

LOWELL COMMUNITY FESTIVAL AND EVENT PLANNERS RESOURCE GROUP



March 5, 2025 Meeting, 6-7:30 pm, LTC

A. Introductions

a. Attendance / Announcements:

- i. Chris Hayes, Gabby Davis - DIY Lowell
 - 1. Community Chill Night - March 21
 - 2. Points of Lights Cultural Celebration -
 - 3. DIY Lowell Ped Zone
 - 4. Acre Art & History Activation
 - 5. Let's Talk Lowell - March 25 & March 27 (every 4th Thursday through October)
- ii. Peter Crewe, Sophia Boucher - CASE
 - 1. Spring Volunteer Fair - April 5
 - 2. Busker Festival - May
 - 3. Greater Lowell Pride - June 7
 - 4. Lowell 4th of July - July 4
 - 5. Folk Festival
- iii. Laura Tavares - Mosaic Lowell
 - 1. Points of Light Cultural Celebration -
 - 2. Spring Volunteer Fair - April 5
 - 3. Volunteer Section on Mosaic Lowell website
 - 4. Experience Lowell - Folk Festival (calls coming out soon)
- iv. Gwen - Book Mobile Manager, Library
 - 1. Lowell Reads - Fall
 - 2. Book Mobile
- v. Bernie Z.(?) Founder of Ani Powell
 - 1. Ani Powell - photographer in 1800s (missed dates)
 - 2. 100 Posters Project with about 23 posters
 - 3. Posters of images taken from over 100 years ago
 - a. Library
 - b. City Hall - Dark Room (City Engineer's Office)
 - 4. World Premiere of Choral piece of song at UML (3/4/25)
 - 5. Two talks with Lowell Celebrates Kerouac at Library this Saturday
 - 6. Lowell Senior Center Talk
 - 7. Will collaborate with Kerouac events in fall
- vi. Skippy Son - Chaos Bookery

1. Member of Lowell Makes as well
2. Looking to become more engaged in area events
3. March 29th Skill Share with Lowell Makes
- vii. Adam McCune- LTC
- viii. Michael Roundy - Art Professor at UML
 1. Lowell Kinetic Sculpture Race - 8th Year
 - a. Teaming up with Mill City Grows this year
- ix. Brad Buitenhuis - Dutch Property Management, Lowell Litter Krewe
 1. Cone & Pickup removal with LKSR
 2. Points of Light
 3. Board of Folk Festival
 4. More hands for groups
 5. Will be planting this year as well as clean ups
- x. Andrea - Community Health Worker - MAPS
 1. Outreach and participation in some community events
 2. Goal is to connect with people
- xi. Lee Viliesis - Executive Director Lowell Folk Festival
 1. Open Studio Manager for Western Avenue Studios
 2. Lowell Folk Festival - 38th Year

B. Temperature Check

- a. Opportunity for group to express feelings regarding current affairs and federal landscape (notes were not taken during this unless specifically in relation to festivals and events)

C. Concerns / Challenges with Upcoming Festivals and Community Events

- a. Performers / Entertainment
 - i. Google Group
 1. Goal of group is for anyone to have access to requesting questions, or providing information to additional resources outside of the meeting
 2. Must opt-in to the Google Group
 3. Leadership will follow up with those in attendance regarding interest to join the Google Group
 - a. City of Lowell (Peter Crewe, Sophia Boucher, Gwen)
- b. Fundraising
 - i. Very intense challenges with fundraising
 - ii. Some grant funds might be limited within the next year
 - iii. Potential downstream
- c. Park Usage Concerns
 - i. Potential prohibited events due to current federal political administration
 - ii. Concerns around Pride events, events around water, women's suffrage, etc.
 - iii. All grant agreements are now under review again
 1. Sound of Work (park - looms, for example)
 2. Parks might not be able to participate in some events moving forward due to their limitations
 3. Grants might also have to be returned
 - iv. Folk Festival is integrated deeply within NPS systems
 1. More concerned about federal prohibition on DEI initiatives
 2. This event highlights multiculturalism

3. Relationship with park - we can sculpt our language to fit what DT wants; yet if we're in violation of whatever the Executive Order says then the Park won't be able to host us anymore
 4. Without park support, the event will not exist or have to be scaled back a lot
 5. If elements of mission are part of DEI then it would be a full withdrawal from park support and this doesn't include park staffing, monies and grant funding
 - a. Who makes the decisions about what events meet these specific requirements? Because locally we have support - yet federally there is not definition on what to anticipate
- v. LTC is tenant of NPS
1. Provides free speech and access
 2. What could be the repercussion for the LTC building and access to these public services
- d. Fear / Uncertainty
- i. Venue issues
 - ii. Funding issues
 - iii. Uncertainty on what events will be allowable or repercussions of various events
 - iv. Local park services are really committed to community; yet have no control over federal issue
 - v. City has no control over federal stances either
 - vi. Less federal monies next year
 - vii. Less giving already occurring
 - viii. What can we do to get more people engaged? And what kinds of actions are possible for our community members?
- e. Community Building - Resilience
- i. Most important aspect for all of us will be leaning into the community
 - ii. Turn to our allies and find ways to collaborate
 - iii. CASE will provide resources and connections, guidance
 - iv. Most events take place on state, local, or private lands
 - v. How do we all tap into private streams?
 - vi. Community partnerships can lead to private partners
 1. CBA provides yard games for LKSR for example
 2. Maintaining groups like this to help support each other and develop those significant connections
- f. Mosaic Lowell
- i. Mass Creative
 1. Arts Funding - Advocacy Week - April 30th
 - ii. Webinar - Recruiting Allies of the Legislature - April 10th
 - iii. Arts & Culture Folks are encouraged to become active in Lowell City Council and Other similar meetings locally and in the state
 - iv. Community Connections
 1. In times of crisis - communities come together
 2. It will be hard on the funding side due to the economic conditions
 3. How do you get more people engaged
 4. Marketing

