

**Franklin Cultural District Committee
Minutes of Meeting
May 5, 2022
Held as a Virtual Meeting
via Remote Access Zoom Platform**

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

Members present: Roberta Trahan, Dr. Pandora Carlucci, Katherine Botelho, Pat Timmons, Jamie Barrett, Vice Chair John LoPresti

Members not present: Amy Adams,

Also in attendance: Bryan Taberner, Planning and Community Development Director; Stephen Sherlock

Dr. Carlucci opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Trahan recommended approving the March 23 and April 6 minutes, but with the stipulation to correct the listed future meeting dates of each to list May 6, 2022 and May 12, 2022 at 7:00pm. Seconded by Vice Chair LoPresti. Ms. Trahan voted yes. Dr. Carlucci voted yes. Ms. Botelho voted yes. Mr. Timmons voted yes. Vice Chair LoPresti voted yes. Motion passed 5-0-0

Ms. Trahan then left the floor to Mr. Timmons to present news to the Committee. Mr. Timmons informed the Committee that he would soon be moving to Bellingham, which would result in him having to leave the Committee. Mr. Timmons said he would continue to try to attend the Cultural Events in Franklin. The members of the Committee thanked Mr. Timmons for his help and suggested that he look into joining Bellingham's Cultural District Committee. Mr. Timmons has already begun the process of resigning with the Town Administration. Mr. Barrett entered the meeting, and was also briefed on Mr. Timmons' departure.

Mr. Timmons then left the meeting at 7:09pm

Review FY23 Goals

Ms. Trahan explained that she and Ms. Botelho had been working on the Goals list mentioned in previous meetings, and now have 6 goals that they are ready to present if the Committee is in agreement. If everyone is in agreement, they can also vote on them this meeting. Dr. Carlucci expressed agreement with them as they are in line with the FY22 Goals and are well-worded. Vice Chair LoPresti also agreed with them. Ms. Botelho explained the Goals had been slightly re-worded but still retained the same meaning as before. Dr. Carlucci asked about Goal 3—Continue to strengthen the Franklin Cultural District Partnership—and whether or not it could be altered to also include the wording “and collaborations with the Franklin Cultural Council.” Vice Chair LoPresti questioned whether or not the original wording already implied collaborating with the Franklin Cultural Council, to which Dr. Carlucci responded that the planned collaboration is

to be at a higher level than with other Partners, so the wording should reflect that. Ms. Trahan emphasized that the Cultural District Committee and Franklin Cultural Council would even have the occasional joint meeting, to which Vice Chair LoPresti responded that he believes increased collaboration is already embedded in the general objective of the Cultural District Committee and thus does not need to be reiterated in the FY23 goals. Mr. Taberner proposed rewording Goal 3 to feature the wording of “Including our new collaboration with Franklin Cultural Council” after the already existing wording. Ms. Trahan and Dr. Carlucci expressed agreement with Mr. Taberner’s wording, and Ms. Trahan proposed to Vice Chair LoPresti that they could remove the wording next year if they feel they have accomplished the goal in FY23. After further deliberation, Ms. Trahan suggested putting the matter to a vote at the June meeting. Ms. Botelho and Mr. Barrett said they would not have a problem with including or leaving the wording out.

Ms. Trahan motioned to accept the FY23 goals as presented before the Cultural District Committee with the addendum to Goal 3—Continue to strengthen the Franklin Cultural District Partnership—to also include the words “including the ongoing collaborations with the Franklin Cultural Council.” Seconded by Vice Chair LoPresti. Ms. Trahan voted yes. Dr. Carlucci voted yes. Ms. Botelho voted yes. Mr. Barrett voted yes. Vice Chair LoPresti voted yes. Motion passed 5-0-0

CDC Terms of Service

Ms. Trahan opened by saying the topic was a difficult one that needed to be addressed. Before turning the meeting over to Mr. Taberner, Ms. Trahan briefed the Committee on the fact that 3 members were set to have their terms expire in June 2022, so they would be discussing those members’ ability to stay as members. Ms. Taberner then explained that the staggered terms to Committees meant 3 members this year would have their positions up for appointment, but this is also a time for those members to think about where they are on the Committee and whether or not they may want to change their role in it. The members whose terms are expiring can most likely be reappointed if they wish to do so. Mr. Timmons’ spot will need to be filled, and it will hopefully help solve some of the Committee’s problems. Mr. Taberner then added that the main problem for the Committee is that the position of Committee Chair still needs to be filled, which no members have yet expressed interest in taking on the responsibilities of.

