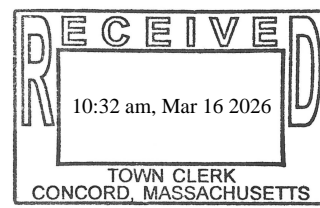


Concord250 Arts, Literature, and Music Subcommittee Meeting  
February 11, 2026



Present were: Di Clymer, Glenn Mitchell, Andrea Roessler, Tom Wilson, Grace Bellavance, Margot Kimball, Sara Seng, Carole Wayland, Leda Zimmelman, Richard Fahlander, Laurie Stefanov, Sandy Harper, Polly Meyer, Tammy Rose, Priscilla Stevens, Sherry Litwack, Zannah Noe, and by Zoom: Stewart Ikeda, Kelby Siddons, and Brian Thorsett.

Di Clymer called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. Sandy Harper moved and Tom Wilson seconded the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, which were accepted without amendment.

Di reviewed the projects currently receiving funding, including Minutemen in Wonderland, the Scout House's Liberty Flag project, Concord Women's Chorus recording of music, and Concord Conservatory of Music's Pianos on the Town. She noted that if we have any extra money after all projects have been funded, those funds will go into the kitty for the next town celebration of the American Revolution. She then asked for updates on ongoing projects.

Glenn Mitchell (Poetry Project) reported that the call to poets is completed. Three judges, Rob Monroe, Maria Madison, and Dorrie Carlin will award first and second prizes and three honorable mentions. On May 3 there will be an event for the poets who win the awards, including readings of their work. The current time, which may be adjusted, for this event is between 3 and 4:15 p.m. Sherry Litwack asked that there be information shared on the demographics of the submissions.

Stewart Ikeda (Freedom's Way) explained the Hidden Treasures Festival of Nature, Culture, and History, which will be a month-long celebration in May. He noted that \$350 mini grants are available from [freedomway.org/htpartner](https://freedomway.org/htpartner) for projects designed to showcase the hidden treasures of the 45 communities who are part of the Freedom's Way Natural Heritage Area (part of the National Park). Discussion followed to identify possibly projects in Concord and West Concord.

Margot Kimball (Art for All) updated the committee on plans for the Lantern Parade and Party, scheduled for March 7 at 6 p.m. It will start at the Alcott School, where there will be parking for participants. Walden Street will be shut down briefly to accommodate the parade and the party will take place at the Scout House. She demonstrated several lanterns that are being constructed and noted that there are still five free workshops scheduled for people to make their own. She is hoping to re-use the lanterns at other town celebrations, like Riverfest, over the course of the year. Music will be available at the Scout House for the party and Richard Fahlander is working on music for the parade.

Sara Seng (Concord Conservatory of Music) reported that “Pianos on the Town” will launch on May 30 with a concert, with all the pianos in one location. Six to eight pianos are already sourced, as has the contractor who will move them to their host locations for the month-long celebration beginning June 1. The pianos will be painted by local artists, and a call to artists will be launched over the next two weeks. CCM is partnering with Sing for Hope, who will handle the artists’ applications and technical matters. Currently the internal team at CCM is identifying and working out the details of host locations and they will put together pop-up programs throughout the month of June

Margot Kimball (Art for All) reported that there are three painted quilts in the Painted Quilts project, and they are up in West Concord: two in the alley at Debra’s Natural Gourmet and one near Brookside Square on Beharrell Street.

Zannah Noe related some of the ideas being discussed for creating a cohesive creative vision about the Block Party on April 20, including the Town Crier (who is lined up and whose figure is part of the Block Party’s logo), a fashion show of the costumes from the Patriots Day Parade, a speaker box, a drum line and fiddler, a capella singers, a band called Five O’Clock Shadow, a makers’ fair, and others. She noted that the planners are looking for a “mardi gras” feeling, emphasizing artists, artisans, and makers, and would be happy to use the lanterns from the Lantern Parade in the celebration. She mentioned that the deadline for makers to submit forms for events or exhibits and venues is March 2.

Tom Wilson (Wright Tavern) reported that an ongoing event called “History Without Frostbite” benefiting the Robbins House is being sponsored by Wright Tavern and offered that the Tavern will hold a beer garden for the Block Party and spaces for artisans to sell their work.

Kelby Siddons (Emerson Umbrella) reminded the committee that on March 5 there will be a student matinee for *To Kill a Mockingbird*, (running at the Umbrella from March 1-22), and students will be transported to the Umbrella by bus that day. She noted that there are ongoing gallery exhibitions open to the public.

Grace Bellavance (OARS) gave details on upcoming events, including a film festival from April 22-25 in conjunction with Earth Day, Beaver and Beer at the Wright Tavern, and a possible appearance by Newhouse Wildlife Rescue’s educational beaver, Nibi. Another possibility is a lantern parade on the river.

Brian Thorsett of Virginia Tech explained on Zoom that his quartet is looking for a venue for performance in Concord to showcase a composition called “Wreaths of Time,” by Ian Venables, a British composer, that has an American text based on “The Concord Hymn,” by Emerson, and a piece called, “Lincoln,” by David Conti. This would be a 45-minute concert,

and it has already been performed all over the world. Thorson mentioned that the quartet is very mobile: six people, a cello, two violins, a viola, and a trumpet, and since Virginia Tech considers these performances a research project, the time frame is flexible as the musicians may travel whenever and wherever they choose.

Priscilla Stevens reported that Di's idea for a "simple song" to update the Concord Hymn for our time is being created, and distributed a draft of the lyrics, asking the committee to help with one of the concepts in the work. Jaimee Joroff, known to most through her work at the Barrow Bookstore, is a Celtic harpist and will be arranging the music of a simple Scottish Gaelic song to fit the lyrics.

Di then asked that the committee be thinking about expanding its mission from Concord's 250<sup>th</sup> to America's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday, which is being celebrated this year beginning on July 4. Sandy Harper (Visitors' Center) asked if we can turn our perspective to "engage as Americans rather than just as Concordians: celebrating America... could just feel good." MA250 and America250 both have logos to use in advertising events. MA250 has a running calendar that already includes some of Concord's events, and more could be added. It was noted that on July 4, there will be traditional readings of the Declaration of Independence and Frederick Douglass at the Old North Bridge and the Robbins House. Sherry Litwack shared that the Town Archives has an original broadsheet copy of the Declaration (a reproduction of which is hanging in the library) in the Special Collections vault. This broadsheet was sent to Concord to be read to citizens in 1776, and similar copies were distributed throughout the colonies. Only a few are extant. There was discussion about how to highlight Concord's copy for the America250 celebration or as a Hidden Treasure. The Concord Museum has an early copy of the Declaration in their collection as well, which may be exhibited at the end of March.

Polly Meyer (Concord250 publications) asked that people submit images of their works and events for the town calendar she produces. Submissions should be sent to **Polly@Concord250**.

The next meeting will be on March 11, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. in the Goodwin Forum at the Concord Free Public Library.

Di then closed the meeting with a request that everyone keep thinking about how to celebrate America's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday on July 4, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Stevens

Alternate Clerk