

**Franklin Cultural District Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
August 24, 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

Members not present: Roberta Trahan, Jamie Barrett, Evan Chelman

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

Others in attendance: Kaye Kelly, Cultural Council; Joni Magee, Cultural Council; Amy Adams, Stephen Sherlock

### **Commencement**

Chair Schoen opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

### **Welcome**

Chair Schoen noted that others may join during the meeting.

### **Porch Fest & Other Ideas**

#### **Brainstorming.**

Chair Schoen stated they were hopeful to organize a Porch Fest, but the State's outdoor gathering limits were reduced to 50; as such, this event does not seem manageable. They must come back to the drawing board to generate some other ideas. Ms. Kelly said she feels they should wait until spring to do this event because of the question marks as to what will happen in the next few weeks. It would be a lot of work to organize and the outdoor gathering limits could be further reduced to 25. She stated she is struggling financially with the FCC grants as people are not getting back to her. She has emailed each person who has received a grant and is not sure who is accepting and who will say no. She stated that other grants, such as MCC grants, could not be used for this event. She noted that she is supposed to be flexible with grants, but she would like to tell people that if they do not get back to her, the money will go to others. She does not know that everyone has read her emails, so there is a question mark over funding. She is sure she has approximately \$790, but would like to be able to provide an accurate number.

Ms. Kelly stated that she and her husband are working musicians. They are going to do an hour long set in her neighborhood; they are thinking of doing this on their own. They will keep the gathering numbers to under 50 people and neighbors would wear masks. She suggested a Porch Fest series with just one person performing per series; possibly they could plan one during the end of September, one in October, and one in spring. This may be a safer way to work this as having multiple stages is a lot to manage during a pandemic. She said she could check with the Recreation Department to see how they keep their activities to the correct number of participants in order to do it safely. Chair Schoen noted that the Police Department is not issuing any permits for events such as the Turkey Trot.

Ms. Adams suggested the Porch Fest be done virtually; however, some Zoom calls get bombed. There would have to be one or two people to maintain the Zoom rooms. Maybe people could register ahead of time. Ms. Kelly said the FCC was going to try to maximize the next two months of good weather and then they know they will have to be online to do events. She is going to propose to her board that from November on they will offer many art and culture events online. She stated that she feels like they are fighting for attention online. She thinks if they are going to do a Porch Fest virtually, they will really have to try to attract people online. Mr. LoPresti agreed that many people are Zoomed out. Maybe they should plan the Porch Fest event for the spring and have time to plan it for outdoors and hopefully have larger crowds. Chair Schoen said that based on their Cultural District goal, and related to the Porch Fest event, they could sponsor some kind of ethnically diverse event of possibly one hour or less that will get some attention and have it be virtual and see what happens. She suggested that maybe the definition of success is if 20 people watch. Ms. Magee stated that she is on a social and racial justice task force; they are doing a unity community to showcase as educational and informational an event for folks of color. She stated that high school students of color wanted to start an initiative. The adults have a variety of different people who could do spoken work, photography, etc., and it would be run by folks of color; it would be live. She stated that 67 Degrees Brewing said they would do an event at their location and it would be ticketed. She stated that her task force is reaching out to others to do an event, as well. Ms. Adams discussed ideas for the arts that would be inclusive for the community. She noted that there are fears and risks for the number of people. Ms. Kelly agreed with Chair Schoen that just because it is not known if people will come, that does not mean it should not be tried. She suggested a virtual Cultural District tour; maybe this is a good time to do some kind of slideshow/video. It could be a great educational tool that could be shared often. Chair Schoen said that at next week's meeting they are going to talk about the website; maybe this is something they could discuss with Anne Marie Tracey and put something on the website.

Ms. Carlucci said she is hesitant about holding a live event. She stated that she is also on the Downtown Partnership and they have also been talking about events such as a drive-through event. She suggested joining ideas about a virtual environment with those on the social and justice task force. She stated that people are trying to stay safe and still embrace the arts. Ms. Adams said she thinks it could work virtually. They would have the performers set everything up ahead of time; and virtually is less expensive. Ms. Magee suggested parallel platforms of both virtual and live such as with the 67 Degrees Brewing business. She stated they are looking at businesses of people of color; there is a lot of opportunity. She does not want what they do to compete with others; the focus is on amplifying voices in Franklin. Chair Schoen suggested doing the taping in the Cultural District spaces. Mr. LoPresti stated he liked featuring the Cultural District partners. He said 67 Degrees Brewing is not in the Cultural District. Ms. Magee stated this is for businesses for folks of colors. Mr. LoPresti said the Franklin Cultural District should be promoting partners in the District. Chair Schoen said that FCD is collaborating and supporting the racial and cultural diversity. She stated Mr. Hellen also wanted them to promote businesses outside of the District; she said they could support the 67 Degrees Brewing event even though it is outside of the District. Ms. Carlucci stated the FCD has supported businesses outside of the District. Mr. LoPresti said he is just thinking about the goals that they have to report to the State. Chair Schoen stated that this would be meeting one of FCD's goals of ethnic and cultural diversity. Mr. LoPresti said they have to be conscious of their District. Ms. Magee said she would learn more about the District and find businesses of color within the District. Chair Schoen said these discussions are very helpful. The FCD wants to work and collaborate with other groups in Town. She said they agree it will be a virtual event with some focus on the District and focusing on racial and social justice and unity and community. Discussion

commenced about the timeframe for this event. Ms. Magee said they were doing their event in September and October. In the fall they can tape the event. She said it is not known what the allowed gathering numbers would be at the time of the event. Some people will enjoy having it virtually, as well. Chair Schoen asked how Ms. Magee's group sees the FCD supporting them; she said they are most comfortable with having the event virtual at this time and not doing something live. Mr. LoPresti said that the recordings can be added to the FCD website. Mr. Sherlock said the details needed to be worked out and then they can discuss the recordings for replay.

Ms. Carlucci asked if the social and justice group was a certified Franklin organization with insurance. Ms. Magee said they are more of a task force. They are still figuring out their membership; they might be moving in the 501C direction. They are at the preliminary stages and trying to figure out how to engage and inform the community on racial justice. Ms. Carlucci said the FCD committee needs to know what they are supporting. Ms. Magee said her group is only on their second meeting; she would look at the timeline after her group's next meeting and she would get back to the FCD. Chair Schoen thanked everyone for their time. She would like to see this come to fruition between the FCC, FCD, and Ms. Magee's group. She said she would like to define the goal a little better and have another conversation.

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

The next meetings are scheduled for Monday, August 31, 2020 at 7:00 PM with Anne Marie Tracey; Monday, September 14, 2020, at 6:30 PM; and Wednesday, September 30, 2020 at 6:30 PM - FCD & FDP Business Listening Session

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

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2020, at 7:00 PM.

#### **Adjourn**

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary