

HILLTOWN ARTS ALLIANCE / ANNUAL MEETING / WORTHINGTON TOWN HALL

MEETING DATE. May 15, 2023

PARTICIPANTS: Kathryn Jensen, Plainfield, painting
Jen Parrish-Hill, Worthington, jewelry
Kathy Ford, recording, Worthington, fiber art
Valerianna Claff, Chesterfield, painting
Michele Dodge, Worthington, arts enthusiast
MaryJane Carey, Chesterfield, quilting
Pleun Bouricius, Plainfield, photography/writing
Laura Bundesen, Huntington, fiber art
Ema Johnson, Middlefield, arts enthusiast
Barbara Konieczny, Cummington, painting
Greta Gnatek, Cummington, painting
Ellie Goudie-Averill, Chesterfield, dance/photography
Gloria Conwell, Worthington, fused glass
Nancy Doniger, Westhampton, printmaking
Eric Jacobson, Westhampton, sculpture
Olwen Dowling, North Chester, painting/printmaking
Madge Evers, Haydenville, cyanotype
Michael Melle, Plainfield, sculpture
Linda Melle, Plainfield, arts enthusiast

1. Kathy F. opened the meeting with a brief history of the organization and a reading of the original articles of organization for 'Arts Alive in the Hilltowns, Inc.', filed on July 19, 2010, as follows:

'Arts Alive in the Hilltowns, an association of artists and art enthusiasts, seeks to provide a unifying network to promote, educate, showcase, and support artistic and cultural endeavors, additionally, Arts Alive will encourage economic development through artistic and cultural tourism in the under-served hill towns of western Massachusetts. Out purposes are to:

- Foster networking opportunities for artists living and working in the hill towns.**
- Promote and maintain a website which informs the arts community and the general public of events, activities and educational opportunities.**
- Develop resources that support artistic, cultural and educational endeavors including, but not exclusively, fund raising, assisting with grant applications and sponsoring events that reflect the diversity of local artists.**
- Develop an arts center that can be utilized by the artists who live in our region. They may include, but are not limited to dancers, musicians, visual artists, and writers.**

Membership shall be open to any person interested in supporting the cultural and artistic life in the hilltowns. We are developing criteria for further membership, annual meeting times, dues, voting , etc. To this end, we are hosting a series of evening meetings open to interested hill town artists, educators, and arts supporters.

2. Arts Alive in the Hilltowns is currently doing business as "Hilltown Arts Alliance" (HAA)

3. 501(c)3 non-profit status for the organization is currently pending, requiring filing with the IRS.
4. Planning for Hilltown Open Studio Tour began in 2017, and in partnership with Hilltown Community Development, established a website for HAA and the first successful tour in 2018. Hilltown Open Studio Tour (HOST) has been successfully held in June of 2018 and 2019, and in October of 2021 and 2022.
5. A website designed has been hired and will work with Kathy F and Jen Parrish-Hill in making updates, revisions, and additions.
6. 'Hilltowns' currently included in geography of HOST include: Plainfield, Cummington, Worthington, Chesterfield, Huntington, Middlefield/Chester. Discussions are on-going as to how to include other communities such as Goshen, Williamsburg, and Westhampton depending on artist applications. Where the geographical footprint may be constricted for operational purposes for HOST, it does not need to be the same for HAA
7. Proposed growth for HAA moving forward to include:
 - evening meetings open to educators, artists, events, shows, salons, etc.
 - database of on-going arts opportunities, including juried shows, grants, and exhibitions, to be managed on website. Currently there is no one coordinating this effort.
8. Kathryn Jensen presented the current status of this year's HOST. Participant applications have been collected and decisions of selection committee will be made by June 1. Criteria considered for inclusion include geography, variety, documentation of original work, active working studio and/or demonstration that work is being made in the hilltowns, and a clear artist statement. For those without studios, consideration will be given for how to be a guest at a HOST studio, or at the community building in Cummington, which will again serve as the hub for visitors.
9. The vote was unanimous for proposed board of directors slate put forward:
 - Kathy Ford, President
 - Valerianna Claff, Vice President
 - Jen Parrish-Hill, Clerk
 - Kevin O'Connor, Treasurer
 - Mary Jane Carey, Community Director