

## **Minutes RiverCulture Steering Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, October, 23, 2018, 6pm, First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Present: Suzanne LoManto, Eileen Dowd, Oliver Miller

Hilary Emerson-Lay, Erin MacLean, Rachel Teumim, Pam Allan, Richard Widmer

1. Notes by Suzanne LoManto. Meeting started at 6:02pm
2. Minutes from August 21, 2018 meeting were accepted. 6:06pm
3. Conversation about the Chair/Co-chair roles. Eileen was nominated and voted as the Chair for the RC Steering Committee. 6:11pm
4. Updates from the RiverCulture director included:
  - a. details of a new grant opportunity for Millers Falls;
  - b. how RiverCulture will implement \$5K MCC Cultural District grant: marketing, equipment, seed money for a film series at The Shea, and artist fees associated with public performances at Peskeomskut Park;
  - c. Signature events like The Word Festival.
5. Erin questioned the nature of the meeting; suggesting the desire about more conversation about the role of RiverCulture vs. the tasks RiverCulture was performing. Pam agreed, wanting less information about RiverCulture operations and more talk about the direction of the program.
6. Rick picked up this thread of conversation. Rick discussed:  
RiverCulture's limited growth potential due to the limitations of time and money;  
The idea of "1% for the Arts" which would be \$200,000 annually.
7. Other committee members added their concerns/frustrations to the conversation: without more foot traffic businesses downtown may not survive.
8. Conversation focused on how RiverCulture would utilize a \$200,000 budget including:
  - a. building an Arts partnership with the Gill-Montague School system to improve the educational value and attract new residents;
  - b. Facilitating a Town-wide artist residence program;
  - c. Increased staff.
9. Conversation shifted to strategy: what is the best way to proceed? Suzanne talked about the success that "slow and steady" has produced when it comes to introducing new ideas to the Finance Committee and ultimately Town Meeting members.
10. Suzanne talked about her own frustrations, including a lack of volunteers, money, and the amount of time needed to handle basic social media which limits her focus on the kind of subjects brought up in this discussion.
11. It was decided that a new group should be formed to look at the possibility of a "1% for the Arts" initiative.
12. Rick was nominated and voted as the Vice Chair.
13. It was agreed that Tuesday works well for meetings and the next would be set up via email.
14. The meeting ended at 7:32pm