

**City of Kingston Arts Commission**  
**Meeting - Thursday, December 17, 2015 – 5:00 p.m.**  
**City Hall**

**MINUTES**

**Attendance**

Commission members in attendance were: Anne Bailey, Micah Blumenthal, Ruth Ann Devitt-Frank, Richard Frumess, Lara Giordano, Susie Linn, Linda Marston-Reid, Pablo Shine and Ward Mintz.

Mayor-elect Steve Noble also attended as a special guest.

**Introduction to the Mayor Elect**

Following brief introductions of each of the Arts Commission members to the Mayor-elect, Richard provided a review about how the Commission grew out of the Arts Advisory Board that had been convening regularly with the mayor for over two years. He also explained the purpose of the Commission, which is to serve as the city's main arts umbrella and liaison between the community and government, and that it will help facilitate, organize, and promote arts initiatives in ways that are as yet to be defined.

**Comments From the Mayor Elect**

Mayor-elect Noble emphasized that he recognizes the importance of the Arts to economic development and quality of life, and that they hold great potential for the community as a whole. He would like the Arts Commission to map out what it hopes to achieve in its first year; this will enable him to formulate how his administration and the Commission can collaborate to yield a better overall plan for the City. He would like to align with, and support the goals of, all of the City's Commissions in order to unite efforts rather than serve individual agendas.

He touched on some of his arts-related ideas, which include:

- Development of an inventory of vacant buildings that includes details about each property that can be promoted to prospective new residents and businesses
- Working with the real estate community to fill vacant buildings
- Development of incentives to restore vacant and abandoned properties
- Promotion of pop-up shops
- Packaging existing assets in new ways that will help the City build upon them and strengthen the "roller-coaster effect"
- Creating an artist relocation toolkit
- Working with the SUNY Ulster Academy to develop new arts-related programs
- Building a mechanism to track successes so that the mayor can develop "action plans" and market Kingston's identity as an arts-friendly community
- Ascertain that the City's economic goals align with what micro-businesses (1 to 10 employees) consider when choosing a location for their operations

### **Web Site**

Mayor-elect Noble also mentioned that the Commission has permission to directly manage its pages on the City's Web site and encourages all of the Commissions to do so. Ruth Ann said she will take on this responsibility and will contact the City's IT manager for instructions. In addition to filing with the City Clerk, we will ultimately begin posting monthly meeting minutes on the site.

### **Swearing-In Ceremony**

Mayor-elect Noble invited the Commission to attend his Swearing-In Ceremony on January 1, 2016 at City Hall.

### **Common Council Arts District Presentation**

Richard reported that he is in communication with Jim Noble about coordinating a presentation for the members of the Common Council. Please note that as of the writing of

these minutes, it was determined that it is preferable that the new Arts District Committee leadership, which includes Ray Curran, Kevin Godbey and Kitty McCullough, make the presentation during the **February 1, 2016—7:00 p.m.** Caucus meeting. This meeting is not open to the public and takes place on the night before the monthly Council session. All Common Council members will be present, and the format allows for conversation. Press may be invited.

### **Next Meeting**

The next Arts Commission meeting will take place on **Thursday, January 14 at 5:00 p.m.** Richard will confirm the date and conference room with City Hall.

### **Assignments**

Members are asked to come prepared with ideas for a brainstorming session at the next meeting. We will also discuss possible committees and committee structure.

The December 17 meeting adjourned at just after 6:00 p.m.