- g. LTC
 - i. What can we do better here at LTC?
 - ii. Live translations publicized
 - iii. Classes and Workshops
 - iv. What are our underserved areas?
 - v. How can we help?
- h. MAPS
 - i. Lots of fear and uncertainty
 - ii. Works with LGBTQ community
 - iii. How will events include these diverse communities
 - iv. How do we be resilient
 - v. With English as the official language now - will translation services be allowed?
- D. Current Themes
 - a. How to become actively engaged
 - i. Join committees
 - ii. Volunteer
 - b. Connections
 - i. Look to Mosaic Lowell and others for building connections
 - ii. Engage to allow others to hear why arts and culture is so important
 - c. Diverse Populations
 - i. Regardless of federal government, we should continue
 - ii. Provide transportation for accessibility
 - iii. Provide translation services
 - iv. Will there be some "speakeasy" situations to continue this work and develop this work beyond
 - v. Despite federal institutions - we still need to be focused on DEI
 - vi. Might need to change some language, yet still need to stay focused
 - d. Advocacy
 - i. State Rep Templates
 - ii. City and State Advocacy Opportunities
 - iii. Engagement Locally
 - iv. Mosaic Lowell will add more advocacy information in notes
- E. Chaos Bookery - Literary Events (Seeks recommendations from group below)
 - a. We want to open up a business (what kind)
 - i. Project Pop Up - reach out to Ali Carter
 - ii. Laura - will send application to Skippy
 - iii. EForAll
 - iv. Speak to Laura at lala books
 - v. Lowell Plan - Downtown Business Association Meetings
 - vi. Lowell Teen Works
 - b. Events
 - i. Speak with Red Antler Apothecary for potential opportunity
 - ii. Dragonfly Cafe
 - 1. Untitled Open Mic
 - iii. Locate other similar events, businesses to collaborate with
 - iv. Koto Lowell
 - v. Brew'd

- vi. Old Court
- vii. Dramatically Incorrect
- viii. University or Community College
- ix. LTC
- x. Party Band Member - purchased building
- xi. Lazy Cat Cafe opens March 7

F. Resiliency Message

- a. Must share with other networks
- b. Must have a singular location for how to get engaged throughout the City (Mosaic Lowell might be that)
- c. Put together a list of regular volunteer events
- d. Share with our network the Spring Volunteer Fair
 - i. This is an opportunity to become engaged in local opportunities
- e. Lowell Plan Board Development / Diversity Initiative is so helpful
- f. Different volunteer methods is very good for different things
- g. "Find your thing. Find your joy." - Gwen mentioned this quote - yet not sure where the origins of quote is from
- h. "We represent a lot of joy for a lot of people and it's our job to help remind them of that; and that's what will get them out there to support. People want to escape from their stress. It doesn't mean we are apolitical, yet we provide a place for people to come together, share, and be a part of their community. That's the message... We are doing this because we love what we do and for other people's joy" - Lee Viliesis - nailed it
- i. Events
 - i. Marketing outside of Lowell
 - 1. Grassroots
 - a. Social media
 - b. Ads on T
 - c. Ads in smaller areas
 - d. Get into magazines and write-ups
 - e. Utilizing posters as part of the campaign promotions
 - f. Partnering with local organizations to share their successes as well
 - g. Tapping into other groups that have similar missions or focuses or alignment in passion
 - 2. Next Meeting will be focused on marketing efforts potentially
 - 3. Identifying areas of improvement for events
 - ii. Greater Merrimack Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau has moved back downtown and are trying to make their resources more accessible
 - 1. Next meeting perhaps bring in Brian Bradbury from GMVCVB

G. May Meeting or Requested Upcoming Topics

- a. May Speaker - Gabriel (etc)
- b. Marketing Dollars
 - i. When to decide to spend the money and where to have most impact
- c. Marketing efforts in and outside of Lowell
- d. How to tap into a new market
- e. Potential teamwork with surrounding towns to cross-promote and build network
- f. Weblinks

- i. How can we incorporate this or something similar to link to one another to build and boost each other's networks together
- g. Bring Brian Bradbury - GMVCVB in to speak (and encourage him to share with his other communities)

H. Closing

- a. Next meeting is in two months
- b. We want to hear what we can provide to make these meetings useful
- c. If you want to see something specific please contact DIY Lowell or Mosaic Lowell
- d. Koto Lowell - Lowell Litter Krewe Kick-Off Party 3/6/25
- e. Tescobar is a new salsa bar on Middle St.
 - i. Available for rentals
 - ii. 4000 sq feet
 - iii. 300 person capacity