



MEETING MINUTES
February 27, 2023
At the Metuchen Senior Center

PRESENT: Carmen Balentine, Bob Diken, Grace Shackney, Carol Gaffney, Carolyn Hamming, Mark Harris, Deb Kmetz, Terry Kohl, Chuck Lopez, Luciana Mallozzi, Nunzio Moudatsos, Lynne Mueller, Rick Perrine, Wendy Richards, Mara Rosencrown, Joanne Stern, Joel Branch, Meg Loftus Suchan

CALL TO ORDER: Co Chair Grace Shackney called the meeting to order at 7:39pm. She acknowledged the Sunshine Law. Grace also introduced Carol Gaffney and welcomed her, stating that we now have all of the Arts Council seats filled.

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

FINANCIAL / BUSINESS REPORTS:

- Friends of Metuchen Arts Council (FOMA): Bob Diken explained there were no major updates to report since our last meeting but mentioned that around \$31,000 has been raised to date.

2023 PROGRAM REVIEW:

- Review of Committee Assignments: Grace mentioned the need for an additional Public Arts Maintenance Committee to oversee the upkeep of existing art and asked members to consider signing up for that as well. She also said now that people have expressed interest in certain areas that we need to start organizing individual meetings to get the ball rolling. Lastly, she mentioned the idea of having a possible trip to the Whitney over the summer.
- Bob Diken explained that we received the Middlesex County Jazz Festival grant again and that it will be used towards Jazz Fest to help augment the existing \$6,000 in the budget.
- Plein-air House Painting Event: The hope is to collaborate with the MDA on this in some capacity.
- Nunzio Moudatsos spoke about an Indie Concert, hopefully to be held April of this year. He has connected with the musicians and is just waiting to nail down exactly what we can offer for compensation.

REPORTS:

- Windows of Understanding Public Art Project: Grace Shackney explained there are a few events coming up this month: March 11th is the open house for our Windows of Understanding art exhibition at Berkshire Hathaway from 1-3pm. The Metuchen Police Patrol will be there. She also said on March 23rd there will be a conversation with the Human Relations Commission at 7:30 p.m. at the Metuchen Library. On March 30th there is the WOU closing reception at the Hungarian Center in New Brunswick.
- Jazz Programs: Lynne Mueller spoke about the upcoming Jazz Concert on March 12 featuring the Kenny Davis Quartet to be held at the library. Go to Eventbrite.com for tickets, seating is limited. She also mentioned that hopefully there will be another Jazz event in the Parlor this May.
- MDA: Meg Loftus Suchan talked about the successful ribbon cutting of the Conversation Corner in front of the Senior Center and encouraged all MAC members to attend future

ribbon cuttings. She expressed her hope that MAC and the MDA will continue to find new ways to collaborate and support each other.

- MDA PUBLIC ART REPORT/Rotunda Gallery Report: Grace Shackney spoke on behalf of Charu Bakshi/Joe Castronova. She explained that the leak at Borough Hall resulted in having to repaint the walls in the gallery space. Some of the artwork was moved to the Senior Center. She said she hopes we can come up with a way for the student artists to come and speak to the Seniors about their work. She also mentioned that a new wall hanging system is being researched for both the Rotunda Gallery and the Senior Center. Bob Diken mentioned that the MDA has an event coming up regarding a call for artists to submit work to go in the windows at the Forum Theatre.
- Grace Shackney mentioned that the Dragon Fly theatre had its production dates for Little Women approved by St. Lukes. The tentative dates are August 11, 12 and 13.

New Business:

- Joel Branch explained an idea he had for a photography project as a way to include the citizens of Metuchen in art projects. He is brainstorming the idea and looking for people to help.

Announcements:

- Carmen Balentine spoke about the Women in Media film screening at Papillon that will be held every quarter and said he will share the information when he has it. Carmen has also been cast in a play, *Superior Donut*, for which he will provide details as well.
- Terry Kohl said there will be an organ concert at 7pm on March 11th at the Cathedral

Before concluding, Grace asked all new members to submit their updated bio information for the website.

All business being concluded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm. The next Arts Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 21st at 7:30pm.

Submitted by,

Meg Loftus Suchan, Secretary