



MEETING MINUTES
METUCHEN ARTS COUNCIL (MAC)
April 15, 2024 7:30pm
At the Metuchen Senior Center

Voting Members Present: Chair Mark Harris, Vice Chair Meg Loftus Suchan, Secretary Deborah Kmetz, Carmen Balentine, Carol Gaffney, Carolyn Hamming, Terry Kohl, Chuck Lopez, Nunzio Moudatsos, Grace Shackney, John Sharp, Joanne Stern

Auxiliary/Guests/Liasons Present: Joel Branch, Victoria Chala, Wendy Richards, Dylan Thurston

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/REPORTS:

- Mark Harris: **Mignolo Dance** changed the date of their performance on the Plaza to October 13 to avoid performing on the same day as another event in town.
- Mark Harris: The summer **MAC concert**, which had been under development, has been cancelled.
- Mark Harris: **JazzFest** has been approved. Details are being worked out.
- Grace Shackney: The Borough has approved the **a capella concert** for Friday, August 2, in Paterson Park.
- Mark Harris: The **PorchFest** committee and the Borough are in conversation. They have a tentative date of September 21, but that is also wrestling on the plaza.
- Mark Harris read an email report from Judy Yin-Chi Lee: a **chamber music concert** is scheduled for 3pm on May 19 at St. Luke's.
- Terry Kohl: **Rise Up Chorus** appreciates the support of the Arts Council. They will perform We All Belong on June 8 and 9. Unlike The Unarmed Child, this will be a light and cheerful performance. All 3 events next year will be light and bright. The Unarmed Child is available to view on YouTube.
- Mark Harris: We found out too late for this year that there is a **Garden State Art Weekend**. We are now on the list to be notified next year and hope to be involved.
- Mark Harris: Mark, Meg Loftus Suchan, and Deborah Kmetz met with Mayor Busch about the status of the **Forum Theater**. Plans include:
 - Flexible space for performances and events
 - 350 seats
 - Hoping it will feel like the original in its heyday
 - Working on other means of creating income so the space can be open to local groups
 - Hoping for cross-pollination with New Brunswick, as they do not have a flexible space

- Public information sessions coming soon
- MAC will be involved

LIASON REPORT:

- Meg Loftus Suchan **MDA report:**
 - July 10 and 30, **Mayor's Concerts**. Volunteers may be needed.
 - May 4 **Downtown Loves Moms**
 - **Pre-Prom**
 - The **Starbucks mural** is under development
 - The **banners on New Street** are being replaced

OLD BUSINESS:

- Grace Shackney: **Windows of Understanding** ends after this weekend.
- Mark Harris: the storytelling event **Relatable** sold out. April Salazar ran the event and would like to do more because this one went so well.

NEW BUSINESS:

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Meg Loftus Suchan: **Listen to Your Mother** storytelling event will be at 8pm on Saturday, May 11 at St. Luke's.
- Carmen Balentine: **Beans and Bread** will host a trivia night on April 27 and karaoke on May 3.
- Mark Harris read an email from Danny Adlerman: Next **Open Mic Night** is Friday, April 26 at Old Franklin Schoolhouse.
- Victoria Chala: Victoria does creative workshops at **Rising Hearts Studio**, 323 Main Street. She supplies the materials, then she and the participants discuss the work. All are welcomed to attend. Fees apply.
- Deborah Kmetz: **Nails in the Wall Gallery** is open on Thursday nights 5-7pm. The current exhibit, "More Than Just Words; the ART of Communication" is on view until after the May 19 concert at St. Luke's.
- Deborah Kmetz: the MHS **National Art Honor Society** will hold its art show and induction ceremony at Nails in the Wall Gallery on Saturday, June 8. All are welcomed to attend.

ADJOURNMENT:

All business being conducted, the meeting was adjourned by Mark Harris at about 8:25 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 20 at 7:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Kmetz, Metuchen Arts Council Secretary