

3-30-22 Cottage Street Cultural District Meeting Minutes

Roll call-Lennie, Kasey, Beth, Pat, Pasqualina, Carol, Tracey, Jeffrey, Gavin, Katie, Juliette, Marcia, Dan, Lindsa

Approval of minutes

Pasqualina talked about the possible name change of cultural chaos. It came from a good place. A couple of weeks ago it was public and we received a lot of pushback. Some on social media, most were offline. Our intentions were good but there was a huge division. It's not worth the ramifications. People miss even the name of this festival. She wants to respect this and continue on. We want to reconsider changing the name.

Pat talked about the origin of the name that stuck. It has a good ring to it. People know that Cultural Chaos is in Easthampton. It turns out the name really does mean a lot.

Lennie always really liked the name. Celebrating arts and culture of Easthampton. That's our brand of chaos.

Beth is not attached to either name. Why are people so upset about the name change. Pat says there wasn't a broader conversation about it. People were asking why we needed to change it. Pasqualina stated how we have become very unified in this group during the pandemic. We thought now is the time to change the name. Many people in the community feel now is NOT the time to change the name. They are looking forward to going to Cultural Chaos again. There was an unnecessary disconnect with changing the name. We do not want any division in our community.

Kasey acknowledged that good intentions were there. It was not to harm anyone. She's fine with the original name of Cultural Chaos.

Dan has been understanding the arguments for changing the name. He doesn't want to unnecessarily create a situation.

Pat made a motion to continue to use the name for the event as Cultural Chaos. Motion passes. We will continue with the name of Cultural Chaos.

Pasqualina says planning is going well. Dan secured two stages. Steve Baer will provide the stage at the top of the street. Pasqualina is pricing out local sound people. Dan is sponsoring a stage this year. Thank you.

We talked about setting up the main stage at the Spot Lot area. In the past we've had around 12,000 people. We can expect fewer people this year due to the past few years of the pandemic. Maybe people will not expand up the street. So to boost the business community, we are thinking about keeping the main stage in the municipal parking lot across from the theater.

We can emphasize accessible parking at the Spot Lot. We can create some activities at the base and around the pond. Talking to Easthampton Clay to see how many people would like to have a pottery sale.

An open call was sent out for the festival. 60+ applications arrived. The deadline is Monday April 4th.

Gavin requests the main stage to not be in front of his business, Book Moon, due to it being super loud. Dan says the volume is controllable and they can select artists that will be at a more manageable volume. They can change the angle of the stage as well.

Casey mentioned using the Spot Lot area will help stretch out the space, the less mob scene the better. Juliette feels the same way and likes the idea of an acoustic parklet at the Municipal Lot on Cottage.

Our next meeting on April 13th will be in person and planning will be much easier. We will meet in Conference room B in the basement of city hall.

Public speak

Lindsay talked about the new outdoor live entertainment application with anyone using a sound amp. She would like to see Pasqualina at the May meeting.

Dan mentioned it would be wise to make final decisions of stages etc so he could get back to the sound company with information for equipment etc. We should also loop in Steve Baer and his stage information for information for the application.

Marcia was upset about the name change. We are named one of the first cultural districts in the state. It's important to know that it marks Easthampton. People know this festival. After a three year hiatus. It would be a loss to not go back to something comfortable.

Tracey said the feedback of the name change was that people wanted more of a discussion before the name change. People like to be part of the community and want a say. Engaging with the community is important.

Katie with Valley Paddler would like to have a floating parade on the pond. People can decorate boats and parade around a course. Should we have a start time of the parade? We would need to coordinate with the floating sculptures. Pasqualina says we will work together with this. There will be three sculptures maximum on the pond. Sculptures will be installed a couple of days before the festival and maybe stay for a few weeks after. If the Spot Lot is used, will the end of Williston St. be blocked off? That is TBD.

Art walk. Many businesses in the cultural district are participating. More than 15 businesses!

Kasey acknowledged thanks to the committee for listening to the community with regards to the name change. And knows it came from a place of good intentions.

Next meeting April 13, 2022 at 9am.

Adjournment 9:57