

**Franklin Cultural District Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
April 8, 2020  
Remote Access Virtual Zoom Meeting**

***As stated on the agenda, due to the growing concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this meeting will be conducted as a Remote/Virtual Cultural District Committee meeting. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement and comply with open meeting law regulations, citizens will be able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number, or citizens can participate by using the Zoom link provided on the agenda.***

Members present: Nancy Schoen, John LoPresti, Pandora Carlucci, Roberta Trahan, Jamie Barrett, Evan Chelman.

Members not present: None.

Also in attendance: Bryan Taberner, Planning & Community Development Director; Anne Marie Tracey, Marketing and Communication Specialist; Judith Lizardi, Recording Secretary.

**Commencement**

Chair Schoen opened the meeting at 7:03 PM.

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**March 11, 2020 CDC Meeting**

***Chair Schoen noted that under FCD/MCC Grant updates, the third sentence states that Ms. Carlucci and Ms. Trahan attended the event. It should read that Ms. Carlucci and Chair Schoen attended the event. Mr. LoPresti noted that there were only two banners in total. Motion by Ms. Schoen to approve the March 11, 2020 CDC meeting minutes with the noted amendments. Seconded by Mr. LoPresti; voted and approved unanimously.***

**Chair's Update**

- **Massachusetts Cultural Council Webinar**  
Chair Schoen stated that last week she and Ms. Trahan participated in a webinar sponsored by the MCC and facilitated by Luis Cotto. He will be holding another webinar using the Zoom platform on Thursday, April 9th at 10:00 a.m. She shared some of the information reviewed at last week's webinar including the struggles and challenges small business owners are facing. She noted there is much information available regarding working with banks and the application process for small business loans.
- **FCD/MCC Grant Updates**  
Chair Schoen stated that Mr. Cotto confirmed the grant money already approved is still available. She stated that four of the events to which the Committee provided grant money have not yet taken place; she suggested that when things get back to a more normal setting, the funds could get rolled over to a fall event. She stated that she is not sure if Ms. Caleigh Keating's Mini Franklin event will be able to be held in the fall.
- **FY21 Regional Tourism Grant Application**  
Chair Schoen asked Mr. Taberner if he had an opportunity to look at this application; she is not sure if this is something the Committee can apply for. Mr. Taberner stated he will review the grant application and speak with Chair Schoen about it.
- **May 12<sup>th</sup> Partners Meeting**

Chair Schoen stated the next Partners Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at 7:00 PM. The meeting was originally scheduled to be held at the Historical Museum; she suggested it could be held as a virtual remote meeting. She stated that Ms. Raye Lynn Mercer, Executive Director of the Franklin Performing Arts Company, had offered to speak at this meeting; she is working with Ms. Mercer to confirm. Chair Schoen said she will reach out to Ms. Erin Lynch, Executive Director of the MetroWest Visitors Bureau, to determine if she is available to speak at a future Partners meeting. Chair Schoen asked the Committee members for their input on holding a virtual remote Partners meeting. Ms. Trahan suggested it is too early to cancel the meeting; they should wait to determine what the next two weeks are like. Mr. Taberner said the meeting could be held remotely and everyone could be invited to participate; he suggested a speaker for the meeting be arranged. Ms. Trahan agreed that most people will be at home and could participate remotely; having the meeting would also let people know that the Committee is moving forward.

### **Partners Subcommittee Update**

#### **Possible Franklin Cultural District Newsletter**

Chair Schoen stated that she and Ms. Carlucci have talked about putting out a newsletter. Ms. Tracey stated she puts out a monthly newsletter; she takes information from all departments and also includes links to information. Mr. LoPresti stated the Downtown Partnership puts out a newsletter. Chair Schoen said that the function of the Downtown Partnership's newsletter is for businesses, not just the cultural district. She recommended the FCC has their own newsletter, even if it is small. Ms. Carlucci said she sent an email to the partners about grant opportunities and another email to ask the partners to share what they are doing during these times; not many partners responded. It was noted that the Downtown Partnership also asked businesses what they are doing during these times such as reduced hours or delivery services. Mr. Steve Sherlock, Franklin Matters, confirmed there are a number of entities that have been requesting information. He suggested the FCC focus on the cultural organizations. Discussion commenced regarding events that have been rescheduled as well as virtual events that have been scheduled. Chair Schoen asked Mr. Chelman to put this event information on social media. Mr. Sherlock stated that events still on the calendar may actually have been cancelled but were not taken off the calendar, so he temporarily took down the calendar.

