



MEETING MINUTES  
January 22, 2024 7:30pm  
At the Metuchen Senior Center

**Voting Members Present:** Carmen Balentine, Carol Gaffney, Mark Harris, Deborah Kmetz, Terry Kohl, Judy Yin-Chi Lee, Chuck Lopez, Nunzio Moudatsos, Grace Shackney, John Sharp, Joanne Stern

**Auxiliary/Guests/Liasons Present:** Robert Diken, Lynne Mueller, Rick Perrine, Wendy Richards, Marisol De Los Santos, Dylan Thurston

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

**MINUTES:** Grace Shackney asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. One amendment was added: Joanne Stern was in attendance. Joanne Stern made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by John Sharp. All voting members present at the previous meeting voted to approve.

**SLATE OF OFFICERS:**

- The following officers were nominated for 2024:

Mark Harris, Chair

Meg Loftus Suchan, Vice-Chair

Deborah Kmetz, Secretary

No additional nominations were put forth.

John Sharp moved to approve the slate of officers. Grace Shackney seconded. The slate was unanimously approved by all voting members in attendance. At this point, Mark Harris took over as Chair to run the meeting.

**FINANCIAL BUSINESS:**

- Mark Harris said that the budget, having been thoroughly discussed in previous meetings, would now be considered final. He called for any additional comments, which were as follows:
  - Mark Harris commented that Linda LaStella had requested \$500 for marketing and refreshments for a 2024 event at Papillon after the 2024 MAC budget had been set. Robert Diken commented that she had copied FOMA on that request and FOMA would consider it. He said that FOMA will set timing guidelines for grant requests as they currently have no set deadline. Linda's request will not be added to the MAC budget for 2024, but consideration may be given at a future meeting.
  - Grace Shackney commented that this is a working copy of the budget and is fluid.
  - Grace Shackney commented that two grants, Mignolo and Rise-Up Chorus, were given in the amount of \$1,000, which was less than requested, in order to balance the budget.
  - Robert Diken said that FOMA agrees to support MAC in the requested amount of \$6,600. FOMA will pay the musicians so they do not have to purchase Borough permits to be paid.

- Mark Harris called for a motion to approve the budget. Nunzio Moudatsos so moved, Carol Gaffney seconded. The budget was passed with approval by all but one voting member present. Terry Kohl, who is a member of event support recipient Rise-Up Chorus, abstained due to conflict of interest.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Windows of Understanding:** Grace Shackney reported that Metuchen will feature three artists at the Windows of Understanding exhibit at Berkshire-Hathaway: Metuchen Environmental Commission, Peter Barnes Foundation, and Lower Raritan Valley Watershed Commission.
- **Jazz:**
  - Lynne Mueller reported a good turnout for the Max Roach event on January 21 with a surprise guest drummer who knew Max Roach.
  - Lynne Mueller also reported that on February 14 the Kate Baker Quartet will perform at the Parlor at Hailey's Harp and Pub.
  - Robert Diken reported that the Middlesex County Jazz festival will likely add Cartaret, and the Middlesex County grant to the six participating towns came through in the amount of \$26,800.
- Lynne Mueller reported that the malfunctioning baby grand piano in the Metuchen Library will be replaced by FOMA and the library can then host chamber music concerts.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Marisol De Los Santos will be supporting FOMA and working with the Borough to update the media and online presence of FOMA and MAC. Her experience comes from her own website, "Macaroni Kid," which features free and low-cost family activities.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- John Sharp announced the opening of "More Than Just Words: the ART of Communication" at Nails in the Wall Gallery, a Ministry of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Metuchen.
- Robert Diken announced that his CoLab will present Wabi-Sabi Workshop on February 24 at the Metuchen Library. The event is free, registration required.
- Terry Kohl announced a Rise-Up Chorus concert at Crescent Avenue First Presbyterian Church in South Plainfield and the Phoenix Cabaret on January 27 at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Metuchen. She thanked MAC on behalf of Rise-Up Chorus for MAC's financial support.
- Carmen Balentine announced several of his events: January 27, 10-5 will be WGBO Jazz Radio day at Papillon & Co with 10% of sales going to WGBO; Beans and Bread trivia night at 6:30pm February 10; he will perform in the dramatic reading "An American Treat" at Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy, Elizabeth.
- Mark Harris thanked Grace Shackney, former Co-Chair, and Judy Yin-Chi Lee, former Co-Chair, for their service to MAC as they step down from their positions.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

All business being conducted, the meeting was adjourned by Mark Harris at 8:30pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 26 at 7:30pm. This is one week later than usual because the Presidents' Day holiday falls on the third Monday.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deborah Kmetz, Metuchen Arts Council Secretary