

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