

**Franklin Cultural District Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
August 12, 2020  
Held as a Virtual Meeting  
via Remote Access Zoom Platform**

***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

Staff in attendance: Maxine Kinhart, Administrative Assistant; Judith Lizardi, Recording Secretary

Others in attendance: Kaye Kelly, Cultural Council; Joni Magee, Cultural Council; Lillian Gould, Cultural Council; Amy Adams

#### **Commencement**

Chair Schoen opened the meeting at 7:04 PM.

#### **Welcome and Introduction of Amy Adams**

Chair Schoen welcomed to the meeting Ms. Amy Adams, Franklin resident for two years. She reviewed some of Ms. Adams' Facebook and neighborhood initiatives of positivity and connectedness. Ms. Adams introduced herself and reviewed her background. She said she has been painting and doing her art since moving to Franklin.

#### **Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, June 10, 2020. ***Motion by Ms. Trahan to approve the May 12, 2020, meeting minutes. Seconded by Mr. LoPresti; voted and approved unanimously.***

#### **Chair's Update**

##### Massachusetts Cultural Council Community Check-Ins

Chair Schoen stated the Massachusetts Cultural Council Community Check-Ins are filled with great information with so much going on politically and socially. At the August 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, MCC members talked about the legislative process and what they are doing behind the scenes to support the arts. She reviewed a banner and mural project done in Holyoke to celebrate the community's diversity. She reviewed an initiative in Melrose for way-finding with narratives about what is happening there. She suggested that MCC can be used as a resource for ideas. Mr. LoPresti requested a calendar of the MCC meetings. Chair Schoen said a person must sign up for meeting notifications on the MCC website. Ms. Carlucci suggested something like what Melrose did could be done in Franklin to highlight the cultural opportunities. She stated the MCC presenters talked about how a community can be engaged and inspired to embrace these initiatives. One presenter suggested it starts with a group that is emailed a lot; reach out to that group and give them easy information to share and bring them into the larger group.

##### MCC Harvest Grant Update

Chair Schoen stated the grant has been put on hold based on the State's budget. She will continue to check back with MCC to obtain more information.

### Social Media Outreach

Chair Schoen stated the Committee is still struggling to get partners to send information to them about what is going on with their businesses/organizations. She stated the Committee wants to help the partners get out their information; it is hoped that the newsletter will do that. She stated that Mr. Chelman is doing a lot of the social outreach. She asked how the Committee members can help Mr. Chelman get more of the events out to the social media posts. Mr. Chelman said that he friends and follows most of the partners social media sites. He will then share those. He stated that it is more of hit-the-streets; just being someone who shares and retweets is not going to do anything. He said it is difficult to be responsible for it all. He said he still runs into people who do not know what this group does or who the group is. He suggested that the members should ask the partners what the Committee can do for them and how the Committee can help them. He feels responsible for the success of the Committee; he is feeling a lot of pressure. He noted that if he shares five things in a row on Facebook, it might be annoying. Mr. LoPresti asked if Mr. Chelman was using Twitter. Mr. Chelman said he was not really using Twitter; he is not getting a lot of positive response back. Mr. LoPresti said maybe people are not responding, but they may be reading and learning. Ms. Kelly said Mr. Chelman is doing a great job; he should keep doing what he is doing. She said she thinks people are feeling oversaturated online. She sees Mr. Chelman's information and thinks it may be better in the fall; there is a lot going on right now. Mr. Chelman noted that The Black Box had an outdoor event. He discussed what the social media account is following. Mr. LoPresti said that all the partners should be on the Facebook page. The primary goal is to promote and make everyone in Town aware of what is going on. Mr. Chelman said he worries about putting out too many posts/shares a day. He said he would get into a routine of viewing three times a day and then promoting. He does not want to be annoying. Chair Schoen suggested Mr. Chelman do that and then get feedback from the partners and ask what they prefer, less or more information. Mr. LoPresti suggested that in the next newsletter the partners should be asked what they use—Twitter or Facebook. Ms. Trahan said that Mr. Chelman is doing a great job. She said the Downtown Partnership has the same challenges about trying to get information from the partners and then get the information out. Mr. Chelman should not feel like this is only on him. Chair Schoen suggested that Mr. Chelman reach out and let the Committee members know how they can help. There are four social media outlets that have accounts: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and the website. Possibly, Mr. Chelman and Mr. Barrett can each take two. Mr. Chelman said he will amp it up a bit and then look for feedback from the partners. Mr. Barrett stated Mr. Sherlock suggested LinkedIn is the best account to use. Chair Schoen said what the Committee is doing has changed a little in the past five months. Ms. Adams said Mr. Chelman is probably right about the Facebook postings, and she would possibly unfollow them if there were too many posts. Mr. Chelman said he appreciates all the feedback. Ms. Adams asked what the goal of the group is. Chair Schoen said the Committee supports other events and encourages collaboration between partners; the Committee does not sponsor events themselves.