### **Marketing Subcommittee Update**

Mr. LoPresti said he had no updates.

### **Goals & Data Subcommittee Update**

Ms. Trahan discussed the required data and stated that she thought it was understood that the data available at this time will be provided. Mr. Taberner stated that Mr. Cotto and the MCC are flexible with the reporting. Chair Schoen stated that Mr. Cotto indicated it was not a top priority. Ms. Trahan stated that energy should be focused on how to get the small businesses up and running after this crisis is over. Ms. Tracey discussed the Franklin Trails and Walking Paths contest. Ms. Schoen asked Mr. Chelman to put this event, as well as other events that have recently taken place or are upcoming, including the webinars, on social media so the information can be shared with the partners.

Ms. Carlucci discussed an email from the MCC and stated there was helpful information for the smaller small businesses like gig businesses. She noted that she subscribes to the Natick Cultural District newsletter; she likes the format they use and the energy from the cultural district partners. She recommended that the FCC highlight similar information from the cultural district and provide that information to partners. The partners are doing many different things which should be highlighted such as the FSPA concerts, the walking trails, and the way small businesses such as the Little Shop of Olive Oils are adapting and providing online ordering, curbside pickup, and local delivery. The cultural district businesses many not have time to provide this information to the FCC; however, the FCC should be gathering this information and putting it out in a newsletter. Chair Schoen asked if the first newsletter should be sent out in May. Discussion commenced about the proposed newsletter's

content, format, contact email addresses to send the newsletter to, and the subscription service feature that may be already on the website created by CivicPlus. Mr. LoPresti recommended the newsletter be available to the entire town, not just the partners. He suggested Mr. Chelman check with Tim Rapoza, Director of Technology Services, regarding the possible functionality of the subscription service on the website as he does not know if the subscription function was turned on.

### **Future Cultural District Partner Meeting Dates**

Chair Schoen stated the next Partners Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at 7:00 PM. The meeting was originally scheduled to be held at the Historical Museum; she suggested it should be held as a virtual remote meeting. She will reach out to Ms. Mercer to see if she would be willing to speak remotely at the meeting. She stated that due to the current pandemic situation, everyone is waiting to determine if events scheduled for the spring will take place, be postponed, or be cancelled. Ms. Trahan confirmed that the Downtown Partnership is waiting to make a determination about the Strawberry Stroll event. Both Ms. Trahan and Ms. Carlucci thought the event would not be held, but confirmed that no formal decision has been made. Chair Schoen confirmed with Ms. Tracey that she would bring the completed artwork that was schedule to be displayed at the ArtWeek kickoff event to a future event. Committee members agreed a virtual partners meeting would be best. Ms. Carlucci stated she let Ms. Mary Olsson know that the May 12<sup>th</sup> meeting will not be held at the Historical Musuem. Chair Schoen suggested a fall partners meeting could possibly be held at the Historical Museum. Mr. Steve Sherlock, Franklin Matters, stated he is continuing to keep the community informed and encouraged FCC members to contact him if they would like him to put out information. Chair Schoen said many people are trying to connect using visual arts and music during these times.

### **Next Meeting Dates**

The next meeting of the Cultural District Committee is scheduled as a virtual remote meeting on Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at 6:30 PM (prior to the Partners Meeting). A meeting is also scheduled for Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at 7:00 PM, location TBD. There will be no meeting in July. The next Cultural District Partners Meeting is scheduled as a virtual remote meeting on Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 7 PM.

### **Adjourn**

With no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Schoen to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Barrett; voted and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary