

Franklin Cultural District Committee
Minutes of Meeting
August 15, 2019
Meeting held at Franklin Municipal Building, Room 205
355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA

TOWN OF FRANKLIN
TOWN CLERK

2019 AUG 20 P 2:34

RECEIVED

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

Members not present: Tyler Warren.

Also in attendance: Bryan Taberner, Planning & Community Development Director.

Commencement

Chair Schoen opened the meeting at 7:03 PM.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

- July 22, 2019, 7:00 PM Meeting. **Motion by Ms. Schoen to approve the July 22, 2019, Committee meeting minutes. Seconded by Ms. Trahan; voted and approved unanimously.**

Introduction of New Committee Member

- Jamie Barrett. Chair Schoen introduced new Committee member Jamie Barrett. She reviewed his background, career, and experience in the Franklin music department. She noted he is a performer as well as the composer of the Town's song. Mr. Barrett provided a review of his connection to the arts and his teaching experience. He stated he lives in town and loves to perform at festivals and events; he is thrilled to be a member of the Committee. Mr. Taberner thanked Mr. Barrett for performing at MetroFest 2016; he did a great job.

Subcommittee Updates

- Website Calendar Update. Chair Schoen noted Mr. Warren is not in attendance at this meeting; this item will be further discussed at a future meeting.

Partners Subcommittee Update

- Upcoming Partners Meeting Date Changed to Wednesday, September 18, 2019 – Notice Sent to All Partners
- Reaching Out to Dean for More Information on the Survey
- Plans to Meet Individually with Some of the Partners for Feedback

Chair Schoen stated she and Ms. Carlucci have been working on ways to engage the partners; they met with Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator, for clarification. She stated Mr. Hellen reiterated his ideas and vision for the Committee that he discussed during the July 22, 2019 Committee meeting. He stated the Committee will be different as it was previously focused on the formation and establishment of the District. She stated Mr. Hellen encouraged them to have their own initiatives. As a Committee, they want to come to a common direction about what the initiatives should be; this should not be confined to the Goals Subcommittee. They want to reach out past the partners into the community such as with entrepreneurs like Bob Vozzella and Brad Chaffee. She discussed some of the new developments in the downtown area including the condominiums and Dean Avenue apartments. She stated Mr. Hellen indicated he liked the Taste of ArtWeek event with the artistic activities, food trucks, and vendors; it was well attended. Ms. Carlucci said they confirmed with Mr. Hellen that the Committee can go out and do things and suggest initiatives. She suggested this be a future agenda item for discussion. Mr. LoPresti stated based on his experience, the Committee does not want to bite off more than it can chew. They should decide their key initiatives and do those completely and well.

Chair Schoen and Ms. Carlucci discussed reaching out to the Cultural Council regarding the continuance of the ArtWeek event. Ms. Trahan said if the Cultural Council does not want to take on ArtWeek again, there would be other entities that would want to do it; it was such a big success. Mr. LoPresti stated Stacey David indicated the Cultural Council was going forward with the event. Ms. Trahan mentioned Ms. David in the past made it clear that she was going forward with it. Chair Schoen summarized that based on the discussions with Mr. Hellen, the shift of the Committee's goals has begun. Originally, the Committee was not running events, but supporting the partners. Now, the core is to get the goals accomplished and if there is time, they can do more. She suggested the Committee talk more about these new ideas for the Committee's direction at future meetings.

Ms. Carlucci provided background information about the Dean College student survey. She stated Dave Drucker, Dean of Students at Dean College, said the online survey was sent via SurveyMonkey to all students during post-spring break of this year. The survey was open for students to complete for a few weeks, and students were offered incentives to complete it. About 30 percent of students completed the survey which provided about 300 responses. Of those students, 65 percent were first and second-year students. She noted this survey was part of a larger student survey. She has not analyzed the data. Mr. Taberner confirmed the survey information the Committee received contained no demographic information such as student age. Mr. LoPresti said the intent was to use the data to let partners know what Dean students would be interested in and how that could relate to what their business offers. Mr. Taberner confirmed the Committee now knows a little more about what Dean students may want in terms of activities. Chair Schoen asked Mr. LoPresti to prepare a few facts from the survey for a brief presentation of the data at the upcoming Partners Meeting. Mr. LoPresti confirmed he would do that.

