
Some Suggestions for the Recruitment of Local Cultural Council Members:

- Keep a file of names—LCC recommendations, past applicants, people in the news, etc.
- Announce in the media using press releases, notices, and help wanted sections.
- Use public service announcements and explore talk show formats for radio and local access television.
- Hold an information meeting announced in the local media.
- Give notice at town meeting.
- Put notices in chamber of commerce and other civic and community newsletters.
- Use speaking engagements to inform a range of community agencies and groups such as: schools and PTOs; colleges; ethnic, religious, conservation, tourism, senior citizen, and culturally specific organizations, and agencies representing people with disabilities, etc.

Local Cultural Council Membership

As its partner at the local level, the MCC relies on local officials to constitute volunteer councils who can effectively carry out the goals of the program and thereby serve the local community in the best way possible.

Who makes appointments?

Members must be appointed by the top appointing official(s) in the community (i.e., the mayor, city manager, board of selectmen, or executive officer). All appointments must be recorded by the city or town clerk. A list of members must be sent to the MCC as changes are made in LCC membership.

What are the guidelines for appointing members?

Numbers: LCCs consist of at least five but no more than twenty-two *volunteer* members. Appointing more than the minimum required five members is advisable in order to achieve the diversity of knowledge, interests, and backgrounds that will translate to strong community representation. A larger body also helps to share the work load and ensures that councils can still function effectively in case of absences or vacancies.

Length of term and term limits: The term of membership for a council member is three years. Members can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms, or a total of six years. They must remain off the council for a one-year interval before serving additional terms. Each council must annually elect a chair, secretary, and treasurer. In addition, the terms of individual council members should be staggered; there should never be 100 percent turnover of members in a single year unless the MCC determines otherwise, as provided in 962 CMR 2.10. Local councils may also elect to designate former officers or members as nonvoting, *ex officio* council members to ensure continuity.

What qualifications should the appointing authority look for in identifying new LCC members?

Through the appointment of diverse, qualified, and committed citizens, the local authority ensures that the community has fair access to public funds through its LCC. Council members should bring:

Relevant knowledge and interests: Artists, humanists, interpretive scientists, educators (see page 6 for definitions);

Diversity: Different racial, ethnic, economic perspectives and backgrounds, differing abilities, balance of men and women and age groups; and

Ability to commit time: Prospective members should be clearly informed about the amount of time they must commit to participate fully in the grant review process and be willing to be involved in other duties particular to the LCC's work.

Some particular membership guidelines follow:

- If two or more towns wish to form a regional council, there must be at least one representative appointed from each community in the consortium.

- State guidelines do not require that LCC members live in the town on whose council they serve. Some cities and towns, however, choose to have local residency requirements.

How can the LCC help find new members?

Ultimately the authority is with the local official to make appointments; however, local officials often collaborate with the LCC to help identify and recruit prospective new members. Conferring with the LCC about individuals under consideration before making appointments ensures that new members complement the diversity and balance of current council members.

Candidates for LCCs should understand fully what their LCC is and does, and what is expected of members throughout the year. It is advisable for LCCs to meet with prospective candidates to discuss the LCC and explain the responsibilities of membership. Attending a meeting of the LCC is one good way to become familiar.

Can members be appointed to the LCC who may have a conflict of interest during the grantmaking process?

An LCC member is allowed by state guidelines to be affiliated with an organization applying for funds. However, there is a requirement for members to disclose potential conflicts. New and returning members should be asked to outline affiliations or activities with respect to the cultural life in the community and any potential conflicts on a municipal disclosure form.

Members are considered “special municipal employees” and are subject to the provisions of the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law, M.G.L. 268A. Members of LCCs must avoid real and apparent conflicts between their private interests and public council duties. Elected public officials cannot serve as council members according to 962 CMR 2.04.

Grantmaking: The member may not participate in the review of or decision about an application in which he or she has a personal financial stake, or in matters affecting the financial interests of others with whom s/he is closely related.

The Magic of First Night Captured in Boston’s Magnificent Ice Sculptures

First Night Celebrations, now common in cities throughout the nation, began in Boston over twenty years ago. As a family oriented, alcohol-free celebration of the creativity and cultural diversity of Boston’s citizenry, First Night Boston is a unique means of building community by bringing citizens from Boston’s neighborhoods together with out-of-town visitors, in the heart of the city, where all can ring in the New Year together. With the help of LCC funding, many communities throughout Massachusetts are now sponsoring their own First Night celebrations.



Photo: Mary Kocol

Community Pride Walkway Children's Art Monument

LCC funding enabled the community of Watertown to begin planning and fundraising activities for the creation of the Community Pride Walkway, under the direction of public artist, "Sidewalk Sam." Creation of the concrete walkway will involve citizens, business leaders, and educators, and enable thousands of Watertown's children to participate. The program will create a permanent monument — an artistic concrete walkway in a public space, expressing the pride of Watertown residents in their community and conveying the spirit of their children well into the next century.

The Community Pride Walkway will take shape as each child creates a personal artwork in a colored "patio block" of wet concrete.



Grant receipt: Each LCC may make its own rules regarding funding council members. If an LCC member might derive financial gain from a grant—for example, an artist-member of the LCC applies for funds to conduct a residency at a community organization—the member is required to apply for an interest exemption. It must be approved by and voted on by the local legislative body and then certified by the town clerk. Ideally, this action should be completed before submitting an application. Action must be completed before a vote is taken on the application.

If there are questions about conflict of interest, the MCC's staff is a resource, as is the city or town counsel. If more than one-third of an LCC's members would have to refrain from voting on a particular application, contact the MCC.

Is there any legal mechanism for removing an LCC member before his/her term expires?

Generally, this is a matter for local resolution. The local appointing authority may remove a member before the expiration of a term as provided in 962 CMR 2.10. Municipal policies and procedures for appointed town committees should also be consulted. Under extraordinary circumstances, when, for example, a council member is violating policy or procedure, MCC staff should be called to advise. If an LCC appears unable to comply not only with its duties but also with corrective actions specified by the MCC, then the MCC may determine that a partial or complete change in the membership of the LCC may be in order. In extraordinary cases, the MCC may authorize the local appointing authority to remove a member from the LCC and appoint a new member. When the MCC finds an LCC has not adequately complied with its duties, the MCC may suspend all or a part of MCC funding for that LCC.