

**Franklin Cultural District Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
December 8, 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: Co-Chairs Roberta Trahan and Dr. Pandora Carlucci, Vice Chair John LoPresti, Katherine Botelho, and Amy Adams

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

***Upon achieving quorum with the required minimum of members present, Ms. Trahan opened the meeting at 7:01 PM***

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

***After confirming that requested corrections to the minutes had been made Dr. Carlucci motioned to approve the Cultural District Committee meeting minutes from September 15, 2022. Vice Chair LoPresti seconded. Vice Chair LoPresti voted yes; Ms. Botelho voted yes; Dr. Carlucci voted yes; Ms. Trahan voted yes. Motion to accept passed 4-0-0.***

***Vice Chair LoPresti motioned to approve the Cultural District Committee meeting minutes from October 10, 2022. Seconded by Ms. Trahan. Vice Chair LoPresti voted yes; Ms. Botelho voted yes; Dr. Carlucci voted yes; Ms. Trahan voted yes. Motion to accept passed 4-0-0.***

**New Committee Members**

Vice Chair LoPresti said that they are still looking for volunteers, and he will work with Alan Earls of the Franklin Observer and Stephen Sherlock of Franklin Matters to send out another ad. Vice Chair LoPresti also brought up the plan to have Dr. Carlucci and Ms. Trahan be interviewed by Franklin TV on the opportunities in volunteering with the Cultural District sometime in January or February. Dr. Carlucci said that she had received a message from Julie McCann of the Town Administration that someone had filled out a volunteer form to join the Committee, and Dr. Carlucci had reached out to them and learned they were searching for a different type of volunteer program. Ms. Trahan liked Vice Chair LoPresti's idea for being interviewed by Franklin TV, and noted that most other committees are having a hard time finding new volunteers. The Committee agreed that Vice Chair LoPresti would continue to be the one who receives notifications on new potential volunteers, but emphasized that it was important that at least one member acknowledge those notices.

**Harvest Festival: October 1, 2022**

Ms. Trahan reviewed the Harvest Festival, of which the Cultural District Committee had set up in a booth with Franklin Downtown Partnership this year. Some people signed up for the

Newsletter, and increased awareness of the Committee and its purpose to people who stopped by. Ms. Botelho mentioned that they had also given away Committee advertising materials such as bags and pens to those people.

### **Cultural Wednesdays**

Dr. Carlucci said that Cultural Wednesdays continue to be well-received, and that they can see who is helping increase the click-rate of the Newsletter, as well as what they are reading about. Dr. Carlucci also brought up and applauded Ms. Adams' work over the past several weeks of helping foster engagement by hosting an Art Giveaway in the Cultural District and having participants follow clues to find the Artwork, which Ms. Adams then shows in the Newsletter. Ms. Adams said she had started the program with the goal of building a sense of community and people working together, and is glad that it appears to be working. Ms. Trahan complimented how it encouraged participants to go to the Cultural District and explore in search of the Artwork, and thanked Ms. Adams for working to set it up.

Ms. Trahan asked about being able to see what websites readers are coming from, which Dr. Carlucci answered that they could not. Vice Chair LoPresti asked if Stephen Sherlock could help them find that information so they could analyze where new readers are coming from. Dr. Carlucci asked the Committee to notify her of any events or news in the District that she could put into the Newsletter.

### **MCC Check-In Meetings**

Dr. Carlucci briefed the Committee on her attendance at last The Mass Cultural Council Meeting where Carolyn Cole was the moderator. The first half of the meeting mostly covered grants, while the \$15000 CDI grant was at the time not yet applied for or reviewed. The second half of the meeting covered access to events and the arts, which Dr. Carlucci learned a lot from and would share her notes with the rest of the Committee later. Dr. Carlucci said she there was very helpful information from Charles Baldwin with regards to helping the Cultural District be more inclusive to diverse groups, ethnicities, and cultures. Dr. Carlucci then shared her opinion that having Charles Baldwin or Cheyenne Cohn-Postell of the MCC Equity and Access Initiative Teams come to a Committee meeting to provide lessons on the same topics they spoke about at the MCC Meeting would be very beneficial. Vice Chair LoPresti suggested they could have either-or-both of them attend a Partners meeting and connect them directly with Partners just like they did with the October 10 Partners meeting. Dr. Carlucci suggested reaching out to Carolyn Cole for directions as to how to set up such a meeting, which the other Committee Members agreed with.

### **FCD Walking Tour & Partners Meeting with MCC, October 10, 2022**

Ms. Trahan reviewed the tour and said it was very successful. Vice Chair LoPresti remarked that everyone seemed very engaged with the tour and the Black Box discussion, which Dr. Carlucci agreed and expressed admiration for the Cultural District having attractions that are historical as well as attractions which are new and actively engaging to the people who attended the tour. Ms. Trahan said she believed the guests, including the MCC, were appreciative of what they learned and received on the tour.

### **ArtWALK 2023**

Ms. Trahan said the Committee should begin discussion of ArtWALK now for calendar purposes. Dr. Carlucci mentioned that she and Vice Chair LoPresti had been considering trolley tours or shuttle vehicles as a way to help transport attendees who might have difficulties with

mobility around the Festival, and they have reached out to Town Councilman Cobi Frongillo to consider using GATRA as a shuttle service. Ms. Trahan and Dr. Carlucci agreed that they would plan on how to allocate grant funds later on.

### **MetroWest 2023 Symposium**

Ms. Trahan briefed the Committee on a discussion with Kaye Kelly to host the next Symposium on Saturday, March 4 of 2023, earlier than the previous year to reduce scheduling conflicts with people who would otherwise want to attend. They have reached out to Michael Bobbitt of the Mass Cultural Council to see if he would like to attend again, but have not heard back a confirmed response. Dr. Carlucci remarked that they do not have much time to prepare this Symposium, but noted that they do not have to set up an event to be just like the previous one. Ms. Trahan suggested that having the event on a Thursday instead of a Saturday might actually bring in a higher attendance, as they have found it apparent that people who would otherwise attend are usually busy on Saturdays.

Vice Chair LoPresti asked if there is an order or rotation of what Towns and Committees take charge of hosting the Symposium each year, since Franklin appears to be hosting it twice in a row. Dr. Carlucci answered that the 2022 Symposium was the first ever by the MCC, although they had previously also hosted Arts Advocacy day. She added that this year, the MCC was letting the Franklin Cultural District take charge of the event instead as the MCC would be busy working on other projects. Ms. Trahan said that she was uncertain of whether or not they could put together a complete Symposium in the two-month window of time that they have.

Mr. Taberner informed the Committee that they could fund the Symposium with their CDI funds. He added that the Department of Planning and Community Development and Lily Rivera in the Town Administration could possibly help if need be. He emphasized that they need to figure out what they want at the event sooner not later. Dr. Carlucci said she would welcome any ideas or thoughts on how the Symposium should go. Vice Chair LoPresti said that he liked the idea of having an informal Partner meeting at the Symposium. Dr. Carlucci responded by recalling guest opinions she had heard at the 2022 Symposium who were from other communities and had expressed admiration that the Symposium showed off the entire MetroWest area, not just Franklin, and Ms. Adams expressed agreement with this point. Ms. Trahan asked if there are any resources in the MetroWest area which they can utilize, such as Cultural Committees and groups from other communities. Ms. Adams weighed in to ask if the event could actually be called a symposium if it was going to have a Partners meeting and a guest speaker in place of other shows and exhibits. She also asked that, if the Committee be able to pull in performances and groups for the Symposium, then could they also invite hosts and exhibits from other towns in the MetroWest, would they have the funding and resources. Ms. Trahan answered that she thought they would not have enough time to bring all of those groups onboard and successfully coordinate a Symposium of that size this year, but if they hosted the Symposium in 2024 and started preparing earlier then they may have enough time. Vice Chair LoPresti added that such a move would allow more time to give other towns the option of hosting the Symposium themselves and prepare an event of the 2022 scale.

Ms. Trahan asked Dr. Carlucci what she thought of putting the offer out to the MetroWest for any town to accept hosting the Symposium themselves each year. Dr. Carlucci responded that she did not think the Committee had permission to give the responsibility to another town, and that the Franklin Cultural Council should be consulted as they originally directed the 2022 Symposium. Ms. Trahan agreed that the Committee should approach the FCC and let them know that the Committee does not think it has the time nor resources to adequately prepare for a Symposium in March of 2023. Dr. Carlucci remarked that, if the Committee reached out to its