Chair Schoen stated Mr. Hellen asked about how the website is being used and if people really want a calendar. Committee members discussed calendar conflicts that partners have encountered. Is there some way to allow partners to plan in advance by having a yearly framework for the calendar? Committee members agreed this would be something to look at. Ms. Trahan suggested a goal should be to have one calendar for everything including partners' future plans. Mr. LoPresti suggested this should be talked about at the Partners Meeting. What are some events partners are thinking about and already have planned for next year, and can we offer to manage that calendar for them? Chair Schoen said Mr. Hellen offered and encouraged the Committee to use the available resources for help including Chrissy Whelton, Alecia Alleyne, and Anne Marie Tracey. She noted Ms. Tracey, Marketing and Communication Specialist, will be shared with the schools, so she will be busy.

Ms. Trahan noted the Partners Meeting location was changed from the Senior Center to Franklin TV-Rear Studio Room due to meeting space requirements; another email reminder should be sent. Committee members agreed the next Partners Meetings will be on November 21, 2019 and February 4, 2020. They agreed to discuss the May 13, 2020 meeting date with the partners at the upcoming meeting. Mr. LoPresti said the goal is to focus on the partners and schedule a date that is convenient for them; we need to have more partners at the meetings. Ms. Trahan said if the Committee gets a poor turnout at the September 18 meeting, Committee members might have to call partners and talk to them. It was discussed that many partners want 8:00 AM meetings; the Downtown Partnership has morning meetings. Chair Schoen said the Committee has to define itself a little better. The Committee has to give the partners a reason to come to the meetings; without the partners, we do not have a Cultural District. Mr. Taberner suggested when the Partners Meeting reminder email is sent, include some information about what is going to be on the agenda.

Marketing Subcommittee Update

- MWTVB Grant Summary.
- Distribution of Rack Cards and Window Clings at the Partners Meeting
- Funding for FY20

Mr. LoPresti said the rack cards were updated and 10,000 were received. He showed the rack card and magnet. He stated the rack card holders did not get ordered but are available at Staples for approximately \$3 each. He noted there are about 20 partners and other people outside the District. He suggested a partner packet with window clings, stickers, magnets, poster, rack cards, and rack card holder. He said this is a form of promotion and it may also encourage others to become a partner. Chair Schoen confirmed the packet would be good to distribute to the partners at the meeting. Committee members and Mr. Taberner discussed who would order the rack card holders. It was determined Mr. Taberner would provide Chair Schoen with the rack card information from the W.B. Mason supply book and confirm it was the correct size for the rack cards. Chair Schoen stated she would discuss ordering the rack card holders with Mr. Hellen as he had the budget for such items. Ms. Carlucci stated there are 21 partners listed on the website. Chair Schoen reminded the Committee that the MWTVB grant was discussed at the last meeting.

Goals Subcommittee Update

- Annual Reporting – Annual Report Completed by Pandora and Bryan This Year.
- 2020 Annual Report

Ms. Trahan stated she and Mr. Warren plan to meet next week. Mr. Taberner stated he would like to attend. Ms. Trahan stated she would let him know the meeting date/time.

Mr. Taberner discussed the annual report. He provided an information packet to Committee members. He reviewed the final report and answers to some of the required questions. He stated he reviewed the goals from the original application, the six-month action plan, and the Town's Mixed Business Innovation District and determined five goals. The State will be looking at the District to respond to these five goals. He noted it is not his job to set goals; he got them from the original information. Ms. Trahan said they are talking with Lisa Piana and Raye Lynn Mercer about providing metrics. Hopefully, other partners will follow, but it will probably require some phone calls; the partners should be providing data. Committee members discussed that many events and programs require sign ups and registration which may include address information. Chair Schoen said this information is a great resource going forward. Mr. LoPresti said one of the reasons to have the partners sign up is to get this kind of data; having them sign something to become a partner may make them feel more obligated. Committee members reviewed the partner member process; Encore Music Academy, Feet In Motion, and The Drummers' Studio are the three partners that signed a formal letter. Mr. Taberner said the original application had 14 or 15 solid partners; they made the commitment. Then there were add-ons such as The Drummers' Studio. Chair Schoen reviewed the original Partnership Letter for interested partners to sign which lists their role and their agreement.

Chair Schoen mentioned that regarding the open meeting law, Committee members can send an email to all members, but members should not comment on it to everyone. Conversations can be held separately, but not with the majority.