### **Partners Subcommittee Update**

#### Franklin Cultural District Partner/Outreach Newsletter

Chair Schoen stated the second newsletter was sent out to 140 people; there are 142 on the mailing list. She noted Ms. Carlucci did a great deal of work on it. She said the open rate for the newsletter is 47, and the click rate increased from the first edition. Mr. LoPresti said he thought they were going to use the mailing list from the Town. Chair Schoen said there is a notice in the newsletter if people want to be added to the list. Mr. LoPresti stated that this is about promoting the partners through the rest of the Town. Ms. Carlucci said they have not had a chance to

debrief with Ms. Anne Marie Tracey and Mr. Jamie Hellen due to all the things going on in the Town. Mr. LoPresti said it is all about reach and leveraging that reach; when there is more time, they should explore the Town's email list. Chair Schoen stated that she thought the first newsletter was too long; however, they were looking for entries for the second issue. Mr. LoPresti said he was willing to help, but he never received any copy. Ms. Carlucci said she emailed everyone, but no one responded. Mr. LoPresti noted he is on the Newsletter Committee with Ms. Carlucci, and he would like to help out going forward.

#### Franklin Cultural Council Porch Fest Collaboration

Chair Schoen stated that she reached out to the Cultural Council members regarding collaboration. She stated that Porch Fest is something that can be done while social distancing. She asked if there is a way to highlight the Cultural District on some of the porches of downtown Town buildings. She noted the Committee has no budget for this. Ms. Kelly said she would like to collaborate on this. She said the Cultural Council does not meet during the summer; they will meet during the first week in September. However, they would talk about ideas and a budget tonight; they have some Town money but noted that Mr. Hellen will be making a cut to those funds. She will then take tonight's ideas back to her Council. She stated that the Franklin Art Festival is not going to happen this fall; maybe they will hold it in the spring. Regarding Porch Fest ideas, there is limited time to get into the community due to weather; September, October and maybe early November would be safe to do some simple programming in the community. She noted that the Recreation Center has done a great job with Concerts on the Common. She had hoped that as part of ArtWeek there would be an immersion of Indian culture involving the Indian community; there will be a place for this in the future. Chair Schoen said they had talked about using some of the places in the Cultural District such as Dean College, Franklin Library, FSPA, Historical Museum, and the steps of two churches in the District. Ms. Kaye said she thinks that the churches would not allow using their steps. Ms. Trahan said they would need to have a conversation with Father Brian. Chair Schoen said she was thinking about local musicians. Ms. Magee asked if there is a reason for doing it in the Cultural District. She stated that if talking about inclusivity, doing it in neighborhoods would be more inclusive. This would be an opportunity to invite folks into neighborhoods. She would like to hear a variety of different bands in Franklin. She said there is a whole undercurrent of what we are not engaging. Ms. Kelly said she knows other people in Franklin who would love to put something together. There can be a mix and variety of music. Ms. Magee stated that to do it in neighborhoods would be more organic. She noted where she has seen Porch Fests, the people did not get paid; it was community building. Mr. LoPresti said variety is good, but the Cultural District's mission is to promote the Cultural District; going to neighborhoods takes away from the Cultural District. Ms. Magee suggested starting the program within the District and then go off to the neighborhoods. She said she is not sure if people in the Town know what the Cultural District is. Chair Schoen said that is what the Committee is trying to promote. She suggested scheduling time in the Cultural District and then later in the afternoon go into the neighborhoods. Ms. Kelly said this could be tried in the fall in the Cultural District and then in the spring in the neighborhoods. She said there are logistics to be considered when going into the neighborhoods such as police details. It may be safer in the fall to use the established venues. Ms. Carlucci said this would be porches on public venues. She asked how can we take a feeling and celebrate various cultures, ethnicities, and art forms, and how can this be done with social distancing and moving people around. Ms. Trahan said the neighborhood groups could come to the Town Common and try it out. Ms. Magee said she hopes the Committee is mindful about reaching out to the community to find the artists. Ms. Kelly said she likes the idea of reaching out and finding some steps. Ms. Adams asked if there was an arts committee where the artists communicate with one another. Ms. Kelly said there was an idea of putting together a list of all artists in the community. Ms. Adams said those people have a following which will help attract others. Ms. Magee asked if

