

**Franklin Cultural District Committee
Minutes of Meeting
February 16, 2021
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 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, Amy Adams.

Members not present: Evan Chelman.

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

Welcome

Chair Schoen opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2021 Franklin Cultural District Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2021 Franklin Cultural District Partners Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2021 Franklin Cultural District Partners Meeting Minutes

Motion by Ms. Trahan to approve the January 11, 2021 Franklin Cultural District meeting minutes, January 11, 2021 Franklin Cultural District Partners Meeting Minutes, and February 1, 2021 Franklin Cultural District Partners Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Mr. LoPresti. Discussion: Ms. Carlucci, regarding the February 1, 2021 meeting minutes, requested identifying Erin Rogers as Director of the Senior Center and capitalizing THE BLACK BOX. Chair Schoen stated she would make those changes. ***No Vote was taken to approve the meeting minutes.***

MCC Grant Applications

Chair Schoen stated that the Committee heard back regarding the Franklin Cultural Council grant. They said that they would really like to support us, but they had concerns about two of the three parts of the mini-series as they were for-profit businesses and because Ms. Adams is on our Committee, she could not be compensated. So, we resubmitted the grant with some changes. She stated that Ms. Adams has agreed to do her part in the mini-series with a Facebook livestream painting class from her house; Mr. Robert Vozzella has offered to do wine tasting for the mini-series. Ms. Carlucci pointed out that these two events are not part of the grant. She stated that she amended the grant, and to be transparent, she included all the names. They went with two performances: Mr. Brent Selby, a Franklin resident and cellist, live from the Chorus Room at Franklin High School, and Don Krishnaswami, violist and violinist, either live or livestreamed at THE BLACK BOX. She noted the events are listed as live or livestreamed due to the pandemic situation. She confirmed that the grant was for \$1,050; however, they only asked for \$1,000 as we would match the \$50 out of our own money. Chair Schoen stated the \$50 was for the marketing piece. Ms. Trahan confirmed that should this grant be accepted by the Franklin Cultural Council, then Mr. Selby, Mr. Krishnaswami, and their accompanists, would be compensated accordingly by utilizing that money. Chair Schoen stated yes.

Ms. Trahan stated that although she appreciates the Franklin Cultural Council offering this grant and saying that they want to work with us, she feels badly that folks like Ms. Adams and Mr. Barrett,

because they sit on this Committee, are somewhat being penalized. Ms. Carlucci stated that she echoed Ms. Trahan's sentiments; she finds it very difficult, and she thinks that we need to find a way that if we are encouraging artists and creatives to serve on these committees and bring a voice, bring awareness, and bring attention, we need to work together as a bigger community to support them, and hopefully other people can help us. Mr. LoPresti stated he agreed, but stated that we do have to be very careful about conflict of interest. