



MEETING MINUTES
September 19, 2022
At the Metuchen Senior Center

PRESENT: Grace Shackney, Joel Branch, Mark Harris, Lisa Hyman, Deb Kmetz, Meg Loftus Suchan, Lynne Mueller, Mara Rosencrown, Carmen Balentine, Dan Rosencrown, Nunzio Moudatsos

Meeting started at 7:40pm.

Grace acknowledges the Sunshine Law. Meg Loftus Suchan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from September 19th Arts Council meeting. Mark Harris so moved. The motion was seconded by Nunzio Moudatsos and approved by all present.

FINANCIAL/BUSINESS REPORT: Grace Shackney - FOMA (Friends of Metuchen Arts)

Bob Diken was unable to join the meeting but Grace Shackney spoke on his behalf, all projects continue to move along smoothly and Bob Diken will give a more in depth talk at the next meeting.

PROGRAM DISCUSSION

- Grace Shackney confirmed that the Middlesex County grant for Jazz fest next year was submitted and read through the preliminary 2023 Budget.
- Lisa Hyman spoke about a possible mural on the side of the Green Drop building on the corner of Lake and Amboy Avenues. The owner of the building expressed interest so Lisa is going to gather a committee together as a next step.

EVENT REPORTS:

- There were a number of successful events this summer which included: Jazz Night (July 20th) in the Parlor at Hailey's, Community Chamber Music Concert (July 28) was held at the Library. Metuchen Rocks! concert (September 3) with the Lonesome Pines on the Plaza. Jazz Fest (September 10) featuring Bobby Sanabria and Nonet Ascension was also held on the plaza.

Some upcoming events include:

- October 16: Cornerstone Jazz at the Library featuring Latin jazz guitarist Alejandro Ataucusi and his band, Forbidden Tropics at 2pm.

Other Reports:

ArtCycle Outdoor Greenway Gallery Progress: Mara Rosencrown reported that things are continuing to move forward. The locations for the signs have been selected and plans are moving forward for the install. Meg Loftus Suchan reported that the schools should have their pieces ready by early October.

Rotunda Gallery Report: Grace Shackney and Mark Harris discussed the need to find a new curator for when Joe Castronova's tenure is over. There was talk about how best to help support the space and the volunteers we may need to help keep it going smoothly.

MDA Report: Lynne Mueller reported:

1. **MDA Executive Director Isaac Kremer** has turned in his resignation effective September 30, 2022. Isaac will receive special recognition at the Borough Council meeting on September 27 and possibly at an MDA gathering on September 29. MDA has begun a search for the next Executive Director and is developing transition plans. Expect more news in October.
2. **MDA Strategic Plan** is being updated. As part of this, The Downtown NJ non profit is doing a survey of Metuchen businesses and towns people. As of the 9/9/22 MDA meeting, over 71 businesses have filled out the business survey. MDA is still requesting input from community members via Downtown Metuchen newsletter – survey monkey link. Grace Shackney, Judy Lee, Bob Diken and Lynne Mueller will be partaking in a special zoom meeting on 9/27/22 with outside planner to provide MAC / FOMA perspectives for the MDA Strategic Plan.
3. **Cannabis business in the Borough.** The Borough has decided that Cannabis store will be allowed but not on Main Street.
4. **Imagination Alley--Maintenance** MDA Board members Jenny Lai and Diana Callinan, have taken on the responsibility of organizing the weekly cleaning of Imagination Alley. Dianne and Jen created a Sign Up Genius Page where anyone can sign up to help clean Imagination Alley:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C4EAAA92EA3F85-imagination>
5. **Upcoming Events/Promotions**
 - a. September 17, 2023 Downtown Rumble Pro Wrestling
 - b. September 29 tentative – MDA Farewell for Isaac Kremer at Joanne’s Creative Twist Party Space
 - c. October 29 Haunted Downtown
 - d. November 26 – Small Business Saturday

Community Events: The Metuchen Milers running group will hold a meet and greet sometime before Thanksgiving or early December.

Adjournment: 8:58pm

Submitted by,

Meg Loftus Suchan, Secretary