Ms. Trahan said that Mr. Taberner had clarified for her the question of who is meant to approach who with regards to accepting or applying for another 3 year term. She added that the Committee does not have to resolve finding a new chair at this meeting, but it should get a sense of things now so that it will be prepared to make decisions in June. Mr. Taberner corrected her by saying that a Chair would be elected in July since June would be the month where members are being appointed to the Committee. It was then summarized that Mr. Barrett, Vice Chair LoPresti, and Dr. Carlucci would be having their terms end in June and could expect the Town Administration to reach out to them about continuing for another term. Vice Chair LoPresti expressed his intention to continue for another term when the Town Administration reaches out to him.

FCC MetroWest Symposium

Dr. Carlucci briefed the Committee on the meetings that she and Kay Kelly have continued to have in preparation for the Symposium, and how they are progressing with volunteer coordination and setting up the Committee’s own table at the event. There will be 30 Tri-M students working 2-hour shifts to direct Symposium attendees on where to go to find things. 2

Students from FHS serving as interns to the FCC will be there. A 5-member Jazz quintet will be playing, either outside or inside depending on the weather, and they will also perform onstage before the Keynote Speaker introduced. Allegra will produce Cultural District Committee lanyards for each of the Committee members. 50 community service Certificates for student volunteers will also be produced and filled out at the event. Also, with Mr. Timmons' and Mr. Sherlock's help, there has been social media coverage of the event.

Ms. Trahan then weighed in to bring up an order for pens that had been requested at the previous meeting to go along with the FCC notepads, and explained that the Committee would be using its already-existing supply of pens for the event instead of ordering new ones. There had been a misunderstanding of when the funding that was originally set aside for the pens needed to be spent by, and the Committee has another year to use that money that it previously thought it needed to spend before the end of June 2022. Dr. Carlucci added that roughly 100 pens will be supplied, which should be more than enough considering the number of enrolled attendees there currently are. Vice Chair LoPresti has possession of the pens and will supply them to the event. The Committee then took inventory of the total remaining number of Cultural District Committee pens it possesses between all of the different members, and coordinated consolidating their inventory down to fewer individuals. Dr. Carlucci then concluded by saying they are hoping to see all of the Committee members on Saturday May 14 and they can pick up their nametags at the Symposium.

ArtWalk 2022

Dr. Carlucci asked if any of the Committee members had been able to reach out to the Partners that they are acting as liaisons for. Ms. Trahan said she had tried to make contact with Greco at the School Department, but she has not received any response back. Dr. Carlucci said she had been hearing back from LiveArts. The 5 schools who want to perform of the Town Common have applied, and currently it is expected their performances should happen as planned. Ms. Trahan then volunteered to also take on the role of Liaison for the Farmers Market, as Mr. Timmons had originally planned to be Liaison. Dr. Carlucci then mentioned that on the Friday of ArtWalk, there would be a performance by Billy T and Doctor X, a singer-songwriter group with a 1970's grassroots style.

Dr. Carlucci then mentioned that Expressions Enrichment would be having an adult art class on June 9, and 2 children's classes on June 11 one from 10:00am to 12:00pm, and the other from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Ms. Trahan said she could stop by on June 9 to see how Expressions was doing and if they need help. The Committee then continued to discuss the availability of members to meet with the Franklin Art Association. Dr. Carlucci reminded them that she is the Liaison for LiveArts, who will be performing at the Franklin Historical Museum on June 11 at 10:30am. She also mentioned LiveArts would be performing the afternoon of June 12 at the First Unitarian Universalist Church. Ms. Trahan then brought up a performance of Sweeney Todd by LiveArts on June 10 at 7:30pm, June 11 at 7:30pm, and June 12 at 2:00pm, which she will be attending all 3 performances of.

