

Cultural Connections Committee Minutes

Location: City Hall Auditorium

Date/ Time: 9/30/2026 12:00-1:00PM

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:00PM by Chair Iraida Muñoz.

2. Roll Call and Introductions

Committee members, community partners, and guests introduced themselves.

Because there was not a quorum, approval of the previous meeting minutes was postponed until the next meeting.

3. Attendance- 13 people

- Members in Attendance (In-Person): 7
Iraida Muñoz, Xiannglan Zhu, Meta Vornehm, Donna Marceau, Elizabeth Berry, Julia Stryzhenko, Joslyn Kuchinski
- Non-Members in Attendance (In-Person): 3
Kerry Miller, Levent Akinci, Eric Drouart
- Attending via Teams: 3
Tori Markiewicz, Wilinson Dominguez, David Holt

4. Meeting Schedule and Committee Business

- The committee was reminded that the final meeting of the year will be held on October 21, 2026, rather than the last Wednesday of the month.
- The October meeting will include discussion of available funds and other important committee business.
- The committee attempted to establish a quorum to approve previous meeting minutes, but there were not enough members present.
- Approval of the July and August meeting minutes was therefore postponed until a future meeting.

5. Multicultural Festival Update

- The Multicultural Festival is scheduled for Saturday, October 3.
- Committee members were asked to continue supporting the event and assist with final preparations.
- Because the festival date was changed, some previously confirmed volunteers, performers, food vendors, sponsors, and community-table participants are no longer available.

Volunteers

- Meta is serving as the volunteer coordinator.
- A SignUpGenius link has been distributed for available volunteer roles.
- Approximately 10–14 volunteers are expected to assist with setup.
- Additional volunteers are still needed during the festival for:
 - Helping performers, sponsors, and community-table participants unload and move materials
 - Assisting the DJ and performers
 - Helping performers get on and off the stage
 - Supporting the children's activity table
 - Assisting with the flag scavenger hunt
 - Handing out prizes and activity materials
- Committee members were encouraged to share the volunteer sign-up information with their networks.

Performers

- Approximately 75% of the originally scheduled performers remain available for the rescheduled festival.
- The performance lineup is considered to be in relatively good shape.

Food Vendors

- Food remains the biggest concern for the event.
- Approximately 25% of the originally planned food vendors were retained.
- Soul Sisters remains involved and plans to have its crew at the festival.
- The committee is actively seeking additional food trucks, restaurants, or other food options.
- Members were asked to suggest restaurants or vendors that might be able to participate.
- Possible alternatives discussed included:
 - Asking local restaurants to participate
 - Seeking exceptions or expedited approval from Environmental Health
 - Purchasing food from local restaurants
 - Having a sponsor provide or distribute food
- The committee emphasized that additional food options are urgently needed before Saturday.

Community Tables and Sponsors

- Approximately 75% of community-table participants remain available.
- Approximately 50% of sponsors were retained after the date change.
- Committee members were encouraged to continue promoting the event because the new date competes with other events taking place on October 3.

- Additional outreach is particularly important because the festival is being held at a new location.

Water and Festival Supplies

- Bottled water still needs to be obtained.
- Hannaford was suggested as a possible source for donated water.
- Committee members who have time before the festival were encouraged to help request donations or assist with remaining tasks.

6. Community Transportation Month

- October was recognized as Community Transportation Month.
- The committee discussed encouraging community members to use public transportation, bike transportation, and other alternative transportation options.
- Two guest presentations were provided on transportation resources available in Nashua.

7. Rideable Nashua Bike Share Presentation

Mr. Akinci from the City of Nashua Sustainability Department presented an overview of the Rideable Nashua bike-share pilot program.

Program Overview

- Rideable Nashua is a bike-share pilot operated in partnership with Drop Mobility.
- The 2026 pilot launched with 50 electric pedal-assist bicycles.
- The program began in June and is currently scheduled to operate through the end of October.
- The bikes are pedal-assist rather than throttle-operated and provide electric assistance while the rider pedals.
- Electric assistance stops at approximately 20 mph.

Hub System

- The system uses virtual hubs rather than traditional physical docking stations.
- Users are encouraged to return bicycles to designated hubs.
- Bikes can be parked outside a hub for an additional \$1.50 fee.
- The original service area focused mainly on downtown Nashua but has since expanded to all of Nashua.
- New hubs have been added, including locations near Mine Falls Park, Lincoln Park, the YMCA, and Rivier University.

Pricing and Usage

- The standard cost is \$1.50 to unlock a bike plus \$0.25 per minute.
- Financial-hardship options may be available directly through Drop Mobility.

- The pilot has averaged approximately 250 rides per month, or about eight rides per day.
- No accidents, theft, or vandalism had been reported at the time of the meeting.
- Only a small number of parking complaints had been received.

Festival Promotion

- Rideable Nashua will participate in the Multicultural Festival.
- Test rides and information about the program are expected to be available.
- Festival attendees can use the promo code “FESTIVAL” for two free 30-minute rides on the day of the festival.

Accessibility and Future Plans

- The program website and support materials are available in Spanish.
- Bike-location and usage data will help the City determine where future hubs should be located.
- If the pilot continues successfully, the bikes are expected to return in April 2027.

8. Nashua Transit System Presentation

Ms. Miller from the Nashua Transit System provided an overview of local public transportation services.

Transit Services

- Nashua Transit System provides:
 - Fixed-route city bus service
 - ADA paratransit
 - Demand-response transportation
- The city bus system includes more than 350 stops and 12 routes.
- The Transit Center, located behind City Hall, serves as the central transfer point for city bus routes.
- Riders can pay using cash, passes, or the Token Transit app.

Accessibility and Language Services

- Transit materials are available in English and Spanish.
- Additional language translations can be provided upon request.
- Telephone interpretation services are available for riders who speak other languages.
- Transit drivers have tablets equipped with Google Translate to help communicate with passengers.
- All transit vehicles are accessible, including ramps and wheelchair securement areas.

Real-Time Bus Information

- Riders can now use the Transit app to view real-time bus information.

- Google Maps also provides real-time transit information.
- Riders are encouraged to arrive early because estimated arrival times may change because of traffic, weather, or other conditions.
- Riders can also sign up for transit alerts through the City website.

Travel Training

- Free travel training is available to help individuals learn how to use the city bus system.
- Training can include meeting a rider at home or at the Transit Center and traveling together on a bus route.
- The goal is to help riders become comfortable and confident using public transit independently.

Fares and Regional Connections

- Riders age 60 and older may qualify for a senior ID card that allows them to ride the bus for free.
- Nashua Transit also connects with regional transportation systems.
- Manchester Transit provides service to the Nashua Transit Center.
- Route 2 connects riders with the Exit 8 Park and Ride, where passengers can connect with Boston Express service.

Community Transportation Month Activities

- Nashua Transit plans to offer a free ride day during the week of October 19.
- Both city bus and paratransit rides will be free on that day.
- Passenger surveys and other promotional activities are also planned.
- Additional statewide transportation resources mentioned included Commute Smart and Keeping NH Moving.

9. Announcements

- A community kindness initiative reported more than 400 acts of kindness in the Nashua area and more than 1,500 throughout southern New Hampshire and nearby Massachusetts.
- Committee members were again encouraged to help promote the Multicultural Festival and fill remaining volunteer positions.

10. Adjournment

The next committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, Oct 21, 2026.