

Chester Cultural Council

Chester, MA

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Chair: Muriel Hall

Members: Karen Marchetto, Melissa McAuliffe, Carol Hepworth, Charles Schoonmaker and Kim Fox

Previous meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

Meeting was called to order 6:09pm

- Review and approval of 11/18 meeting minutes

Charles Schoonmaker asked whether the minutes should include the final funding decisions for applicants. Muriel Hall stated that she and Carol Hepworth had compiled a list that could be inserted into the minutes. Kim Fox confirmed she will add the list of awardees to the minutes.

Melissa made a motion to approve the minutes contingent on an adjustment to include the list of approved and declined projects. Charles seconded and the motion passed.

- 2026 Grant Application Review

Muriel said that her and Carol went through the Cultural Council portal together to submit the notifications to both approved and declined projects. Approved applicants were notified of their award and were provided with required documentation, including the contract, W-9 form, and deadlines. Completed paperwork is due back from recipients by February 3, 2026.

- Grant Agreement Approval Information and Guidelines

The Council discussed current guidelines, specifically language that limits projects to those within Chester. Members agreed to revise the language to include neighboring towns, in order to avoid discouraging Chester-based projects that may not have been approved over projects outside of Chester. The Council will review and finalize updated guidelines at a future meeting. Revised guidelines must be submitted to the Massachusetts Cultural Council by August 2026 for the next funding cycle.

- Funding for 2026 Grants

Karen mentioned doing a mailing and informational packets asking for donations which prompted the need to have a treasurer role within the council to collect those donations. There was discussion about having a table at Chester on Track with pamphlets to inform residents about what the Cultural Council does and how the residents can get involved. There was also mention of the 250th July 4th celebration. Muriel mentioned creating a flyer to have in the Town Hall highlighting Chester's Cultural development over the years. Funds would have to come from the remaining budget or would be donated. Charles mentioned that could be something the Historical Society would be interested in partnering on.

There was discussion about having a Chester Cultural Council logo. Melissa had a great starting logo with mountains and could be revisited to then use on pamphlets. Also have surveys on the table for residents to take.

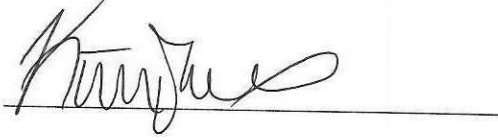
- CCC Community Input Survey

The survey would allow residents to tell the council what kinds of projects they would like to see funded. The survey would be available at the transfer station, library, town hall and could be handed out during Chester of Track.

Melissa made a motion to adjourn, Muriel seconded and all were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:09pm.

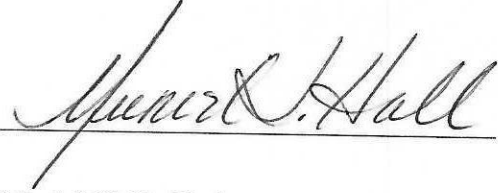
Minutes submitted by



Kim Fox

4/28/26

Date



Muriel Hall, Chair

4/28/2026

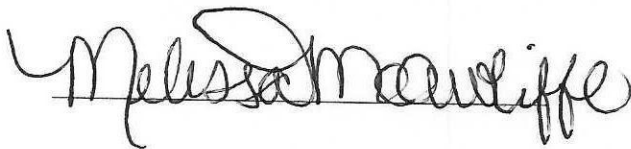
Date



Member

4/28/2026

Date



Member

4/28/2026

Date