



MEETING MINUTES
October 16th 2023 7:30pm
At the Metuchen Senior Center

Members Present: Danny Adlerman, Carmen Balentine, Joel Branch, Robert Diken, Adam Fensterheim, Carolyn Hamming, Mark Harris, Deborah Kmetz, Meg Loftus Suchan, Nunzio Moudatsos, Lynne Mueller, Wendy Richards, John Sharp, Mickey Waring, Jessica Rios

CALL TO ORDER: Co-Chair Judy Lee called the meeting to order at 7:36pm and acknowledged the Sunshine law.

Meg Loftus Suchan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous month. Chuck Lopez made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mark Harris.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION:

Meg Loftus Suchan presented her findings from an open call for ideas on Facebook. She passed around two documents for everyone to take a look at and the group discussed the different options. Joel Branch stressed the importance of making sure all members of the community have a place to bring their art and Bob Diken commented we need to make sure that a member of MAC is available to be a liaison for these projects to make sure they're handled appropriately. Bob Diken also discussed the Plein Air event and how this year really is a pilot program. If it is well received they will look into how it can grow organically. In further discussions about programming, Joel Branch mentioned AI art and Carmen Balentine mentioned it might be interesting to have a panel discussion about the implications of AI in the art community. Lastly, Bob Diken stressed the importance of making sure that all of the ideas discussed are properly vetted.

Some ideas for programming that were discussed at our last meeting and were met with enthusiasm this week were:

- Windows of Understanding (Jan – April)
- Chalk Art Event (Spring Fair in May)
- Mignolo Dance Event (May 19th on Plaza)
- High School DJ Event (June 21 or 28 on Plaza)
- Summer Concert Series
- Middlesex County Jazz Fest (September 25-29)
- Electrical Box Murals

CURRENT PROGRAMS/REPORTS:

- Middlesex County Jazz Festival: Lynne Mueller shared information about the success of the event. She estimated about 750 people in attendance. She and Bob Diken talked about the positive response they were given by attendees and how happy the vendors were. Meg Loftus commented on how this was a test run for the town on how to use that space. Bob said there

was a professional photographer so we'll be able to make a composite that we can use for our grant application for next year. Bob also mentioned the hope to add Carteret to the list of towns involved for next year. Lastly, Lynne added that she is going to compile the information that was gathered from all of the questionnaires that were handed out.

- Faculty Chamber Music Concert: Judy Lee said they haven't been able to move it forward much due to faculty availability and they are thinking to postpone until next year.. They are now looking at perhaps doing a choral concert instead of instrumental. She said they are working on timing and the location still TBD.
- Painting-Out Event at Farmers Market Report–Bob Diken said they are aiming to hold it Nov 4th. There are 5 artists participating. The plan is to keep it small because there isn't a lot of space at the farmers market and they want a chance to gauge enthusiasm.
- Cornerstone Jazz at the Library: Lynne Mueller said this event will be October 22 with James Austin Jr Quartet, to be held at the library at 2pm for free. This is the last in the series.
- FOMA: Bob Diken said the Gala Party date has been changed to March 2nd 2024 at the Metuchen Golf and Country Club. He said FOMA received an offer from Hoboken Farms to do a fund raiser. They offered to share a piece of the revenue and promised a minimum of \$350, which they are earmarking to put towards one of the artists stipends for windows of understanding under the food equity theme. The date for this will be Nov 4th .
- MDA REPORT: Meg Loftus commented on the great response from Jazz Fest from the MDA. 10/28 will be the Haunted Downtown, Sat November 25th (after Black Friday), is shop small Saturday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Judy Lee talked about our need for a social media person. Bob Diken said he'd like to propose hiring a professional. He said he would look into this and we could discuss it more at our next meeting.
- Danny Alderman: Gave a reminder that open mic is the last Friday of the month and there's a Halloween theme this month. It was agreed that MAC needs to do more to promote this event.
- Carmen Balentine let the group know about the Running Club virtual 5k Fundraiser for Autism Foundation.
- Grace Shackney mentioned the Nails in the Wall Gallery is now open 5-7pm on Thursday. Grace congratulated them on the beauty of their exhibit: Home Security/Insecurity. Deb Kmetz let everyone know that the next show is: More Than Words; The Art Of Communication. Grace also mentioned the exhibit at the First Presbyterian Church curated by Joe Castronova: The Art Of Forgiveness.

ADJOURNMENT

All business being conducted, the meeting was adjourned by Judy Lee at 8:49pm. The next Arts Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 20th 2023 at 7:30pm.

Submitted by,

Meg Loftus Suchan, Secretary

