



## MEETING MINUTES

May 15, 2023

At the Metuchen Senior Center

Members Present: Joel Branch, Robert Diken, Carol Gaffney, Mark Harris, Deborah Kmetz, Charles Lopez, Nunzio Moudatsos, Lynne Mueller, Rick Perrine, Wendi Richards, Mara Rosencrown, Grace Shackney, John Sharp

Guests Present: Dylan Thurston, Julia Win

CALL TO ORDER: Co-Chair Grace Shackney called the meeting to order at 7:35pm

Grace Shackney asked for a motion to approve the April 17, 2023 minutes. Lynne Mueller so moved and Mark Harris seconded. The minutes were approved by all present without further comment.

### PROGRAM REPORTS:

- **Proposal for Chalk Festival** (Julia Win): a committee was formed including members Nunzio Moudatsos, Rick Perrine, and John Sharp with guest Julia Win. Grace Shackney proposed holding the event in front of Borough Hall during the 2024 Spring Fair. Before the event, used pizza boxes will be collected at the Senior Center to be sorted. The acceptably clean ones will be prepared with black paint. During the event, children will choose a prepared pizza box to decorate with chalk art. This promotes both recycling and creativity. Discussion included possibly having a chalk artist draw on the sidewalk and a vendor selling pizza. It was decided that work will continue and this plan will be pursued. Rick Perrine offered to assist with ordering any supplies that may be needed, such as paint and chalk.
- **Mignolo Spring for Spring Dance Festival June 4, 2023**: Mark Harris reported that the event will feature a variety of work by different choreographers and dancers. Robert Diken reported that Friends of Metuchen Arts (FOMA) will send an email blast and press release to support the event.
- **Middlesex County Jazz Festival** (Lynne Mueller): Lynne Mueller reminded the group that Metuchen is one of 5 towns participating in the event. Work continues on the web page. Each town has contributed \$1000 toward a professional web page. The Metuchen headliner will be the Cyrus Chestnut quartet. All other musicians will be announced June 30. Metuchen has secured 5 port-a-potties, paid for by MAC.
- **Jazz Concerts at the Library** (Lynne Mueller): Lynne Mueller reported that the previous concert was very successful and thanked Charles Lopez for giving the artist a ride. The next event will be Grammy-nominated Roseanna Vitro & the Jazz Ambassadors on June 11. Charles Lopez and Carol Gaffney volunteered to help with the event. Tickets are free through Event Brite.
- **Spring Street Fair**: Lenore Boyarin, Robert Diken, Carolyn Hamming, Grace Shackney, and Meg Loftus Suchan have volunteered to help at the event. All are encouraged to stop by and lend a hand giving out information and asking for donations.
- **Plein Air Painting event**: October 14 (rain date October 15) The event will take place at 10 locations. 5 are homes and 5 are other landmarks, mostly located near Route 27 and Oak Avenue/Rector Street. 2 artists will be assigned to create art depicting each location. The public may also register to participate in creating art. One or two docents will supervise each location, and the general public is invited to watch the artists work. Later in the day, the art will be

displayed for a reception at the Old Franklin Schoolhouse, which has been reserved, and cash prizes will be awarded.

- **Summer Concerts:** Grace Shackney reported that the Metuchen Downtown Alliance (MDA) is planning 3 summer concerts. More information to follow.

#### REPORTS:

- **FOMA report** (Robert Diken):
  - o Local businesswoman Edna Epileu has joined the FOMA Board of Directors.
  - o Drawing Night at Hailey's Parlor, which FOMA helps advertise, has been successful.
- **MDA report:** Meg Loftus Suchan, absent, sent a written report of upcoming events on the Plaza: May 25 Pre-Prom Party; June 3 Pride; June 10 Fun House; June 17 Juneteenth; June 20 Kids Take Over Downtown. The MDA continues to look for mural and place-making ideas in the downtown district. The old Metuchen Savings/Manasquan Bank drive-thru has been donated. MDA has \$50,000 in grant money to develop it as a pocket park.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- Grace Shackney reported that the mayor is looking for help to cover the electric boxes with mural art on a printed wrap as other towns have done. Mark Harris will follow up with a company he knows of, that creates wraps for other purposes.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Lynne Mueller: The Marcus and Riza Prinup Quartet will perform at Hailey's Parlor on Wednesday, May 17, 7-9pm. \$25 admission.
- Robert Diken: Public Art opening at the Forum Theatre will unveil the art in the two front window display cases at a reception on June 17, 3pm.

The meeting was adjourned by Grace Shackney at 8:30pm following a motion by Lynne Mueller, seconded by Carolyn Hamming.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Kmetz