Dr. Carlucci then mentioned Escape Into Fiction is hoping to have an event at their store, but in the meantime they are having their grand opening from June 23 from 5:00pm to 8:00pm after a less formal opening over the weekend of ArtWalk. Dr. Carlucci then continued by mentioning that the Children's Library would like to host a StoryWalk along Main Street like they did last year, but they need help coordinating with the store owners along Main Street to display story book pictures. Dr. Carlucci and Ms. Trahan then suggested that one of them reach out to Cobi

Frongillo to see if he would help with this task, as he helped with the same task last year. Ms. Trahan suggested that she or another Committee member be ready to help in case the Children's Library is able to print the story book pictures, but they find that Cobi Frongillo is unable to help. The Committee then discussed shops that they are confident would display the story book pictures, and agreed that they should get a figure on how many pages will be needing spaces in the storefronts.

Dr. Carlucci then mentioned that the upcoming Strawberry Festival would feature 2 performers over by Birchfield Bakery & Kitchen, followed later by performances from Dom Debaggis at 4:00PM and Heath Nesbit at 6:15. She also mentioned that Dean bank would have a performance stage with Scott Brown and the Diplomats performing for the afternoon. Dr. Carlucci then added that Mr. Barrett would be celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Remington-Jefferson Elementary School on June 10 during the ArtWalk. Ms. Trahan concluded the ArtWalk discussion by reminding the Committee that there was still plenty of opportunity for members to help, and Dr. Carlucci reminded them that a booth would be set up for the Cultural District Committee.

FCD Blog Update

Ms. Trahan thanked Mr. Sherlock for his help in setting up the blog, who in turn said that the blog could be updated whenever the Committee wanted. Mr. Sherlock provided updates to the Committee on the May 14 MetroWest Symposium to say that he had worked with Kay Kelly to provide an audio recording informing attendees of the health & Covid-19 protection measures that FHS contains. The audio ran on the radio on May 4, and will be run again on the week of May 8 as well as be posted on social media. Mr. Sherlock then added that he could populate the blog's calendar with the ArtWalk schedule if someone from the Committee could provide him with that. He added that there would be a Cultural District focus on Wednesdays on the blog. The Committee then went over accessing the blog to make updates and new publications on it, with Ms. Trahan saying that there would need to be a plan set up for who would take responsibility for it and when. Dr. Carlucci brought up that the issue was finding a member who wanted to write the blog updates and could write them well to draw in readers. Ms. Trahan suggested that, for the time being, herself and possibly Ms. Botelho could take responsibility for writing on the blog so that Dr. Carlucci is not overburdened with too many responsibilities.

FCD Budget Funds and remaining MCC Grant Funds

Ms. Trahan told the Committee that 3 requests had been received for grant funding. One from Debra Martin from the Veterans Services; Another from Raymond Mercer for their Sweeney Todd performance at the Black Box; and the last one from Escape Into Fiction. Vice Chair LoPresti asked how much funding is available. While that figure was being found, Dr. Carlucci briefed the Committee one how much each request is for. Escape Into Fiction is asking for \$367.75 to cover 20 chairs and delivery cost to seat guests for Book Discussions. Without them, she has not been able to have any Book Discussions. The chairs would also be usable to the Franklin Art Association as well as anyone who wanted to host events at Escape Into Fiction.

