

Enfield Culture and Arts Commission Meeting Minutes

February 3, 2026, 6:30pm, Enfield Town Hall, Scitico Room

Roll Call: Present: Emily Clifford, Donna Hamre, Joyce Bolanos, Danielle Brown, Chris Gann, Marilyn Cowles, Aaron Thomas, Aaron Marcavitch. Not Present: Jason Neeley, Nzima Hutchings

Special Guest: Aaron Marcavitch, Economic Development, shared 3 initiatives:

Thompsonville Revitalization effort, America 250 effort, and Economic Development standpoint to grow the Arts and Culture in Enfield.

Aaron will be visiting the Martin Brower company to discuss a “live, work, play concept” Aaron wants to be kept in the loop on events and can support with help finding grant money for the event if available. Some sponsorship options that are available are Mural walls. Thompsonville Revitalization started over the past 50 years. The project just received a million dollars from Joe Courney for street scaping installations. The design aspect includes benches and trashcans. There may be more funding coming from Town Council (pending).

There are multiple new developments in Thompsonville, named the Connecticut Municipal Development Authority. One thing that has been identified is the lack of color: flowers, color, buildings. There are funds that can be used for public improvements.

Planning to install brackets for Veteran’s banners for America 250.

Downtown Thompsonville-paint electric boxes, funds can pay stipend to artists. Digital print on vinyl covered boxes was suggested.

Façade program, \$50k has to be matched for businesses but funding is available for walls to be repointed, windows repaired, or murals.

So many towns already do the electric box program. Suggestion to build connections. We will revisit the meeting minutes for the conversations with Eversource and Adrian from Gallery 66 in New Britain.

Discussed community outreach with High School students to design on a canvas, Chris Gann and partner 9 painted boxes over the summer in Hamden, CT using student designs. Aaron mentioned the boxes behind Caronna’s market and near the waterfall that are visible. We can reach out to Artist Connects and encourage artists to apply. The funds are available right now, timeline for the budget this year, funds are expected in next year’s budget as well. Work on getting the contest started pending permissions from Eversource, Aaron can support with Eversource if needed.

We discussed fiberglass public art: Eagles or Thomas Abby Drums, will revisit the minutes for the updates on the fiberglass structures as well.

America’s 250th, is this year and a series of events are planned to include the Thomas Abby monument, chorus concert, library programs.

If anyone is involved in an organization that may have something to do with the concept of the American experiment including exhibits, art, music programs (there are no funds available) but Aaron can help promote the events on the website.

There will be a merchandise shop set up to sell T-Shirts.

July 4th will be the focus but there are events planned through November-December 2026.

A 1774 resolution was found by the Town Clerks office and will be on display in the office.

Aaron will try to submit a request from Economic Development for funds from Town Council if needed.

The Thomas Abby monument has support from the Town. The library programming is supported. ECAC funded jazz concerts for the upper elementary schools and there is money budgeted from ECAC set aside to possibly purchase banners and America 250 signage.

We are asked to consider other events, attend planned events, share on social media.

On Thursday, Aaron is holding an Economic Development Business Round Table event in the morning and evening. He will be discussing Thompsonville Revitalization, America 250, Art Squash, Enfield Connects program (that is addressing the loneliness epidemic), an initiative of the Enfield Together Coalition and Social Services.

Emily will share ECAC postcards to be handed out at the Round Table event.

Chairperson's Remarks

Welcome Chriss Gann!

Upcoming Events: 2/4 ECAC's Open Mic at Enfield Public Library 6pm

2/6-2/22 Opera House Players performance of CHESS at the Enfield Annex

2/9 Enfield Community Chorus rehearsals begin at 6:30pm

2/11 Enfield Public Library-Drum Circle with Carol LaLiberte (CT State Asnuntuck Professor) at 6:00pm.

2/13-No Cover Café for singer, songwriters, and musicians free event at Hazardville United Methodist Church.

2/13-2/14 Enfield Public Library, Red Poetry Event

Treasurer's Report-not present

Staff Liaison's Remarks-not present

Town Council Remarks- Aaron can share updates and events information at Town Council meetings next Monday.

Old Business

Summer concert series meeting last Wednesday to begin planning the 3rd year. Starting to solidify bands that are interested. A survey was sent out and it received 130 responses to the survey in 24 hours.

Planning on having Vin Cassotta do an American-based jazz concert.

America 250 will have a table/tent at the summer concert series to promote events.

Danielle asked a question about sponsorships and the alignment of music performance with what the company is interested in raising awareness for (for example sensory friendly events) There was a conversation about partnering with Enfield area businesses to get sponsorships for something that ties together if a commissioner has time to explore that connection.

Motion was made for 2 Community board signs for the summer concert series, 1 for the start of the concert season, and 2nd for the National Night out concert. \$200 each and their signs will be reuseable in future years. A motion was made for \$400 for 2 signs by Joyce, 2nd by Marilyn.

Future discussion will be for more basic signage to connect the Enfield Community with more events.

Art Squash Update:

Joyce shared the video on Facebook for this year's event.

Joyce shared the Townscape postcard draft and her vision for the event. Joyce will invite the EHS Jazz quartet to perform at the Art Squash event.

August Farms will host an artist soiree at the Enfield Historical Society on March 14 where artists will choose printed prints and be provided with 24x24 canvas for their art pieces. The Print and their painted canvas will be displayed side by side at the event. The art will be the artists interpretation, "freedom of expression" will be permitted as per the contract, artwork will be refused if it is offensive.

For the October Art Squash event, the Poet Laureate will perform in the center of the room, there will be a Town Square section set up at the center of the room with benches, light posts, popcorn and cotton candy machines.

Pizza and soda will be served as refreshments, and the event will have a DJ.

Joyce provided a budget for \$6426. The invoice will be submitted from the Enfield Historical Society, which includes a quote for the prints.

A call for artists will be sent out. The event will be promoted through Facebook Ads, press release to newspapers, flyers posted at grocery stores, and sent through email lists.

A subcommittee will be formed as Art Squash gets closer, once artists commit, Artists submit their work, pricing, etc., extra help will be needed closer to the event to finalize details and set up.

Support will be needed for event promotion. The opening reception will be Friday night; ECAC commission members will be encouraged to attend.

The total budget is \$6426. A motion was made by Marilyn, 2nd by Chris, all voted in favor of the full budget.

Red Poetry event: Feb 13 and Feb 14 Marilyn is available to help set up Friday 2/13, and can also help on 2/14, Joyce will be there on 2/14 as well. Emily will come in the afternoon. Donna is not able to attend.

A motion was made for Poet Laureate Stipend \$500 to Nzima Hutchings, Poet Laureate.
Motion was made by Joyce, 2nd by Chris, all voted in favor.
Emily is working with Chris Silver for the Thompsonville Food Tour; Joyce is interested in joining.

New Business

Women's Club Enfield Public Schools Art Show. A motion was made to sponsor the event for \$500 by Joyce, 2nd Marilyn. All voted in favor.

Bylaws-if anyone has any questions at future meetings we can discuss them.

Pearl Street Library art installation for high school seniors Abby Kokoszka, AJ Jones, and Nicole Powers. They will have a combined exhibition of their artwork at the Pearl Street Library from Feb 10-March 8th. An artist's reception, sponsored by the Friends of the Enfield Library, will be held at the Pearl Street Library on Thursday, February 12th from 5:30pm-7:00pm.

Miscellaneous-Joyce mentioned progress made over the past couple of years. One thing we are still missing is Dance. We have 2 Ballroom dance studios in town. Thinking about future events, anything for America 250, email ideas to Emily.

Adjournment-8:04pm