

Minutes of the BRC for Arts & Non-Profits, March 29, 2021

Barbara called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.

Committee members attending: Russ Grazier, Barbara Massar, Jason Goodrich, Robin Albert, Beth Falconer, Larry Yerdon, Tina Sawtelle, Courtney Perkins, Renee Giffroy, Kathy Somssich, and Martha Fuller Clark.

A motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting on March 22 was made by Larry, seconded by Robin and approved unanimously.

Tina gave an update on the survey which has received 429 responses from patrons, 35 responses from artists and 8 from non-profits.

The written responses are yielding rich information on lots of trends. For example, 90% of responding patrons are focused on outdoor events. Tina's sub-committee will look at the data and decide how to present it.

Jason is interested in where the respondents get their information. Survey information indicates the public gets safety information from the CDC; and event information from organizations' websites.

Tina will give summaries of the information gathered from the surveys to the committee and then details to everyone.

Russ suggested that there may be ideas for future agenda items from the surveys.

Tina reported that there is interest in a centralized calendar. Also, consistency in communicating safety guidelines is a theme that is emerging from the surveys.

Barbara feels that a calendar conversation should be Portsmouth-centric with organizations being able to link websites to a city aggregate. She foresees maintenance of such a site as an issue.

Stephanie Seacord: Keeping a calendar listing of events has been tried and has proved to be challenging. The Chamber and Seacoastonline do it well. Working with them might be better than reinventing the wheel.

Russ: There are automated ways to do this with using external links.

Renee suggested the committee create awareness of the sites already out there and plan a communication campaign.

Robin asked if there was an easy way to do ticketing such as a one-stop-shopping site for tickets.

Courtney's update included her plans for a follow-up meeting with Kim.

The State meeting Courtney attended defined three current steps. These steps are not yet final and must be reviewed by the Governor's staff. They are as follows:

Suggested new guidelines for the large venue (500+):

1. Current: incorporate 6' social distancing between seated groups, with masking not needed when seated.

2. Effective 5/28/21: Incorporate 3' social distancing between seated groups, capacity based on maintaining 3' distancing, masks needed when seated.

3. Effective 7/16/21: No social distancing needed in seated areas, capacity at 100%, assuming self-attestation of vaccination from patron when purchasing tickets, masks required when seated.
Present – 6 ft social distancing for seated groups without masks.

The one sticking point expressed at the State meeting was self-attestation for vaccinations.

Beth reported that there is a big push for indicators and this will come from the State Health Committee. It's disconcerting that the number of cases of COVID in NH is creeping up.

Russ reported that PMAC conducts internal contact tracing. All are registered and there have been no transmissions.

Stephanie: Dr. Chan of the NH Dept. of Health and Human Services reports that the latest contact tracing on the State level is concentrated on variants.

Russ added that self-attestation is the goal and that venues are considering social distancing and non social distancing areas so that attendees are not denied service, but may have greater restrictions. The focus of the recommendations is for outdoors. Renee added that the management of such a regulation would be problematic. Russ added that we have to make it clear to the community that this is temporary and that we undertake these measures because we care and want to ensure everyone's safety.

Martha gave an update from the Reopen Committee. They are still exploring the possible closure of streets in the area of Market Square. There has been no resolution yet. The committee has run up against reluctance and the fear of being inconvenienced. Pleasant St. is still being looked at, but nothing will happen on Penhallow. Another topic is how to make a pedestrian path from and to the Foundry Garage more appealing. Lights in the trees? The area is under construction and it is not welcoming. Martha also reported that the barriers to protect outdoor diners are ready and will be in place by April 1. They will have flower boxes and help create a more consistent and attractive aesthetic.

Barb suggested that venues should direct patrons to the Foundry Garage on their websites and encourage patrons to park there. The City has allowed special pricing for parking there.

Martha reports that usage of the Foundry Parking Garage is up.

She also reminded the committee that the McIntyre survey with 4 development ideas is open until March 31.

- **Link to City of Portsmouth McIntyre**
Webpage: <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/mcintyre-project>
- **Link to McIntyre Survey:** <http://bit.ly/mcintyre-survey-3>
 - *This survey will be open to all Portsmouth residents. The survey will be open from March 18th at 7:30pm through 5:00pm on March 31st.
- **Link Directly to McIntyre Miro**
Board: https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_1PLE6xA=

- **Link to YouTube video of the presentation:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GHC-p6art4&t=7s>
- **QR Code to access the McIntyre Survey - Directions:**
 - Open the Camera of your smart device (smart phone, iPad, etc.)
 - Point the camera at the QR code below.
 - The device will either automatically open a webpage with the survey, or will prompt you to click a link to access the survey.
 - Fill out survey.

Russ added that the barriers have been painted a base color. As the weather did not cooperate this weekend, additional painting by the PHS students will have to proceed with the barriers in place. The involvement of the high school students is a powerful message to the students and the community, but must be done with the safety of the students in mind.

Laura Brown submitted a link in the chat feature about a concert in Barcelona where all 5,000 attendees were rapid tested for COVID-19. There was no social distancing. The City of Barcelona will follow up regarding any spread of the virus. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56556451>

Russ encouraged members of the committee to think about what this committee should be considering for future projects and stated that the surveys will provide ideas.

The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Kathleen Somssich