Ms. Trahan interjected to mention the amount of remaining funding had been found to be approximately \$3600. She then continued by saying they had considered \$750-\$1000 for the Veterans Services and a similar dollar-range for the Black Box. Ms. Trahan rounded out the funding requests by saying that \$500 had been intended for Escape Into Fiction, and \$250 had been set aside for Greco at the School Department but is not finalized as the Committee has not

heard back from Greco. Vice Chair LoPresti weighed in to explain the purpose of the Veterans Services funding, and that it was meant to help in part with their efforts to restore and recondition Veteran monuments throughout the Town, but that Veterans Services needs \$14000 for its project and intends to find the remaining funding elsewhere.

Mr. Taberner spoke to point out that, of the Veterans Services Restoration Project, the Persian Gulf Monument by itself was estimated to cost \$1344, thus the Committee could fund its restoration entirely instead of donating to a small fraction of all of the monument restoration projects. Ms. Trahan and Vice Chair LoPresti agreed on providing \$1350 to the restoration of the Persian Gulf. Then, Ms. Trahan and Dr. Carlucci agreed that \$400 for Escape Into Fiction would suffice. Ms. Trahan then proposed to provide \$1200 for the Black Box Performance, to which Dr. Carlucci advised leaving some more funding for the Committee to pay for printing services at Allegra as well as Police Detail at the Franklin Town Common, to which Ms. Trahan then altered her proposed funding for Black Box to \$1000. The total for all 3 funding allocations came out to \$2750, which would leave the Cultural District Committee with approximately \$1000. The funding allocations break down to:

- \$1350 for the Veterans Monument;
- \$400 for Escape Into Fiction; and
- \$1000 for Black Box.

Mr. Taberner confirmed that there would be an additional \$1000 made available for the Committee on July 1. Dr. Carlucci advised that, going forward, the Committee should consider the Franklin Art Association's opening of their new Art Gallery and the possibility of supporting them with funds if requested.

Ms. Trahan motioned that the Committee appropriate the following amounts to their respective applicants: \$400 to Escape Into Fiction; \$1350 to the Veterans Services Department to restore the Persian Gulf Veterans Monument; \$1000 to the Black Box for their upcoming Sweeney Todd performance. Seconded by Vice Chair LoPresti. Ms. Trahan voted yes. Dr. Carlucci voted yes; Ms. Botelho voted yes; Vice Chair LoPresti voted yes; Mr. Barrett voted yes. Motion passed 5-0-0

Mr. Taberner said that letters would be sent to the applicants informing them of the Grant Funding they would be receiving. Mr. Sherlock offered to mention the awards in the Cultural District Committee Piece during the following Wednesday's blog.

Rain Check Program

Dr. Carlucci explained that the Rain Check Program is being led by Lily Rivera, the Town of Franklin Marketing & Communications Specialist, in collaboration with FHS Students. The Program's mission is to send messages of unity and positivity out to the world, in this case by putting messages on sidewalks throughout the Downtown and Cultural District, and they are wondering if the Cultural District Committee would support it and help promote their messages. Dr. Carlucci added that the messages are written in water-activated ink, and the Committee is simply promoting the work and not directly taking part in it.

FCD Passport

Dr. Carlucci continued from discussing what could be done to help the Rain Check Program to talk about the FCD Passport program, which is also being led in part by Lily Rivera. Lily had briefed Mr. Timmons on the program, but Mr. Timmons did not have a chance to relay the

information to the Committee before resigning, so further discussion will have to wait until someone else can meet and talk with Lily.

FCD Partners Meetings

Ms. Trahan said that a Cultural District Partners meeting had originally been planned for Thursday, May 12. However, the Committee had previously discussed altering how Partner Meetings are conducted to entice Partners to attend, whether it be by choosing a different time to hold the Partner Meetings or by having different speakers/hosts for each meeting.

