



MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 15, 2021, 7:00 P.M.
(Via Zoom)

PRESENT: Grace Shackney, Judy Lee, Lynne Mueller, Mark Harris, John Sharp, Carolyn Hamming, Luciana Mallozzi, Bob Diken, Nora Pagel, Deb Kmetz Cody Grabbe, Meg Loftus, Charu Bakshi, Patricia Freis Ackerson.

WELCOME:

Co-chair Bob Diken opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m. with a welcome to all and an acknowledgement of the Sunshine Open Meeting practice.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 18, 2021:

Bob asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Arts Council's October 18th meeting. John Sharp so moved. The motion was seconded by Deb Kmetz and approved by all members present.

FINANCIAL/BUSINESS REPORT:

- 2021 Budget – a report prepared by Nancy Goldberg showed that all Arts Council funds for 2021 have been spent. We have no reserve to carry over.
- 2022 Preliminary Budget: Our projected budget for 2022 as discussed at our October meeting includes expenses of \$20,850; projected income of \$15,700; leaving \$5,150 to raise from sponsorships, donations and ticket sales.
- 2022 Slate of Officers discussion – Grace Shackney reported we will be electing new officers at our reorganization meeting in January. Several people will be stepping down including Steve Reuter and Nora Pagel. As was previously announced, Bob Diken will be stepping down a co-chair and off the Arts Council to help run The Friends of the Metuchen Arts Council. Grace and those members present expressed their thanks to Bob for his service of the past several year in extending our reach through collaborations with other towns, the expansion of jazz and visual arts in our programming, and especially for the creation of the Friends of the Metuchen Arts Council. Grace also thanked Nora Pagel for her dedicated help with social media over the course of her several terms, and Steve Reuter for his ability to bring exciting indie music to our programming. We will continue to partner with Steve and the BIL in that regard. Grace asked that nominations for co-chair, vice chair and secretary be sent to her by the first of January.
- FOMAC Update – Bob Diken reported that the FOMAC board is moving forward with a re-launch of the organization. The board is buying an operations system to streamline fundraising and which also includes organizational coaching in the package. The board is looking to expand its membership. Judy Lee asked those present to forward any recommendations for the FOMAC board to Bob Diken. Bob reported that FOMAC did not get the grant we applied for from Provident Bank. In the coming year FOMAC will reapply to Provident as well as the Manasquan Bank. There will be a push for FOMAC membership as well as individual donations. Judy asked those present to forward leads to Bob.

2022 PROGRAMING:

The following programs were submitted to date:

- Windows of Understanding Public Art Project – Bob and Grace announced that Berkshire Hathaway will sponsor the four artists set for the Metuchen exhibition at \$250 per artist in addition to exhibiting the work in their windows on Middlesex Avenue. (Budget amount reduced to \$500 for signage/marketing)
- ArtCycle Greenway Gallery – Plans are pending the approval of our Middlesex County grant application (\$1,800 – our match).
- Rotunda Gallery – Besides the rotating exhibits in the gallery, Joe Castranova is working to coordinate events with the other Metuchen Galleries, starting with an outdoor art fair on December 4th. (\$500 for reception refreshments/expenses).
- Concerts:
 - Chamber Music concert (\$1,000)

- Jazz Fest (\$6,000)
- Cornerstone Jazz Series at the Schoolhouse (pending pandemic restrictions)
- Indie Summer Music Concert at the Plaza (\$1,500)
- Rise Up Chorus June concert of original music (\$350)

PROGRAM UPDATES/REPORTS:

- Teen Art Council – Joe Castranova reported that he met with Initha and has arranged for the Teen Arts Council’s volunteer support for the Metuchen Gallery initiative.
- The Rhino Project – Nora Pagel reported that the land on which the Rhino sculpture presently sits is scheduled for demolition before the end of the year. The Borough has refused to accept it’s transfer to Borough property for insurance reasons. We also discovered from an interview with one of the artists who created it, that is may not be structurally sound to move. We are, therefore, not taking the Rhino on as a public art project.
- Jazz Education Series – Lynne Mueller reported that the last program in the series is scheduled for Sunday, November 11th at 3:00 p.m. about the music of Ellington and Strayhorn. It can be viewed on the NJ Jazz Society’s U Tube channel and via our website.

MDA UPDATES:

Lynne Mueller reported the following:

- The restaurant tents on New Street are down for good. The MDA is looking for opportunities to share or sell the tents. Each tent costs \$17,000. They are being stored at the Sports Plex.
- The MDA is looking for volunteers to help Bernie Hetzel put up the holiday lights and greens in downtown Metuchen. Prep work starts week of November 15. Installation planned for the weekend of November 20th.
- Public Art – Rutgers Mason Gross art students are working on developing the mural that will go on Angie’s Café.
- Up-coming MDA events include: Small Business Saturday (Nov. 27); Winter Bazaar (Dec. 4); Christmas Caroling with Rise Up Chorus on Main Street (Dec. 11, 1:00-3:00 p.m.); T’was the Night before Christmas (Dec. 18); New Year’s Eve Party on the Town Plaza (Dec. 31).

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Arts Council Holiday Party Friday, December 10th at the home of Carolyn Hamming. Watch for invitation.
- Mignolo Dance presentation of *Visitor Parking*, December 10-11 at the Gardenship Art in Kearny, NJ. Tickets available on their website.

All business being completed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next Arts Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 18, 2022.

Submitted by,

Grace Shackney, Secretary
Metuchen Arts Council