



MEETING MINUTES

January 23, 2023
At the Metuchen Senior Center

PRESENT: Carmen Balentine, Lenore Boyarin, Joel Branch, Kat Davis, Bob Diken, Carolyn Hamming, Mark Harris, Deborah Kmetz, Catherine LaMoreaux, Meg Loftus Suchan, Chuck Lopez, Lynne Mueller, Rick Perrine, Mara Rosencrown, Grace Shackney, John Sharp, Judy Yin-Chi Lee, Shea Zephir

CALL TO ORDER: Co Chair Judy Lee called the meeting to order at 7:39pm. She acknowledged the Sunshine Law

Judy Lee welcomed the new Arts Council members and asked that each person present take a moment to introduce themselves.

Meg Loftus Suchan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November meeting. Grace Shackney so moved and the motion was seconded by Deb Kmetz and approved by all present.

A vote was held on the slate of officers for 2023 and all of the nominees were approved.

-Co Chairs: Judy Lee & Grace Shackney

-Vice Chair: Mark Harris

-Recording Secretary: Meg Loftus

Meg Loftus Suchan was confirmed as MDA Board Liaison

FINANCIAL / BUSINESS REPORTS:

- Friends of Metuchen Arts Council (FOMA): Bob Diken explained his role and FOMAC's relationship to MAC. He explained they have raised a total of \$30,848 to date.
- 2023 Budge Review: Grace Shackney outlined the planned spending which shows \$6,250 that still needs to be raised. The Budget was then formally approved by all present after a motion by Mark Harris which was seconded by Chuck Lopez.

2023 PROGRAM REVIEW:

- Grace Shackney shared the preliminary calendar and encouraged everyone present to join a committee. Grace distributed a committee sign up form to each person. She highlighted the need for help with the Rotunda Gallery.

REPORTS:

- Windows of Understanding: Grace Shackney and Bob Diken spoke about their ongoing work on this Public Art Project. They asked we note March 11th in our calendars for the open house at Berkshire Hathaway and directed all to visit: www.windowsofunderstanding.org
- Upcoming Jazz Programing: Lynne Mueller went over the calendar and specifically pointed out the screening of "A Great Day in Harlem", January 29th at the Library and noted a Valentines Day special

event at the Parlor at Hailey's, February 14th, 7-9pm where the Anderson Brothers Quartet will play. Tickets are available on Eventbrite.

- MDA Report: Lynne Mueller gave a detailed report from the last MDA meeting. Some of the highlights were:
 1. MDA Executive Board as of Jan 13, 2023 consists of Bobbie Theivakumaran, Chairman; Gary Tilbor, Vice President; Jason Delia (also Borough Council President), Secretary; Jay Muldoon continues as Borough representative.
 2. Dawn Mackey Executive Director Report
 - a. AARP Livable Communities Grant "Conversation Corner" at Center and New Streets. Benches and planters are in place. Artistic mosaic table will be installed.
 - b. Refreshment of Strategic Plan. Draft has been received from consultants and submitted to Executive Board.
 - c. American Girl Kavi Doll with Metuchen as her "home town" will bring huge recognition to Metuchen. Includes a story in book form about the doll. It will be available in more than 60 stores, publicity on CNN, Yahoo. Provides huge town marketing opportunity.
 - d. NJ Best Destination in 2024. Metuchen is a finalist and will be watched in 2023 to see what we as a town are doing.
 - e. Annual Meeting – Jan 15, 7:30 to 8:30 was held at Suite Metuchen.
 3. Metuchen Borough Update: Jason Delia reported that Cannabis locations are still being finalized.
 4. Upcoming MDA events:
 - a. Lunar New Year Jan 28, 1 PM to 2 PM Parade & events on Plaza.
 - b. Atlantic Medical will open at Pearl and New Streets (previously CVS) "Small town" approach is their specialty. It will be primary care not urgent care -about 40 employees.
 - c. Kings Studio (Pearl Street) in March plans a special event in honor of Women's History Month.
 - d. Restaurant Week: Week of February 20th.
- MDA Public Art Report: None as Charu Bakshi was unable to attend the meeting.
- Rotunda Gallery Report: None as Joe Castronova was unable to attend the meeting but it was further discussed that a committee is needed to assist and that a new hanging system is being investigated. If anyone has any suggestions, they are encouraged to reach out to the Executive Board of the MAC.

New Business:

Deb Kmetz passed around a flyer detailing the opening of Emerging, the new exhibit at the Nails in the Wall Gallery at St. Luke's Church. The opening reception is 2/11/23 2-4pm, the exhibit will run through May 18th. For more information please visit: exhibits@stlukesmetuchen.org

All business being concluded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34pm. The next Arts Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 27th at 7:30pm.

Submitted by,

Meg Loftus Suchan, Secretary