Ms. Trahan is not sure of what the Committee has to discuss at the May 12 Meeting, but the Committee are required to hold 4 quarterly meetings and does not want them to encounter trouble by failing to meet that requirement. The Committee then discussed whether or not the 4 quarterly meetings requirement was official or strictly enforced, and concluded that the 4 quarterly meeting requirement is not strictly mandated. Vice Chair LoPresti said that he believes the intent is broadly to just engage the Partners and a meeting could simply be held in the fall, but the Committee should be working harder on Partner engagement. Ms. Trahan responded by saying that she believes the Committee has been working hard in the past year at furthering its outreach to Partners, but it has been focused more towards the art-oriented Partners and not enough towards the businesses that exist in the Cultural District such as The Rome, La Cantina and Little Shop of Olive Oil.

At the previous Partnership Management and Outreach Subcommittee Meeting, they discussed how best to start engaging those members of the Cultural District. Ms. Trahan is unsure of how to approach this matter, but she is certain there should be a meeting to further discuss ideas on it. Ms. Botelho asked if they should seek input from Partners to see what times in the day they might be most inclined to attend Partner Meetings. Ms. Trahan agreed, but said that at this point the only way to really ask Partners about that would be to go meet them in person as other means of reaching out have not proven successful. Dr. Carlucci proposed going to businesses directly during ArtWalk to meet with the business owners, as those businesses have participated greatly in the NewsLetter in the past and that might transfer over to the blog nicely.

Ms. Trahan expressed concerns about being able to reach all of the Partners that they want to connect closer with, to which Dr. Carlucci suggested everyone on the Committee take on the responsibility of connecting with a Partner. Ms. Trahan said she and Ms. Botelho had put together materials that the other Committee Members could use to understand how to connect with the Partners and convince them of the significance of attending Partner Meetings. Vice Chair LoPresti added that Committee Members should be emphasizing to the Partners why they should be attending and why the meetings are important, and possibly invite a guest speaker to draw in new attendees. Ms. Trahan said she and Ms. Botelho would continue work on their list.

CD Committee Meeting Dates, June 2022-May 2023

Ms. Trahan then explained she and Dr. Carlucci were thinking it would be beneficial to come up with a regularly occurring day and time for meeting dates. In the past, the Committee has been meeting on a Thursday each month, but choosing a specific day for every month would be easier to work around. Vice Chair LoPresti suggested holding all meetings in FY23 on the second Thursday of every month. Ms. Botelho agreed this would be a good day to meet, and Dr. Carlucci also said that a set day would make it easier for people to attend. Ms. Trahan expressed agreement as well, but brought up an issue in that June 9, the second Thursday of June, would also be the beginning of ArtWalk and make meeting between the Committee

members difficult. Vice Chair LoPresti suggested starting the second-Thursday-every-month policy in July 2022. Ms. Trahan agreed with this idea. Dr. Carlucci asked if this plan would mean that the Committee was not going to meet in June 2022, to which Ms. Trahan replied by asking if a June meeting was necessary. Dr. Carlucci said that the Committee needed to organize who would be working at the Committee's booth at ArtWalk and tie up loose ends. Vice Chair LoPresti said he would be away at the time of ArtWalk, but wanted to make sure he could help the Committee prepare as best as he could beforehand. Ms. Trahan proposed the Committee forego a meeting and have members sign up for working at the booth instead. The Committee concluded they could go without a June meeting, and have its next meeting be July 14 at 7:00 PM, and then plan further meetings afterward.

Mr. Taberner agreed this schedule was okay, and reminded the Committee that up to 3 members could be exchanging emails at a time to communicate things that cannot wait for a meeting without violating public meeting law. The Committee then finalized their plan to skip a June 2022 meeting and meet next in July 2022.

Next Cultural District Meeting Dates

July 14, 2022 7:00 PM

Cultural District Partners Meeting

Fall 2022, specific date TBD

Additional Comments

Mr. Taberner told Ms. Trahan he had sent her letters to send to the Partners who had been awarded grant funding at this meeting. Vice Chair LoPresti, Dr. Carlucci, and Ms. Trahan agreed that each of them would send one of the letters to the 3 Partners.

Adjourn

Ms. Trahan motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Vice Chair LoPresti. Meeting was passed without vote.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Paslaski
Administrative Assistant