Ms. Adams would like to work on creating such a list. The group determined that Ms. Carlucci, Mr. LoPresti, Ms. Trahan, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Magee, and possibly Ms. Adams would be on the Porch Fest Committee. Mr. Chelman said it was discussed at the last meeting that they were going to try to bring in black and brown artists and they would be paying the artists. Ms. Kelly asked how to abide by the limit of 50 people for gatherings in MA. Ms. Trahan noted that the number of people at the Farmers' Market is monitored. Chair Schoen said that she would send out emails to start to get the new committee started. They will have to talk about the financials. Ms. Kelly stated that she wants to make sure the artists are being paid correctly. Discussion commenced on how long the artists should present; 45 minutes was agreed upon. Discussion commenced about if this was actually a Porch Fest; Ms. Magee stated that it is not organic enough to be a Porch Fest.

#### Franklin Art Association Online Juried Show

This item was not discussed.

#### **Franklin Downtown Partnership Update (Pandora & Roberta)**

Ms. Trahan said Ms. Lisa Piana is working with the Board and has come up with a list of things that can be done while socially distancing; they are moving forward. Ms. Carlucci will look forward to sharing some of Ms. Piana's ideas.

#### **Economic Development Committee Market Position Study Update**

Chair Schoen said they want to share the findings of this analysis. She asked everyone to look at it and said the Committee members can talk about it in the future.

#### **Goals for FY2021**

Chair Schoen stated the goals for FY2021 were put online. Committee members were asked for their feedback. She noted that the goals were provided to Mr. Bryan Taberner, Director of Planning and Community Development. She stated that at a future meeting, the Committee will further review the goals; the Committee will have to be mindful of the goals as the goals will be measured. Ms. Trahan suggested having a Committee meeting/workshop specifically to focus on the economic study and the goals. Chair Schoen said she would like to have Mr. Hellen provide clarification and guidance on some parts of the study. Ms. Carlucci said there are so many things in the report that it is overwhelming. Chair Schoen suggested discussing it in October. Mr. LoPresti said the 2020 MetroFest event was held virtually; Franklin had a virtual booth. The event is being presented again on August 29<sup>th</sup>; he will participate again. Chair Schoen asked Mr. LoPresti to send a link on how to access event. Mr. LoPresti suggested the event be promoted on Facebook and Twitter.

#### **Next Cultural District Meeting Date**

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2020, at 6:30 PM.

#### **Next Cultural District Partner Meeting Date**

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2020, at 7:00 PM. Chair Schoen stated that Ms. Raye Lynn Mercer would be the featured speaker. She noted that future meeting dates would be scheduled at the September meeting.

#### **Adjourn**

With no further discussion, a motion was made by Chair Schoen to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. LoPresti; voted and approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary