



MEETING MINUTES

March 20th, 2023

At the Metuchen Senior Center

PRESENT: Charu Bakshi, Lenore Boyarin, Carol Gaffney, Carolyn Hamming, Mark Harris, Deb Kmetz, Terry Kohl, Catherine LaMoreaux, Meg Loftus Suchan, Chuck Lopez, Luciana Mallozzi, Lynne Mueller, Mara Rosencrown, Grace Shackney, John Sharp, Joanne Stern, Judy Yin-Chi Lee

CALL TO ORDER: Co Chair Judy Lee called the meeting to order at 7:35pm. She acknowledged the Sunshine Law.

Meg Loftus Suchan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February meeting. Terry Kohl so moved and the motion was seconded by Carmen Balentine and approved by all present.

FINANCIAL / BUSINESS REPORTS:

- Grace Shackney explained about the new certificate requirements due to government mandates. The new rules would require a fee along with paperwork for anyone being hired by the Borough. The AA-302 Employee Information Certification costs \$150 and take 3-4 weeks to obtain. Grace and Judy spoke to their concern that such a fee will significantly impact our programming abilities. Grace asked members to think if they know anyone in other local Art Councils who might be able to speak to how they are handling this. A local artist (Dave LaMorte) who was present at the meeting, commented that he may not have participated in the ArtCycle program this year if he had to pay \$150. Judy commented that if the Arts Council or FOMA to have to take on the burden of that cost, it would greatly affect our budget and we would have to significantly limit our programming to accommodate.

PROGRAM REPORTS:

- Windows of Understanding Public Art Project (Grace Shackney) – Grace passed out flyers for the next event, this Thursday at the Library, “community conversation” with the Human Relations Commission to be held at 7:30pm. Grace asked people to share it on the Facebook page and pass the word around. The closing for the Windows of Understanding is 3/30/23 in New Brunswick at the Hungarian Center. Grace said all of the MAC members are invited. The open house at Berkshire Hathaway was a great success.
- Middlesex County Jazz Festival Grant (Grace Shackney, Lynne Mueller)- The event will be Saturday, Sept 30th Lynne confirmed the Metuchen HS band will be there and that 5 surrounding towns are involved. Each town will provide \$1,000 toward a website and publicity.
- Plain-air House Painting Event (Grace Shackney)- The Arts Council committee is meeting on Wednesday, March 22nd so there will be more information to come after that.
- Jazz Concerts (Lynne Mueller)- Lynne spoke about the successful event on March 12th at the library and mentioned that April is International Jazz month. She passed around a sheet of upcoming dates including one on April 30th at 2pm at the library celebrating Jazz month and National Library week. The performance will feature NEA Jazz Master, Drummer Billy Hart Quartet

REPORTS:

- MDA (Meg Loftus)- Meg spoke about the call for artists for the posters at the Forum Theatre as well as asking the group to think on areas in town that might benefit from murals or small art 'happenings'. She also let the group know that 4/22 is Earth Day and there will be some shop local events happening downtown. On the heels of Meg's MDA report, Judy Lee spoke about an email that was sent to the group from a former MAC member regarding their distasteful comments about the MDA. Judy spoke about how important it is for all of us to work collaboratively and that she hopes everyone will be supportive and encouraging of the wonderful work the MDA is doing for our community. She stated that the email certainly does not reflect the sentiments of the Arts Council or its members, to which there was resounding agreement by all present. Judy Lee asked that everyone follow professional protocols when dealing with Arts Council emails and business and in general and reminded us that we are all on the same team.
- MDA Public Art Report (Charu Bakshi)- Mosaic classes are going to be held in the senior center by the artist who did the table in the conversation corner. Charu also talked about the pocket park, that it is in the initial stages but hopefully there will be a public art opportunity there. More details to come.
- ROTUNDA GALLERY REPORT (Grace Shackney)- We are still waiting on the hanging system but we will be getting the student art back from the Hungarian Center and will return it to the Senior Center. Grace hopes we can arrange to have the senior high school student artists come and talk to the Seniors about their art.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Mark Harris has 3 pieces being shown at the Belmare Arts Council
- Terry Kohl mentioned the upcoming Rise Up Chorus concert on June 10th at the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church in Plainfield. She asked for help spreading the word.
- Catherine LaMaoreaux said the Dragonfly performance of Certifiably Yours will be March 31st- April 2nd.
- Carmen Balentine said that on Sunday May 7th at Papillon there will be a film screening in partnership with Women in Media, Newark. It will be held at 2pm and there will be three films. The event is free to the public. Carmen is also in a play, Superior Donuts that will open on April 21st and run for 3 weekends.
- Judy Lee mentioned that NJPAC is looking for an arts producer for a festival they're doing. It's a three city festival and Judy said she will send out more info via email.

All business being concluded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm. The next Arts Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 17th, 2023.

Submitted by,

Meg Loftus Suchan, Secretary