

**Saratoga Springs Arts Commission
Regular Meeting
March 1, 2017**

MINUTES

Commission members present: Ian Berry, Devra Cohen, Ria Curley, Sue Kessler, Bev Mastrianni, Joel Reed, Ardie Russell, John Wager, Dianne Winter

Guests: Mayor Joanne Yepsen, Deputy Mayor Meg Kelly

- Mayor Yepsen opened the meeting at 6pm by announcing the appointment of Sue Kessler as Chair, Ardie Russell as Co-chair, and will determine a Secretary asap.
- Sue Kessler announced our future meeting schedule. The SSAC will meet the first Wednesday of the month for 12 months of the year at 6pm at the Visitor's Center. She will communicate with Jim Baker, the IT professional for the city, to post the meeting dates on the city's website.
- Mayor Yepsen announced the revised term limits and changes to the organizational structure of the SSAC:
 - Currently we have 5-20 members. That will change to 5-11 members on April 1, 2018
 - Terms will run from April 1 through March 31
 - Current Commission members' terms will end on March 31, 2018
 - Each elected city council member will appoint (1) new member to the commission in 2018
 - Current/founding members will end their three year term in 2018. First cycle of newly appointed 2018 members will be a combination of one and two year terms so the membership will stagger
 - Three missed meetings will result in stepping down to an advisory capacity
 - There are currently (2) spots open and Mayor Yepsen will make new appointees
 - The Mayor asked that any recommendations for new members should be sent via filling out a form on the city's website
- Discussion was held about populating committees with outside community members with specific skill sets when needed. Devra Cohen-Tigor asked the Mayor to consider appointing an Advisory Committee

- Discussion was held about qualifications of commission members in regard to residency. The bylaws state one must be residing within the Saratoga Springs city school district and this is correct.
- Bev Mastrianni led a discussion about formulating a set of criteria for future SSAC members to help inform those appointing new members. Ian Berry volunteered to draft a document to be circulated.
- **Presentation of 2017 Goals: MOVING ART FORWARD** (Mayor Yepsen)
 - Past accomplishments of Public Art Policy and Busking Policy were very helpful to the city.
 - Ardie Russell reported on the Rite-Aid sculpture project, which was a collaboration with the city planning department.
 - **2017 Goals:**
 - ❖ **VENUES**
 - SPAC: Elizabeth Sobel, the current ED, is pursuing branding Spa State Park as “A Park of the Arts”. The current vacant buildings at the park are possible options.
 - If the Saratoga Music Hall is converted to a court room, Mayor Yepsen announced a plan to replace the performance space. She announced she will work with Joel Reed, ED of Saratoga Arts to enlarge and enhance the Dee Sarno Theater.
 - The former METRO has been sold privately and is no longer an option to pursue
 - ❖ **CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND PARTNERSHIP**
 - Mayor Yepsen has engaged with the mayor of Nashville Tennessee (Megan Berry) and the ED of the Tennessee Arts Commission (Jen Cole) to propose a cultural exchange between Saratoga Springs, NY and Nashville, TN. Discussion was held about how the program might manifest. Meg Kelly has spoken to Rick Bolton and other musicians in town to exchange performances. She also mentioned Joel Moss. John Wager suggested exchanging additional unique assets from Saratoga Springs and include institutions such as SPAC, the Tang National Museum of Dance, etc. Joel Reed mentioned an existing program through NYSCA that supports a cultural exchange with Quebec. Mayor Yepsen has asked the SSAC to draw up a proposal stating the purpose and framework of the exchange. Sue Kessler will follow through.
 - ❖ **CITY MASTER ARTS PLAN**

- Mayor Yepsen would like a committee to work on this process with the help of Tina Carton from the planning office. The committee will research Americans for the Arts and seek guidance from the organization. Bev Mastrianni suggested we conduct a thorough review of our “arts” assets within the city in order to assess our needs. Saratoga Arts Fest has already done much of that work, therefore we will reach out to Dee Sarno to obtain that data.

❖ INCUBATOR PROJECT

- Mayor Yepsen announced that Dennis Brobston of the SEDC is leading an effort to establish an incubator for innovative ideas in the city.

❖ MONTHLY GUEST SPEAKERS

- Mayor Yepsen would like to schedule guest speakers for the first 15 minutes of each SSAC monthly meeting. Her first suggestion is Dennis Brobston for the April 5 meeting. She would like him to present the incubator project. She would also like to schedule Elizabeth Sobel and Todd Garafano. Sue will reach out to them to schedule.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Next meeting date is Wednesday, April 5 at 6pm at the Visitor Center.