Partners Subcommittee Update (continued)

Chair Schoen reviewed that they would like to have an engaging Partners Meeting. She stated they would introduce Ms. Carlucci, Ms. Trahan, and Mr. Barrett as new Committee members. She mentioned there was still one vacant Committee member spot. Discussion commenced that maybe they would like to have someone from Dean College such as Daniel Kozar, Matt Letcher, or Tracy Lane. Mr. LoPresti suggested they look for someone who has not been on multiple committees in the past. The Committee should get someone with a different perspective such as someone from the business community or someone who is just a resident; this would help the Committee be well rounded as many of the current Committee members are strongly represented in town. Ms. Trahan suggested everyone think about a few names. Ms. Carlucci asked how to get someone's attention

who is not already on some committee to express interest in this committee. Discussion commenced on where to advertise for this open position. Mr. LoPresti said he saw the opening advertised in Franklin Matters when he applied. Mr. Taberner said the member must be willing to work and reviewed where the Committee may be shy in talent; maybe a marketing expert would be helpful. It was agreed Steve Sherlock should be sent the vacancy information to advertise. Chair Schoen said she would send the information to the Country Gazette and media outlets.

Ms. Trahan asked which email should be used for the Cultural District Committee. Chair Schoen said there was not a directive at this point. Discussion commenced on how to use the Committee's Gmail account.

Chair Schoen continued to review the plans for the Partners Meeting. After the introduction of new Committee members, the partner packets, which should include the rack cards, rack card holders, magnets, maps, window clings, and stickers, will be distributed. She suggested then reviewing the website and how it works. This would be a good opportunity to talk about the calendar and platform for future planning. Ms. Carlucci said she spoke with Peter Fasciano, Franklin TV, about putting the website on the screen for the partners to see; Mr. Fasciano said he would do that. Chair Schoen said Mr. Warren should go through the website for the partners. She said they would then review the future meeting dates and ask the partners what they are looking for. Mr. LoPresti said they asked the partners what they wanted at the last meeting. The partners seemed engaged, but maybe it would be better to give suggestions and get their feedback rather than just asking what they are looking for. Ms. Carlucci suggested the partners really do not understand the difference between this Committee and the Downtown Partnership. Committee members discussed possible ways to engage partners and get them to discuss what they would like. Mr. LoPresti reiterated it may be more productive to talk about ideas that the Committee would like the partners to react to rather than have the partners come up with the ideas. Mr. Taberner suggested they want to think of it as collaborative marketing; getting the partners to work together on marketing projects would be great. Mr. LoPresti said if the partners bring their calendars, maybe something will spark an idea. Ms. Carlucci asked how the smaller partners can be a part of the bigger picture; we would like to have the partners work together. We need to ask what kinds of things would help them in their businesses. Mr. LoPresti suggested having partners such as Bob Vozzella or Brad Chaffee speak at the meeting and discuss what they are doing for 2020 and how they can partner with other partners focusing on the cultural aspect. Committee members discussed having partners speak at the meeting and three items they should talk about: what are you doing, how are you connecting in the community, and how the Cultural District Committee can help you. Committee members agreed the Dean survey information should be shared at the meeting; Ms. Carlucci said she would talk about the survey.

Committee members discussed the differences between the Cultural District Committee, Cultural Council, and Downtown Partnership. They reviewed how to become a partner. Partners have to have performed within the Cultural District throughout the year. There is no cost to be a partner. Chair Schoen said she would reach out to Tracy Lane; Ms. Trahan said she would reach out to Bob Vozzella. Ms. Carlucci said she would send an email to the partners with the correct location, date, and time of 7:00 to 8:00 PM for the meeting, along with information about what will be discussed. Committee members and Mr. Taberner discussed the Google drives and the available documents. Chair Schoen confirmed she would ask Chrissy Whelton about purchasing the rack card holders and about the Google drives.

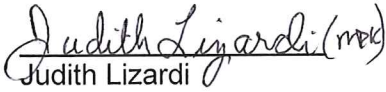
Next Meetings

- Regular Meeting. The next two Committee meetings are scheduled as follows: Wednesday, September 18, 2019 at 6:30 – 7:00 PM, preceding the Partners meeting, at Franklin TV-Rear Studio Room and Tuesday, October 29, 2019, at 7:00 PM, at Franklin Town Hall.
- 2019-2020 Partners Meeting Dates. The next Partners Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 18, 2019, at 7:00 PM, at the Franklin TV – Rear Studio. Additional quarterly Partners Meetings are scheduled for Thursday, November 21, 2019; Tuesday, February 4, 2020 all at 7:00 PM with locations TBD. The May 13, 2020 meeting date is TBD.

Adjourn

With no further discussion, a motion was made by Chair Schoen to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Trahan; voted and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary