



MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 21, 2021

7:00 P.M. Via Zoom conferencing

PRESENT: Bob Diken, Judy Yin-Chi Lee, Mark Harris, Carolyn Hamming, Terry Kohl, Nora Pagel, John Sharp, Sam McDonald, Grace Shackney, Jack Meyer, Lynne Mueller, Charly Santagado, Catherine LaMoureaux, Nancy Goldberg.

WELCOME:

Co-chairs Bob Diken and Judy Lee opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. with a welcome to all and acknowledged our observance of the Sunshine Law open meeting practice.

APPROVAL OF ARTS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM MAY 17, 2021:

Bob Diken asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from May 17, 2021. Mark Harris so moved. The motion was seconded by Lynne Mueller and approved by all present.

FINANCIAL/BUSINESS REPORT:

- Nancy Goldberg reported there was one expenditure this month for the Metuchen Artfest Main Street banner.
- Friends of The Metuchen Arts Council (FOMAC) report -
 - Bob Diken and Lynne Mueller reported that they had a zoom meeting with the data company, Network For Good, which specializes in online applications for nonprofits to keep financial records and follow ups with donors. The FOMAC board is considering acquiring the applications.
 - Charu Bakshi is assisting FOMAC as a consultant to assess the website, branding and communications.
- Fundraising:
 - Talks with the Westerhoffs are set regarding a renewal of the Westerhoff Foundation sponsorship. Bob is drafting a proposal and will have more information to communicate in a week or so. In the meantime, the Westerhoffs have donated a baby grand piano to us which we have arranged to place in the Metuchen Library Community Room. We are planning a celebration that will include the unveiling of the piano plus a showing of a short original film, *Bandito's Quest*, which uses Gary Westerhoff's wildlife photos.

PROGRAM UPDATES/REPORTS:

- The Tiny X Project - Charly Santagado reported that the Tiny X installation at Borough Hall was damaged, will be repaired and re-installed by the end of the week. The installation at the train station has chalked up the most views. A call to artists for new installations at other locations will be put out. Charly will circulate a list of possible locations. This would be for installation sometime in the fall. In the meantime, it was agreed that the current installations need more publicity.
- Mignolo Fall Dance Program - Charly reported the new dance, to be performed in the Woodmont parking deck, will have 10 dancers, 2 musicians and a composer. The piece is called *Visitor Parking*, is site specific, rooted in contemporary dance and will include audience participation. Charly also mentioned Mignolo's fundraiser for its Art Center to be held September 18th.
- The Downtown Piano Project – Grace Shackney reported that the painted pianos will be unveiled on Friday night, June 25th. The pianos have all been painted by select artists commissioned by the MDA. They will be placed on Main Street by Antonio's Pizza, on Hailey's back patio, and between the restaurant tents on New Street. The piano will move to different location between June and July. The roster of musicians along with dates and times is posted on our website. The MDA is awaiting word on a grant that could support the hiring of musicians through August.
- ArtFest – Bob Diken reported that the collaboration with Hailey's Pub is set for Saturday, June 26th from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Hailey's back patio. We have the rest of the adjacent commuter parking lot to accommodate 13 artists who will have tables for an art sale. The band, Jivestock will perform. Hailey's will have full food and drink service. The artists paid \$50 each for a table. The money will go to pay the band. Hailey's is providing a

\$20 gift certificate to the artists for the purchase of food and drink. Bob asked for volunteers to help with setup, breakdown and to sit at an Arts Council table. John Sharp will organize list of volunteers.

- Chamber Music Concert – Judy Lee reported that we are looking for a venue for a possible July 31st concert. Charly mentioned that the Mignolo Art Center now has a baby grand piano.
- Metuchen Rocks – Grace Shackney reported that we are on track to host a Metuchen Rocks Concert on August 21st on the Plaza with Tara Dante and the Bind Pilots. Renee Maskin will open for them. The Lonesome Pines are scheduled to play Sunday, September 26th at Bill's Ineffable Auto Repair Shop on Jersey Avenue. More details to follow.
- Dragonfly Theatre Presentation of *Popcorn Falls* – Catherine LaMoreaux reported that the production will take place in the Woodmont parking deck on August 27, 28 and 29.
- Jazz Fest – Lynne Mueller reported that the Metuchen High School Jazz Band is confirmed to participate in the Metuchen leg of the Central Jersey Jazz Festival that takes place on the Plaza on September 11th. It will feature the Marcus Printup Quintet with Riza Printup on harp.
- Jazz Education Series – Lynne Mueller reported that the next lecture takes place virtually on July 18th at 3:00 p.m. The topic is the Life & Music of Gerry Mulligan. This program is lived streamed through the New Jersey Jazz Society. Forty people attended the first lecture in June 13th. The lectures are free. Donations are accepted and go toward paying the guest lecturers. The Series is live streamed at www.njjs.org, on our website as well as on NJ Jazz Society's Facebook page and YouTube channel.
- Metuchen High School Emerging Art Exhibition – Bob Diken reported that the exhibition will be held at the Rotunda Gallery July 24 through August. There will be an opening reception in a tent outside Borough Hall.
- The Rhino Project - Nora Pagel reported that she is meeting with Robert Russo to assess the state of the rhino sculpture as it is now. Bob Diken is working with the owner about the transfer of ownership. Nora, John Sharp and Deb Kmetz have formed a committee to work on the rehabilitation and placement of the rhino.

2022 MIDDLESEX COUNTY GRANT PROPOSAL:

Grace Shackney announced that we need to submit a declaration of intent for a grant proposal by August 3rd. She opened the floor for ideas. Mentioned was the Lake Avenue railroad bridge mural/light installation. Another was doing something on the Greenway such as the road sign recycling project as a continuation of Artcycle. Bob and Grace will explore.

MDA UPDATES:

Lynne Mueller reported that the MDA was awarded Main Street America and Main Street NJ certificates for 2021. The MDA is looking into several grant opportunities. There are plans to reach out to businesses that did not get funding from the first round of grants. Some events planned include: Break dancing on the Plaza on June 12; a Juneteenth program in partnership with the Human Relations Commission on June 19th on the Plaza; the unveiling of the painted pianos on June 25th; an outdoor showing of the movie *Crazy Rich Asians* on June 26; and Downtown Rumble and Wrestling on the Plaza on September 18th.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Nails In The Wall Gallery at St. Luke's is starting planning for a show in February 2022.
- The Rotunda Gallery at Borough Hall will feature an exhibit by Joe Castranova in September.
- Rise Up Chorus is rehearsing in the Parking Deck and is planning a concert of original music for 2022.

All business being completed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m. **The next Arts Council meeting will be held in person at Borough Hall on July 19, 2021.**

Submitted by,

Grace Shackney, Secretary
Metuchen Arts Council