Partners such as the Franklin Art Association, the Black Box, Dean College, and Franklin School of Performing Arts, then they might find they have people who can help with the work. Mr. Taberner suggested that they gather the people who were in touch with all involved participants at the 2022 Symposium, which in this case would be Kaye Kelly of the FCC in addition to the Cultural District Committee, and have a meeting in January to figure out what exactly they need to have at the event, whether or not and if they can accomplish it, and then obtain contact information from Kaye Kelly on participants from outside Franklin. He added that someone else on the FCC may be available and want to work with the Committee on the Symposium, and the School Department could be invited to help as well. Mr. Taberner then continued by saying that the funding that the Committee has access to should be enough to afford the expenses of the Symposium. Ms. Trahan asked for clarification on whether the Committee is going to have a meeting in January with key people to figure out if there is enough interest in participation from them to organize a successful Symposium, or if the Committee is going to instead meet with the FCC and let them know that the Committee does not think it has enough time or resources for the Symposium. Vice Chair LoPresti expressed agreement with the latter option, along with involving MCC in further Symposiums so that they can see if any other towns would be interested in hosting them.

Ms. Trahan asked for opinions from the other Committee Members. Ms. Adams expressed concern over the number of unknowns, and how their experience with setting up other events months in advance has shown the Committee how much time is needed for an event like this, and that is in addition to the other events that the Committee already has plans to prepare for in 2023.

Ms. Trahan pointed out that the Committee does not have to hold the Symposium in March, and they can plan to have it at a later date. Ms. Botelho asked why the FCC had decided not to continue hosting the Symposium themselves, to which Ms. Trahan answered that Kaye Kelly is stepping down, and as she had been the primary coordinator of the first Symposium, the FCC does not have anyone who can immediately take on her responsibilities.

The Committee discussed and agreed that there was not enough time in two months to prepare a complete Symposium. Ms. Trahan suggested that they reach out to Kaye Kelly to let the FCC know the Committee's decision, to which Dr. Carlucci agreed.

### **FY23 MCC Cultural District Investment Grant**

Ms. Trahan thanked Mr. Taberner for his help with applying for the MCC Grant. The Committee then began to discuss ideas on where the grant funding could be allocated to, which Mr. Taberner remind them that it would need to be spent by the end of June 2023. Mr. Taberner then presented a briefing of the MCC Grant and funding to the Committee, which detailed the amount of funding that would be received from as well as requirements for using any of the funding. Mr. Taberner pointed out that expenses for events that might take place after June 2023 can be covered by the Grant if they are paid beforehand, which would provide the Committee and Partners with more flexibility on funding programs in the second half of the year. Ms. Trahan asked if the Committee should reach out to Partners to let them know they have grant funds available. The rest of the Committee agreed, but with the suggestion that they just be referred to as funds rather than re-granted funds so that Partners do not confuse them with those grant funds which are handled by the FCC. Ms. Adams inquired as to why there is no balance of funding set aside for public visual artists, because she has found that other towns have funds set aside to pay them for putting their art up on town property such as painting power boxes or fire hydrants. Ms. Trahan agreed with Ms. Adams that they should start a fund for painting the electrical boxes and have visual artists be invited to participate when the Town

is ready to paint them. She and Vice Chair LoPresti suggested that some of the MCC Grant could be allocated a standing fund for any such future project where they need to send out a call to artists who incur a cost in creating and maintaining their art in the public space.

After further discussion, the Committee decided they would have to separate the fund for a call for artists from the funds that would be allocated to Partners who request them. Dr. Carlucci asked how a call for artists would be done, which Mr. Taberner answered would involve notifying Lily Rivera so she can publicize it, as well as the Department of Public Works, before any work commences. Vice Chair LoPresti and Ms. Adams agreed they would reach out to Lily Rivera to discuss this idea after the holiday season.

Ms. Trahan asked if a survey form should again be sent to the Partners in January to ask for ideas and what Partners would like to see happen in 2023, to which Dr. Carlucci and Vice Chair LoPresti agreed. The Committee agreed that the form would be sent out after the January 12, 2023 meeting to give Partners time to respond.

### **Next Cultural District Meeting Dates**

January 12, 2023 7:00 PM

February 9, 2023 7:00 PM

### **Additional Comments**

Ms. Adams announced that her husband would be participating in *A Conversation of Hope: Black and Jewish Voices in Harmony* on Sunday December 11 at 7:00pm at the Temple on 900 Washington Street, and encouraged anyone interested to attend.

### **Adjourn**

***Meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM***

Respectfully submitted,

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Tyler Paslaski  
Administrative Assistant