

## **Minutes of the BRC on Arts & Non-Profits – March 8, 2021**

Barbara called the meeting to order at 12.02

Committee members in attendance: Russ Grazier, Tina Sawtelle, Robin Albert, Barbara Massar, Beth Falconer, Bill Humphries, Jason Goodrich, Courtney Perkins, Kathleen Somssich and Nihco Gallo (by phone).

Russ introduced and welcomed 2 new members to the BR Committee:

Sen. Martha Fuller Clark – member of Reopen Portsmouth Committee and Portsmouth Icon

Renee Giffroy – Seacoast Artist Association

Motion to accept the minutes of the March 1, BRC meeting was made and seconded by Jason and Robin. Minutes were accepted unanimously.

Josh Denton, President of the PopUpNH Board of Directors, withdrew his proposal regarding a presence at the Worth Lot this year. He stated the importance of the arts organizations focusing on their own venues and offered PopUpNH's shed and kitchen equipment to any arts or non-profit organization.

Russ invited PopUpNH to return directly to the BRC with any new plans instead of first going to City Council.

Barbara will send a message to City Council informing them of this decision.

Robin told Josh to express our appreciation to his board for their efforts for the community.

Russ suggested that Josh and PopUpNH keep in touch with the Reopen committee for any opportunities for PopUpNH involvement.

Tina gave an update for her committee (Nihco, Jason, Beth) on the progress of the survey. They are still reworking the survey. It will be in Google Forms for 1 week for any additional changes. The sub-committee will test the survey and then provide a link that committee members can then distribute to their constituents. Tina recommended a 2 week distribution period and anticipates 1-2 weeks to analyze data. Results should be available early to mid April.

Russ suggested a link to the survey be posted on the City website to reach more community members. He suggests including information such as the latest CDC announcement that vaccinated people can safely be indoors with other vaccinated people without masks or distancing.

Courtney (Kathy, Bill, Robin) gave an update on the Health & Safety Guidelines sub-committee. Courtney has received responses from various groups and is collecting hard numbers about last season's venues and audiences and will present the information to Health Officer Kim McNamara. The Health & Safety Guideline sub-committee will meet with Kim this Wednesday at 10am and will report on that meeting next Monday.

Russ and Barbara attended a Reopen Committee meeting and discussed ideas about street closures for this year.

Martha reported on the recommendations of the Reopen Committee for non-permanent street closures. Ideal would be a corridor including Penhallow and Ceres Streets. Issues involving these street closures include deliveries to Moxie and take-out parking for Pink Bamboo.

Martha remarked that the outdoor dining last year added life and vibrancy to downtown and made the City more pedestrian friendly, while allowing room for emergency vehicles. She asked if any other streets or parts of the City should be included in the closures. She added that Penhallow and Ceres Streets have shops and restaurants that haven't received attention. She reminded the committee that the end of Ceres is private and will need to accommodate emergency vehicles. She asked whether smaller venues such as Pontine and Players Ring have a voice on the BRC.

Russ will reach out to those smaller arts organizations and invite them to attend BRC meetings.

Barbara mentioned that Pro Portsmouth's Summer in the City is going ahead this year with Pleasant St. closed to Porter St. She reminded the committee that Fleet St. will be closed due to construction soon.

Martha remarked that Reopen is talking about closing Market St. from Bow to Congress and Pleasant St. from Congress to Porter this summer for outdoor dining. She emphasized that community support would be needed for any more street closures.

Nihco will contact Portland, ME authorities about how they are dealing with street closures and if they have any recommendations or ideas.

Beth suggested better utilization of the Foundry Garage and hoped for a more attractive pedestrian friendly path for the 3-5 minute walk from the Foundry Garage to Downtown.

Russ mentioned the need to vet and organize any outdoor performers.

Barbara said Pro Portsmouth uses an online form called A Call to Performer for applicants to post who they are, what they do and a sample of their work. She added it was important to consider how the artists are being compensated.

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 1pm.

Next meeting of the BRC on Arts & Non-Profits will be on Monday, March 15 at noon.

Minutes submitted by Kathleen Somssich.