



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
ARTS COUNCIL
JAKE WILSON
MAYOR

Somerville Arts Council Board Meeting Minutes
City Hall Annex conference room, 1st floor
50 Evergreen Ave., Somerville MA 02145

Wednesday, Oct 14, 2026 | 6:30 pm

In attendance: Heather Balchunas, Joe Burgio, Ada Ren-Mitchell, Emily Beattie, Ben Cuba, Sarah Beckmann, Christine Hayes, Rachel Strutt, Antonio Escobar, Becky Donner, Lena Warnke, Bess Paupeck, Sharon Lacey, Josh Breeden

1. Approve Agenda (5 min)
2. Community Check In (10 min)
 - a. Ben performing with band at many locations
 - b. Rachel's new fav artist Kerry James Wallace, at MoMA
 - c. Christine evening dinner with many artists in the field!
 - d. Heather vacation and explored art in Portugal, Central St and Vernon St studios will be doing a joint open studios early Dec
 - e. Ada Honkfest, Synthtember with librarian
 - f. Sharon went to a gallery show on Empathy, MIT FutureFest, MIT Museum Oceans, Diamond Factory, Somerville Theater anti-Nazi film festival
 - g. Josh Invisible staff anthropologist life. Saw Alewife hardcore Fiddlehead show, got lit panel together! Lots of cool writers in different disciplines. Collab with Sarah Beckmann on Somerwrites Nov 3rd! At Portico
 - h. Bess opened beautiful drawing show, will be away for a few months, went to a printmaker show in Northampton
 - i. Joe was at Civic Day tabling for SAC, Ada dropped by, suggested planning around climate change because it was a really windy day! Someone suggested a list of all the SAC events for the year. Someone wants to paint over Lowell St bridge. Parks and Rec wants to co-produce an event together (paint & sip), attended a theater production in Lowell where it was done in near total darkness. Joined an experimental art group in North Shore,

- j. Rachel: Maybe we should bring back the folded pamphlet of annual events by SAC
 - k. Joe: Maybe we could connect with folks in nearby towns who are also part of arts council board
 - l. Lena: panel selection done! Free music shows Wednesdays in Davis Square, led by folks who did Rat*****, photo show of local photographers through end of November at the museum, Central St Studios Paper-making workshop Oct 24th drop-in all day.
 - m. Antonio: went to Finding Common Ground show, 2 talks later in October of photographers who contributed to the exhibit! Somerville Museum folks as special guests at Intercambio! 69 applications, mostly native English speakers, had to ask some people to come back next year. Went to a concert before the noreaster at the Middle East (punk and marimba) with lots of jumping!
 - n. Emily: went to FutureFest and saw an interactive sound piece, premiering in a piece with a dance group from Ecuador, happening Friday and Saturday!
3. LCC Panel Recruitment Status (5 min)
 - a. Joe still needs to get the names together
 - b. Sharon needs to select another candidate, we don't have capacity to support people joining the panel meeting virtually
 4. Arts Director Recruitment Progress update (5 min)
 - a. We're excited!
 5. Onboarding: How can the board help the director? (5 min)
 - a. Support to meet everyone, tutorial on navigating City Hall, tiered system in this department would be a great way to support the new director
 - b. Provide a snapshot about community, over 6 months to a year
 6. Arts & Culture Division Board Calendar Review & Priorities (20 min)
 - a. Review of things the board does every month... to share with the new director, this is a separate document to be finalized
 7. Interim Director Update: Cultural Ambassador, Diamond Factory, Arts Town Hall (5 min)
 - a. Ajda music ambassador running a mixer at New Alliance
 - b. Finn is new literature ambassador
 - c. Section on website for resources gathered by
 - d. Diamond factory, months of work, ribbon cutting this Saturday 4-6pm
 - e. Arts Town Hall Tue Dec 8th Warehouse XI 6-8pm
 8. Upcoming Events (5 min)
 - a. There's going to be a winter events series Dec-Jan-Feb