



MEETING MINUTES
METUCHEN ARTS COUNCIL (MAC)
May 20, 2024 7:30pm
At the Metuchen Senior Center

Voting Members Present: Chair Mark Harris, Vice Chair Meg Loftus Suchan, Secretary Deborah Kmetz, Carmen Balentine, Carolyn Hamming, Terry Kohl, Joanne Stern, Judy Yin-Chi Lee

Auxiliary/Guests/Liaisons Present: Joel Branch, Robert Diken, Lynne Mueller, Wendy Richards, Dylan Thurston

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Mark Harris called the meeting to order at 7:34 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:

- Lynne Mueller: **JazzFest** headliner will be Russell Malone Quartet, with several other acts to include the Mariel Bildsten Septet, the MHS jazz band, and a youth dance group. Carmen Balentine will be the MC.
- Mark Harris: the **a capella** performance in the pocket park is moving along, with FOMA paying the performers.
- Meg Loftus Suchan: **PorchFest** (Sept. 21st, rain date 22nd) applications are open. There is good interest. Members are encouraged to spread the word about the May 27 deadline to apply to perform or host. There will also be a contest to create a logo, open to all. They are looking for a maximum of 8 locations (actual porch not required) and 16 bands. FOMA is co-sponsoring and will pay the musicians.
- Terry Kohl: **Rise Up Chorus** thanks MAC for their continued support and FOMA for paying the musicians in the upcoming We All Belong concert at First Presbyterian Church, Metuchen on June 8-9.
- Robert Diken discussed the future of the **MAC website** with the committee, noting that the current plan is to have a website integrated with the Borough's (administered/content controlled by the Borough), with complementary posts only on Facebook, as per the Borough's current rules. Discussion in the group brought about the recommendation that the Borough at least add Instagram to reach a younger audience. Borough Council Liaison Joel Branch said he would bring the suggestion to the Borough. Carmen Balentine suggested that a website consultant may still be warranted to help us determine the result we hope for from online publicity, helping us to direct our messaging to that end.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Mark Harris: the **Metuchen Classical** at St. Luke's Episcopal Church went very well with over 90 in attendance. Thank you to Westerhoff School of Music and Art, MAC, FOMA, and St. Luke's for the collaboration. Westerhoff faculty performed. The school would like to plan future concerts showcasing other talent from Metuchen and the area. Judy Yin-Chi Lee and Joel Branch expressed support for including more performers we have not featured in the past. Per Lynne Mueller, as Metuchen Classical moves forward, Judy will be responsible for choosing the music and the musicians to perform the music. Help is needed to do all the other work in producing the event.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Lynne Mueller's **Jazz report:**
 - June 9 at 2pm at Metuchen Public Library the Larry Fuller Trio will perform to celebrate the new (used) piano donated to the library.
 - A possible concert is in the works for October 20
- Robert Diken's **FOMA report:**
 - FOMA would like to support more classical music
 - FOMA is considering expanding into theater in 2025
- Meg Loftus Suchan **MDA report:**
 - Julia Win's new mural has been well received
 - The Starbuck's mural is being worked on
 - The Listen to Your Mother storytelling event went very well. Special thanks to Joanne Stern for her participation.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Mark Harris: the **First Presbyterian Church** is thinking about monthly summer concerts and would like support from MAC and/or FOMA. A meeting will be arranged to see what they are thinking about doing and whether or not MAC/FOMA might participate in the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Mark Harris: **Rick Perrine will be resigning** as of May 31 for a job closer to his home. MAC thanks him for his support and wishes him well in his new position.
- Mark Harris: on June 13, Mark will attend the **ArtPride Thrive conference** in Princeton about art and community involvement.
- Judy Yin-Chi Lee: **Westerhoff School** has generously paid their own musicians for the Chamber Music Concert, so the \$2,000 we allotted to that is now free for other purposes.
- Robert Diken: what is the status of the **Rotunda Gallery**? Mark and Joel will inquire with the Borough.
- Carmen Ballentine: he will lead another **karaoke night** at Beans and Bread on June 29
- Deborah Kmetz: the **MHS National Art Honor Society** induction and student exhibit reception will be 1-3pm on Saturday, June 8 at Nails in the Wall Gallery, St. Luke's
- Lynne Mueller: **Edgar Middle School** will have a concert at MHS on Wednesday, May 22
- Terry Kohl: In addition to the June 8 and 9 concerts at the First Presbyterian Church, **Rise Up Chorus** will perform in Memorial Park after the Memorial Day Parade

ADJOURNMENT:

All business being conducted, the meeting was adjourned by Mark Harris at 8:32 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 17 at 7:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Kmetz, Metuchen Arts Council Secretary