, and (1) Economic Vitality Exchange Committee Members.

Mayor Prentiss wanted to start the meeting, before introductions of the Task Force Membership, by explaining the reasons why they are here. She stated this meeting is a planning meeting to lay out plans for the next 6 months, which will be important moving forward.

Mayor Prentiss stated there has been an interest in the arts for the City by many different groups for many different types of art, including space for art. She said this interest has been going on for a while now and felt this is the right time for the community to become involved, so had a conversation with the City Manager (Mr. Mulholland) regarding how the City could advance its Arts & Culture. Because of this conversation, she and Mr. Mulholland put together an agenda and had the City Council to sign off on this initiative. Mayor Prentiss noted that there were 12 applications for three spots as Public Representatives on this Task Force and described how the Public Representatives were selected: applicants were divided into wards and then into different types of perspectives. She stated this is not the first time the City has ventured down this road but would like to think this will be the last time from the perspective that we (Arts & Culture Task Force) are going to get this done and to do it right.

Mayor Prentiss stated the Task Force meetings would take place 2 nights each month for 6 months (June through October), noting that both she and Councilor Zook have done some of the essential set-up planning topics, such as:

- Since this is an intersection between the government and the public, they would like to hold meetings at different locations outside of City Hall) in both Lebanon and West Lebanon.
- Think about questions that need to be answered.
- Think about types of presentations to help/educate the Task Force on what other Cities have done with their Arts programs in order to come up with a final recommendation to the City Council.
- Think about if the Task Force should recommend that a Commission for Arts & Culture be established, or should the Task Force recommend an Arts District funded as a 501-3(c), or a combination of both.
- Establish intersection between government and the public regarding space, and develop the criteria/process for displaying Art.

Councilor Zook also presented her summary stating that we have to come up with a process going forward and set the City's purview on this particular issue by doing the preliminary work.

Mayor Prentiss explained the history of the City's committees, their advisory roles and what a Task Force does, which is to do work (to accomplish a specific task) over a specific time. She stated the recommendations that come out of this work would be a guiding process for the City to develop an Arts & Culture Policy, which would fit into the City's Master Plan as described in Chapter 12: Community Design and Civic Art and Chapter 3: Lebanon Central Business District.

There was a round table introduction by all Task Force Members. After introductions were made, Mayor Prentiss stated that within the Master Plan there is a list of current arts and cultural-related activities as well as partners. The job of the Task Force will be:

- 1) To review and update those lists,
- 2) Look at different models of how art/public and the economy come together. She noted there is an educational component to this so we need to firm up this direction,
- 3) Firm up speakers for meetings, and
- 4) Determine the public art component which intersects with government (e.g., who, what, where and the criteria/guidelines for approval of art components in the City).

Mayor Prentiss informed members that at the next full meeting on June 5, she will be inviting a guest speaker named Nancy Pearson (City Councilor) from Portsmouth, NH and explained her work. Mayor Prentiss said she wanted to have someone speak to the Task Force who was neutral, had no interests in the City, someone who has done this exact thing, and someone who can be used as a launching point to describe lessons learned and what the future could look like. She emphasized that all the Arts/Cultural Task Force Meetings are open to the public.

Mayor Prentiss, as part of the Task Force Planning went through/discussed the following

A. Future Meeting Dates:

- June 5, 2018
- June 19, 2018
- July 10, 2018
- July 17, 2018

- July 31, 2018
- August 14, 2018
- September 4, 2018
- September 18, 2018
- Pending End of September: Open Public Forum. Platforms will be determined, and a discussion took place regarding the Open Forum and possible surveys for Public/Community to express their ideas.
- October 2, 2018
- October 16, 2018 (last meeting)

B. Potential Meeting Locations (must be handicapped accessible):

- AVA Gallery
- Ballet School
- Opera House
- Scratch
- Dana House
- SAU
- Kilton Library
- DHMC – Therapeutic Arts/Byrne Center
- Music Center
- Colburn Park/Outdoor Space in West Leb (Riverside)
- Center for Cartoon Studies
- CATV (Tip Top)
- Possible field trips to Salem, MA or Northhampton

Mayor Prentiss asked the Task Force to think about questions that they would like to have answered during this process and everyone responded with the questions they had in mind (listed below in the summary of meeting).

There were also discussions on the following:

- Development of an Art District(s) in Lebanon and West Lebanon,
- The difficulty in establishing Art Districts through City & Planning and identifying the regulatory processes,
- Potential possible regulatory pitfalls,
- Economic opportunities, and the positive effects that having a robust Arts Community, would have on the City of Lebanon,
- The importance of thinking about putting businesses to the forefront on this initiative and what the positive influence of having their support would mean,
- Marketing/branding Arts & Culture, and
- Funding for the Arts & Culture

4. **Future Agenda Items:**

- Nancy Pearson (City Councilor), Portsmouth, NH
- Trip Anderson: get him on Agenda early on to talk about the Arts District
- Funding Prospects:

- NH State Arts Council's Creative Communities Program
- NE Foundation for the Arts
- Creative Communities (Government vs. a 501-3(c))
- Sierra Council

**5. Next Meeting Date: June 5, 2018, Location: AVA Gallery**

**6. Other Business:**

Mayor Prentiss summarized this meeting as follows:

- The Task Force will lock down, by the end of this week, the schedule of where our meetings will be located. We know that at our first meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup>, Nancy Pearson (City Councilor), Portsmouth, NH will be our guest speaker. We just do not know where this meeting will held yet.
- On June 19, 2018, have Trip Anderson talk about the Arts District, close and upfront.
- Questions that need to be answered are as follows:
  - What an Arts District(s) would look like,
  - How can we put ourselves in the tunnel,
  - Public Art and open space,
  - Public Art in the private context,
  - What are the potential challenges of an Arts District,
  - Small successes to get the ball rolling,
  - Equity on both sides of the City,
  - Arts functionality in the Business District,
  - Identifying the potential regulatory issues,
  - Comment/note on State's Arts Council and the Creative Communities Fund,
  - Performing Arts and Visual Arts: the intersection of those and how raise the visibility,
  - Marketing/Branding,
  - Potential of a public survey,
  - Some type of Open Forum once we get closer to the end of the Task Force Meetings (middle of September).

**7. Adjournment:**

*A MOTION was made by Karen Zook to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 PM.*

*The MOTION was seconded by Devin Wilkie.*

*\* The vote on the MOTION passed (6-0).*

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Dona E. Gibson**

**Recording Secretary**