

Franklin Cultural District Partners Meeting

Minutes of Meeting

February 17, 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, Amy Adams, Katherine Botelho, Pat Timmons, Jamie Barrett; Stephen Sherlock; Melanie Hamblen; Sue Sheridan; Lisa Piana-FDP

Members not present: Vice Chair John LoPresti

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

Dr. Carlucci opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Dr. Carlucci updated the Partners on recent changes in the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair. Chair Nancy Schoen stepped down and Vice Chair John LoPresti is taking leave until later in the spring. In the meantime, the Cultural District Committee voted for the implementation of temporary Co-Chairs being filled by Dr. Carlucci and Ms. Trahan.

Marketing the Partners and the District

Ms. Trahan told everyone that she and Ms. Botelho had met to create a 4 question survey for the Partners and sent it out to them. So far, only 10 response have been returned, so the Committee is wondering if the Partners would prefer other means of reaching out and learning what Partners want help with. One of the questions in the survey was 'What does the Cultural District mean (to Partners)' because it could be that some Partners are unsure of what role the Committee plays in contrast to other Cultural District entities. Ms. Trahan and Ms. Botelho wanted to try connecting with individual partners in person, but had trouble due in part to the pandemic. Now that things are getting better and the spring is beginning, they are hoping to try meeting in person with Partners again. Ms. Botelho said it was understandable why there might be confusion as to what the Committee's role is, but ultimately the Committee is trying to facilitate the Partners' goals and aspirations.

Franklin Cultural District Newsletter Update

Dr. Carlucci then discussed how Mr. Timmons, a new member to the Committee, has expertise in social media and may help in the Committee's upcoming blog that will hopefully become a useful tool for sharing Partner events and news. A meeting is planned for the following week between Mr. Timmons, Dr. Carlucci and Mr. Stephen Sherlock of Franklin Matters to discuss what the blog will look and function like. Mr. Sherlock then discussed the work done on the Cultural District Festival website, as much of that work can be reused and transferred over to the new blog. This way, the blog will be easy to access, update, and maintain so that news

from Partners will be posted in a timely manner. Dr. Carlucci then invited questions from the Partners.

Marc Arentsen remarked, metaphorically, that once the Committee acquires a blog, it has to continue to keep it alive with new material and maintenance, so will the Committee be able to keep it going. Dr. Carlucci responded by speaking about how she previously worked on the newsletter and received a large amount of information every month for it, so if that same amount of information continues to come in for the blog, then it should be consistently active. The blog will have the material and support to receive and share a lot of information.

FCC Grant Award

Dr. Carlucci thanked former Chari Schoen for writing the grant before she stepped down. The grant was for \$1200 and is meant to fund the LiveArts performances at the Historical Museum over the weekend of ArtWalk. Dr. Carlucci then also thanked the Franklin Cultural Council for the work they do to make the grant and award them to organizations and institutions.

MCC CDI Grant Funding Awards

Dr. Carlucci informed the Partners that the Committee receive \$7500 for the grant. The Committee is still voting on awarding the money and will continue once the Committee meeting can resume after this Partners meeting. 3 organizations have already had their grant funding voted upon. Those 3 organizations are Expressions Enrichment for \$700; Franklin Farmers Market for \$1000; and Franklin Art Association for \$1125. Dr. Carlucci congratulated the Partners for the grants they were awarded, to which the Partners expressed their gratitude.

ArtWalk 2022

Ms. Trahan informed everyone that the ArtWalk will take place the weekend of June 10-12 and possibly for a time after depending on how long art will remain up. The following weekend will be the commencement of the Strawberry Stroll, which will also include the unveiling of the Ladybug Trail. The Committee is working with the Franklin Art Association to see what the Committee can do for the ArtWalk. Last year, the Committee helped get art displayed in storefronts around the district. This year, the Committee is going to avoid taking a role of running the ArtWalk and instead function more as a supporter of the Partners as they run the event. Ms. Trahan then asked the Partners if they had questions.

Ms. Melanie Hamblen asked if artists would reach out to the businesses in the district, or if the Committee would make that connection. Ms. Adams answered that the Franklin Art Association would coordinate the artists and the artists would reach out to Ms. Hamblen and businesses. Someone from the Committee will ensure that this part of the planning runs smoothly. Ms. Hamblen remarked that there had been issues with a lack of communication between the artists and the businesses last year that prevented artists from knowing about events that were going on. Ms. Adams explained that last year there had been a collaboration with the Library involving a scavenger hunt that diverted the Artists away, but such a scavenger hunt was not happening this time around. Ms. Sue Sheridan of the Franklin Art Association weighed in to say that a discussion had been held about simplifying the event and focusing on the businesses downtown. Ms. Trahan expressed appreciation on behalf of the Committee to Ms. Sheridan and Ms. Adams for taking the lead on this part of preparing for ArtWalk.

Additional Comments

Ms. Trahan asked if any Partners had questions. Ms. Sheridan answered that the Art Association was trying to build back membership after seeing a drop during the pandemic, so they are wondering if the blog could be used as a means of sending event information to a central place to then be distributed out to other sites. Mr. Sherlock answered that there should not be an issue with posting, and there could be a meeting held later where he shows how the blog can be used by Partners. Mr. Sherlock then discussed plans and processed of running the Franklin Matters and the upcoming Cultural District blog to the Partners to let them know how information published on the blog would disperse out. Dr. Carlucci reiterated how the blog would help become a one-stop area to send out news and information. Ms. Trahan said she expected an increase in posting as the pandemic faded away after 2 years of less activity, and hopefully there will be more things that the Cultural District can work on. Mr. Sherlock mentioned that members of the Franklin NonProfit Network could be able to manage a 'Franklin can: ' event during the weekend of ArtWalk, wherein network members would be ready to help in the ArtWalk and Strawberry Stroll events. Ms. Lisa Piana informed everyone that the Strawberry Stroll would in fact be happening this year, and commented that the Downtown Partnership is happy to help distribute information from Partners out by email to each other.

Next Partnership Meeting

Thursday, May 19 at 7:00 PM, expected to be virtual but notification will be sent out if it becomes a hybrid meeting

Mr. Sherlock commented that May 19 is expected to be when the Food Pantry's *Empty Bowls* event will take place. Ms. Trahan responded by saying that she and Dr. Carlucci would look into possibly changing the date or time of the next Partners Meeting.

Adjourn

Dr. Carlucci told everyone that notices would go out regarding any changes or updates to the blog. If any Partners remembered a question they wanted to ask, they can email the Cultural District Committee members with that question.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Paslaski
Administrative Assistant