



MEETING MINUTES

November 30, 2020

7:00 p.m. via Zoom Conferencing

PRESENT: Bob Diken, Carolyn Hamming, Mark Harris, Deb Kmetz, Judy Lee, Lynne Mueller, Luciana Mallozzi, Jack Meyer, Grace Shackney, John Sharp, Charly Santagado, Tobi Santagado, Nancy Goldberg, Adam Fensterheim, Sherry-Rose Rubin, Meg & Shawn Suchan, Helen Geary, Charu Bakshi, Patti Ackerman.

WELCOME:

Chairman Bob Diken opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. with a welcome to all present and an acknowledgement of the Sunshine Law open public meeting practice. He introduced Helen Geary and Meg and Shawn Suchan who are new residents of Metuchen and have expressed interest in the work of the Arts Council. They were warmly welcomed by all those present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 26, 2020:

Bob asked for a motion to approve the Arts Council meeting minutes from October 26, 2020. Lynne Mueller moved that the minutes be approved with two spelling corrections. The motion was seconded by Mark Harris and approved by those present.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

- Financial Update - Bob Diken presented an on-screen report indicating some income from MAX classes and a carry-over of \$3,606 from the 2020 budget into the 2021 budget.
- Friends of the Metuchen Arts Council Status Update – Bob Diken reported that we are waiting for the federal confirmation of the FOMAC nonprofit status which will take two to six months. In the meantime, we have a temporary ID number. He and the current board members (Lynne Mueller and Kat Davis) are looking to increase the board, both in number and diversity.

2020 PROGRAM REPORTS:

- **Metuchen Art Exchange (MAX)** – Bob reported that one acting class is active with 17 young students.
- **Bollywood Concert** – Judy Lee reported that the concert took place on-line on November 6th. The New Jersey Symphony chamber string quartet plus Indian percussionist were taped live at the Mignolo Studio in Metuchen ahead time. The taped concert was screened on November 6th with live commentary and a Q & A with the on-line audience. Seventy-five people tuned in. The tech records indicated that some of the audience tuned in from out of state and that everyone stayed on-line until the end of the concert. Judy received thanks and congratulations for her work in arranging the concert with the New Jersey Symphony. Bob Diken thanked Mignolo for the use of their studio space. This successful concert fulfilled part of our 2020 County grant obligation.
- **Louis Armstrong Jazz History Assembly** – Lynne Mueller reported that the Anderson Brothers' sextet videotaped a live performance with commentary that will be made available to the Metuchen High School administration to show to the student body when it can be worked into the curriculum. The program will also be offered to the public via our website, YouTube and Facebook page. Brandon Uhlig is editing the pieces together. The program will be announced in the Metuchen Jazz Newsletter and will start to stream in the next two weeks. This successfully completes our 2020 County grant obligation.
- **Tiny X Public Art Project** – Charly Santagado reported that the art fabrications are ready to be installed in March. A fox has been added as a teaser. Promos will instruct the public to stay tuned and “follow the fox.”

- **Windows of Understanding Public Art Project** – Robert Diken and Grace Shackney reported that the 15 participating artists have provided their proposals. Next step is to get proposal approval from the agencies the art will be representing. We are working with the committee representing Highland Park and New Brunswick on publicity. We expect to hang the artwork in the Library Gallery in mid-January. Brian Uhlig will create a virtual exhibit. The kick-off for the program in all three towns is January 18th.
- **Manifest Destiny Dance Performance in the Woodmont Parking Deck November 14 & 15** – Charly reported that the event was completely sold out the first night and nearly sold out the second night. All Covid precautions were followed regarding the safety of the dancers and the audiences. Those present who attended congratulated Mignolo for the excellence of the program. A film version of the program will be released at a later date. Bob stated that Jay Muldoon paved the way to get permission to use the parking deck. It opens up the opportunity to use the deck for other socially distanced music and dance performances.
- **ArtCycle** – Charu Bakshi reported that the next iteration of ArtCycle has been pushed back to 2021. It will include the commissioning of artists to paint over old road signs to create an installation to be hung somewhere in town. Westerhoff has committed funds towards the project.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **2021 Slate of Officers** – Grace Shackney introduced the opening for nominations for the slate of officer which include Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary. The current officers would gladly entertain other nominations. Arts Council members were asked to submit nominations to Grace before our January reorganization meeting on January 19, 2021. In the meantime, Bob will be making up a list of Arts Council assignments for 2021.
- **2021 Programming** –
 - Currently on the schedule:
 - Windows of Understanding exhibit and programs – Kick-off January 18th.
 - Spring 2022:
 - Tiny X installations
 - ArtCycle
 - September or October 2021 – Jazz Fest (pending County grant)
 - The following program ideas were suggested and discussed:
 - Jazz Education classes as part of the MAX Program
 - Pop-up dance events for site specific work like in Imagination Alley.
 - A Westerhoff music student concert in collaboration with professional musicians.
 - A Dragonfly Theatre collaboration.
 - A Jazz event in the Martin Luther King Park and/or the Metuchen Inn.
 - Concert and art exhibition at Mignolo Studio.
 - Metuchen Rocks Summer Concert Series
 - Singer/Songwriter Concert
 - Moth Fireside Stories event
 - Artists Gathering
 - Bus Trip (Grounds for Sculpture)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- We are seeking new artists to sell their work at our Merch Mart in Boyts Drug Store.
- The MDA Public Art Team has been reconfigured for 2021. Bob has been in conversation with MDA Team member Beryl Koblin and both have agreed to collaborate more closely with regard to arts events happening in and round the downtown district.

All business being completed, Bob lead those present in a virtual toast to celebrate the successes of the last year, the forth coming holiday season, and the hope for continuing opportunities to serve our community in 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Grace Shackney, Secretary
Metuchen Arts Council