

# Montague Cultural Council Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Thursday, August 21, 2025

**Time:** 10:03 AM – 12:21 PM

**Location:** Virtual (Zoom)

## 1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 10:03 AM by Chair pro tem.

Roll call: **Maggie Martin, Ben Letcher, Julie Kumble, Jon-Marc Seimon, Kate Martineau.**

Quorum established.

## 2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed (distributed in advance).

Motion to approve: Passed unanimously.

## 3. Treasurer's Report (Maggie Martin)

Current balance: **\$3,408.91 carryover** from unclaimed or declined grants.

Total funds available for FY26: approximately **\$20,000** (includes Mass Cultural Council allocation of \$8,600 plus town discretionary funds).

Explanation of encumbered vs. unencumbered funds provided.

Some grants declined or unaccepted (e.g., Miller's Falls Festival, mistaken application).

ARPA funding no longer available.

Future funding uncertain; current town contribution comes from discretionary funds.

LCC account form due in September; will confirm available funds.

No vote required; report accepted with thanks.

## 4. Community Input Survey

64 responses received (similar to last year).

Survey now required only every 3 years, but may conduct more frequently.

Observations:

- **High interest:** Music, history/science, art shows, festivals.

- **Moderate interest:** Drama, youth-based programs.

- **Low interest:** Comedy.

- Notable increase in support for **diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)**.

Discussion on limitations: low participation (<1% of population), skewed demographics.

Agreement that future surveys should be more robust and widely promoted (possibly through grantees, QR codes at events, RiverCulture coordination).

Noted lack of local venues, especially accessible ones (Montague Common Hall not ADA compliant).

## 5. Guidelines & Priorities for FY26

Reviewed existing guidelines (last revised in FY25).

Motion: Retain current guidelines and priorities for FY26.

- Motion: Kate

- Second: Julie

- Vote: Unanimous approval.

Noted that survey results can be used to guide deliberations during grant review.

## 6. Outreach, Publicity & Press Release

Agreed to prepare a press release for Montague Reporter and RiverCulture; may expand to other outlets.

Consider highlighting **local history, science, literature, and DEI-focused programming** to attract diverse applications.

### **Action Items:**

- **Jon-Marc:** Draft “tarted-up” press release (more engaging).

- **Julie:** Research additional outreach venues (arts newsletters, literary groups, Valley Arts, etc.).

- **Maggie & Jon-Marc:** Coordinate SmartSimple portal update.

Noted timing urgency: Grant cycle opens September 2 and closes October 16.

## 7. Advertising & Flyers

Review of current small ads and flyers (functional but uninspired).

Discussion: fewer, larger ads might be more effective than many small ones.

Flyers to be updated; RiverCulture has offered free printing.

Facebook page access restored; will be used for outreach.

## 8. Collaboration with RiverCulture

Discussion on possible closer partnership or integration with RiverCulture (Suzanne’s proposal).

Agreement to revisit after grant cycle, possibly inviting Suzanne to a meeting.

## 9. Future Meetings & Grant Review Process

Grant review meetings will require hybrid capability. Library confirmed as possible venue.

Panel book review to be split if necessary for efficiency.

Process reminder: Denials first (15-day reconsideration period), then allocation decisions.

## 10. Officer Elections

Elections held for FY26 officer positions:

- **Chair:** Jon-Marc Seimon

- **Co-Chair:** Julie Kumble

- **Treasurer:** Ben Letcher

- **Secretary:** Kate Martineau

Maggie will remain temporarily to assist with transition but will rotate off soon.

## **11. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 12:21 PM. Passed unanimously.