



Watertown Square Cultural District Partnership

Monday, May 13, 2025, 4:00 pm

Zoom link: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/83683744923>

Meeting ID: 836 8374 4923 Call in: +16465588656

Present:

Krisen Kenny (Chair), Jeannette Belcher-Schepis (Co-Secretary), Lois Pond (Co-Secretary), Liz Helfer, Jack Dargon, Jamie Gordon, Susan Jones, Kristen Hansen, Andrea Santarpio, Dee Drapeau, Kelsey Tidball, Jackie Dentio, Roberta Miller, Erin Rathe, Leah Kotok, Darren Farrington, Morgan Henderson, Stephanie Venizelos and Margie Wayne.

1. Welcome - Kristen called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm

2. Acceptance of Minutes -

Jackie motioned to accept the April 2025 minutes, Andrea seconded.
Jeannette, Margie, and Roberta abstained but approved otherwise.

3. Party Planning Update - Jackie

A celebration @ the BarCino patio on 5/21 with a limited capacity of 50 attendees is planned as a joint event with the Watertown Business Coalition. M&T bank is unable to sponsor but Watertown Savings Bank has agreed to Sponsor along with BarCino. WCA-TV will feature a looping video highlighting accomplishments for the WCD to date. There are 41 @Pre-Registration. Jackie/Kristen will strategy for rotating folks if needed.

4. Cultural District Outreach Coordinator - Update

- a. Danielle highlighted the upcoming Porchfest event this Saturday, May 17th, which will include:
 - 178 Performers
 - 75 Hosts
 - 2 Afterhours Events - RitcyEast & WCA-TV

The PACC Arts Bulletin (email newsletter) has transitioned as part of the new Cultural District Coordinator's role with the first publication last week.

5. YardArt

Darren shared participation statistics from the last five years and the results of the final survey by Yard Art participants:

2021 - 149 Participants

2022 - 91 Participants

2023 - 128 Participants

2024 - 115 Participants

2025 - 70 Participants plus 10 additional installations (Commander's Mansion, etc.)

- Walking Tour and Bike Tour were both well attended.
- WPS not involved this year
- There were 27 responses for the final YardArt Surveys. (mostly returning Yard Art participants).
- 77% of responders reported that the map was "very useful".
- 79% reported communication was "very satisfactory"
- 48 participants will keep their YardArt up year round
- 96% would like to see YardArt return
- 85% are likely to participate in the future

Suggestions included:

- Return to holding YardArt in March or for two months in March & April
- Focus on "Earth Month" activities, which include WPS participation

Discussion:

Participation in YardArt has decreased and the WCD Partnership will need to determine if we should continue with the event going forward. The majority of folks had participated in the past.

Lois noted YardArt as a unique and joyful event - if there is a way in which to increase involvement including the schools, it would be ideal. Susan reminded folks that the newly built HS will be completed by next March with more green space, and that could be a draw - perhaps combining it with Earth Day involving WPS in some way. The targeted critical mass (90) was not achieved this year - how can we increase participation?

If continued, schools should be involved but need to be on-boarded early in the school year. Liz shared a possible tie-in via the HS students working on a piece for the sculpture walk. Discussion to be continued next month with a vote to continue / discontinue in July.

6. Porchfest

- Event is scheduled for this Saturday, May 19 - Please see details above @ Cultural District Coordinator's Report.

a. Kristen encouraged all to visit the Website: <https://watertownporchfest.org/>

b. Press release:

<https://www.watertownmanews.com/2025/02/03/porchfest-returning-to-watertown-in-may-2025/>

7. Old Business

- a. Community Lawn Event at the Browne House - May 3 (1st Period home in Watertown). Barbara Callahan (Regional Director) is hoping to host more community events - stay tuned. If anyone would like to partner with Browne House, please contact Liz for an introduction..
- b. Watertown Pride - June 1st 12 - 4pm. Kristen, Liz, and folks from Public Arts & Culture will host a table. Featured art work: "Love in Full Bloom"
- c. Watertown Arts Market - 8/9 Registration is open: <https://www.watertownartsmarket.com>
- d. Watertown Helps Out (WCF) - registration is open: Still seeking volunteers to "help out": <https://www.watertownfoundation.org/event-listings>

8. New Business

- a. Register for Faire on the Square on 9/13 from 12-5pm <https://www.faireonthesquare.com>
 - i. For those that don't want their own space, WCD space will be available
 - 1. Volunteers are needed
- b. Annual Partner Survey to be released to WCD immediately following meeting
 - i. Due July 1, 2025Required MCC tracking in order to hopefully show our district's growth over time.

9. Sharing: Upcoming Events and Programs

- MCA's 20th Anniversary Benefit is scheduled on May 22nd. Dinner from 6-7pm. The exciting program includes performances by MCA's improv, WCT's Hadestown cast, Singer/Songwriter Hayly Riorden, and emceed by Doug Orifice. Tix \$150 with some comps available through the generosity of some donors who are unable to attend – please reach out to Roberta directly if a community member in need would like to attend.
- Watertown walks every thursday 1-2 pm. Will be earlier
- Farmerts market is June 11.
- Historical Society -
 - June 1 @ 10am - Tours 90 minute historical Walking Tours
 - June 7 - 1-3:30 Fowle Hous
 - June 15 - Browne House Open House Tours
- Russell Cooperative Pre-School:
 - Free craft at the library on May 14 (tomorrow)
 - 5/17 @ 11am: Tanglewood Marienette's Performance plus music to begin at noon with games & Concessions
- WCA-TV Afterhours Porchfest Events to include:
 - Live Mariocart Video Tournament with live music from the game, which will also be livestreamed for those unable to attend. Winners will be entered into a raffle
- Gorky Mural Dedication - June 10 - 5:30-7:00 pm
 - Grove Street underpass @ Arlington St. / Tufts building

Please see a full listing of additional events happening throughout the Watertown Cultural District / community by visiting the WCD Website: <https://watertownmaculture.com/>

Please reach out to Liz/Danielle if assistance is needed with uploading events to the website.

Stay tuned for more events related to the 250th next month!

12. Next meeting scheduled on Monday, June 9, 2025, at 4pm via zoom

Motion to adjourn – Roberta

Seconded – Lois

Meeting Adjourned at 4:48 pm

Submitted by Jeannette Belcher-Schepis, Co-Secretary