



MEETING MINUTES
METUCHEN ARTS COUNCIL (MAC)
March 18, 2024 7:30pm
At the Metuchen Senior Center

Voting Members Present: Chair Mark Harris, Vice Chair Meg Loftus Suchan, Secretary Deborah Kmetz, Carol Gaffney, Carolyn Hamming, Terry Kohl, Nunzio Moudatsos, Grace Shackney, John Sharp, Joanne Stern, Judy Yin-Chi Lee

Auxiliary/Guests/Liasons Present: Danny Adlerman, Robert Diken, Lynne Mueller, Rick Perrine, Wendy Richards

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Mark Harris called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm and acknowledged the Sunshine Law.

MINUTES: Secretary Deborah Kmetz asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. All voting members present at the previous meeting voted to approve.

PROGRAMS:

- Joel Branch reported via email that he expects outstanding permits to be resolved this week
- A meeting with the Borough is coming up to discuss Porchfest
- All of the following events are subject to borough approval:
 - Judy Yin-Chi Lee is continuing work on the May concert at St. Luke's, date TBD
 - The Mignolo dance performance will be on the Plaza on the afternoon of May 19
 - The summer concert is planned for July 13
 - Jazzfest will be on the Plaza on September 28
 - The a capella group is planned for August 2 at Petersen Park
 - The Chamber Music concert is planned for June 8 or 9 at First Presbyterian Church
- Linda LaStella's financial support request will be handled by FOMA, not MAC

BYLAWS CHANGES (Mark Harris):

- The position of MAC Financial Officer has been eliminated
- MAC members will be contacted after two missed meetings without excuse
- The official meeting place has been changed to the Metuchen Senior Center
- The motion to approve the changes was unanimously passed by all voting members present

OLD BUSINESS:

- Carolyn Hamming suggested contacting groups we have supported in the past to let them know of the new Borough permit requirements and that we need advance notice of their requests. Meg Loftus Suchan commented that contacting those groups and any prospective groups has been our policy, and we send a mass email as the November submission deadline approaches.
- Grace Shackney reported that Windows of Understanding is coming to a close at the end of April. The Barnes Preserve Walk will be held on April 20, led by Walter Stochel.

- Jazz report (Lynne Mueller):
 - March 24 - the Dave Stryker jazz concert at the Metuchen Library is sold out
 - April 28 - International Jazz Day will be celebrated at the Library 2 days early with the Rufus Reid Band
 - May 9 - Cynthia Sayer Quartet at the Parlor at Hailey's
 - June 9 - event TBD at the Library
 - September 28 - Middlesex County Jazz Festival on the Plaza will feature the Russel Malone Quartet, Metuchen High School Band, Metuchen Dance Centre dancers, and more groups TBD
- FOMA report (Robert Diken):
 - The Gala was excellent. Thank you to the FOMA committee, the event team, and MAC members. Robert reported many attendees he did not know, an indication of the event's success in connecting with members of the community who are not the same people we see at every gathering. Lynne Mueller and Meg Loftus Suchan reiterated thank you to all involved in planning and to all attending.
 - Coming events:
 - April 5, 7pm - Relatable Storytelling event at the Old Franklin Schoolhouse, 55 tickets already sold. If the event is a success, they may make it a series.
 - April 14, 3-5pm - The World of Anime Art at Galerie Westerhoff
- MDA Report (Meg Loftus Suchan):
 - May 11, 7:30pm - Listen to Your Mother storytelling event (non-MDA announcement)
 - April 1 - New Street closed intermittently for crosswalk painting
 - April 6 begins Restaurant Week
 - Economic Vitality Committee was added
 - April 12, 4pm unveiling of Julia Win mural across from the parking deck
 - MAC will no longer have a voting seat on the MDA board but will retain a resident (voice no vote) seat. Several members expressed concern about this decision by the MDA. Meg clarified that this is best practices for the MDA as they are part of an umbrella organization and could be accused of favoritism for allowing MAC a vote without recruiting representatives from other Borough commissions or town organizations.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Danny Adlerman expressed thanks for brand support from MAC over the past 15 years for Open Mic Nights held in Old Franklin Schoolhouse. The event is free to the public with attendee donations going to a different charity each month wherever there is a pressing need. Past charities include such things as tsunami relief in Asia and local families in need. The Schoolhouse has been donating use of the space for this charity event series, but now that the Schoolhouse is struggling with upkeep of the historic building, those donations have gone to the Schoolhouse instead. MAC has not previously provided financial support, but has been credited with support. Danny asked the committee to consider giving financial support to the monthly event. This received a generally favorable response and will be considered in more detail at a future meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Grace Shackney reported that the vandalized artwork on the Greenway has been restored and returned to DPW for reinstallation.

- Terri Kohl extended thanks to all who attended the Rise Up Chorus performance of The Unarmed Child and announced the next concert, We All Belong, on June 8 at 7pm and June 9 at 4pm at the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen.
- Danny Adlerman announced the next Open Mic Night on March 22, and added that it is usually the last Friday of the month. Deborah Kmetz added thanks to Danny for his acknowledgement of MAC at his events.

ADJOURNMENT:

All business being conducted, the meeting was adjourned by Mark Harris at about 8:25 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 15 at 7:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Kmetz, Metuchen Arts Council Secretary