

Brewer Arts and Culture Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: May 19, 2025

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Brewer City Hall Council Chambers

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ashlie Beals, covering for Tammy Lunn, at 6:01 PM.

II. Roll Call

Members Present:

Kathleen Kramer, Steve Wong, Mandy Ouellette-Clark, Susan Xirinachs, Michelle LaBree Daniels (City Council Liaison), Edner Pelkey Fago, Lee Ohmart, Soubanh Phanthay (City Council Liaison)

III. Old Business

Approval of Minutes:

- Motion to adopt the April 17 meeting minutes was made by Mandy Ouellette-Clark and seconded by Edner Pelkey Fago.
- The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements & Reminders:

- Absentee protocol reminder: Please notify Tammy via text at (207) 659-4701 or contact Ashlie Beals if you will be absent.
- A refresher video on Google Doc navigation for new members was mentioned.

Committee Membership & Secretary Role:

- Vincent was sworn in for the upcoming committee session.
- Discussion around filling the Secretary position. Michelle mentioned she has reached out to someone from Tuesday Forum and is awaiting a response.
- Suggestion to cast a wider net for additional members and consider establishing subcommittees.

- Discussion about expanding core membership and structure, especially ahead of Riverwalk.

IV. New Business

A. 2025/2026 Event Planning

1. Riverwalk Festival (Steve Wong)

- Volunteer sign-up sheets are 2–3 pages long.
- Susan requested Cultural Arts Committee members sign up to represent at the festival.
- Mandy confirmed she would sign up; other volunteers include Edner, Michelle (briefly), Ashlie, and Kathleen (12–1 PM).
- Volunteers can also contact Renee Doble at 989-7500 instead of signing up via Facebook.
- A Google Form will be created for feedback at the event. Michelle has acrylic holders for forms and can assist with printing.

2. Native American Heritage Event (Lee, Edner, Tammy)

- Edner and Lee will meet with Betsy Lindsey to discuss past efforts and partnerships.
- Initial outreach to the Penobscot Nation has not yielded results. Honorariums requested were not feasible under current budget constraints.
- Ronny Baer's typical fee is around \$800; discussions ongoing.

3. Wreaths Across America (Susan Xirinachs)

- A tractor-trailer is secured for the July 4 parade; volunteer walkers needed.
- WM stores in Bangor and Brewer may provide volunteers.
- A collection trailer is planned for June 28 at Brewer WM.

- Two letters drafted: one to teachers (ready), and one for donors (pending QR code update).
- Goal: 700+ wreaths. Volunteers will be needed for laying wreaths, with an emphasis on name recognition during the ceremony.
- Potential media involvement discussed (NESCO, Husson, Cole Museum).
- Planning for future: Student video project, slideshow, and improved mapping for cemeteries.
- Volunteer night training will be hosted at City Hall.

4. Oktoberfest Proposal (Mandy)

- Mandy will reach out to the liquor inspector, code enforcement, and the ice arena to discuss logistics for a 2026 event.

5. Paws on the Penobscot Proposal

- Discussion of venue limitations (e.g., dogs not allowed on the Riverwalk).
- Ashlie will check in with contacts in Old Town; Bucksport mentioned as a possible location.
- Soubahn to speak with Eric regarding Riverwalk pet restrictions.

6. Brewer Days (September 13, 2025)

- To follow the Riverwalk event.
- Intention to keep this year's event small and manageable.

B. Branding and Outreach

- Edner is working on logo design options and will present two at the next meeting.
- Color palette discussion: current city branding uses blues, greens, and orange.
- The committee's formal name is "Brewer Cultural Arts Committee."

Collaboration Ideas and Discussion:

- Ashlie proposed a “Porch Fest” style event, similar to Watertown, MA—featuring local musicians, karaoke for kids, food trucks, and pop-ups.
- Possibility of partnering with businesses for Riverwalk donations, especially for sound setup or gazebo additions.
- Idea of a canoe raffle or fundraiser was floated—further research needed into city policies on raffles and fundraising.
- Suggestion to investigate how the Land Trust operates for fundraising models.
- Proposal to create a dedicated Facebook page for the Committee.
- Discussion about city-funded mailings and support, including banner printing and volunteer support.

V. Public Comment

No additional public comments were recorded.

VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Susan Xirinachs and seconded by Lee Ohmart.

All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 PM.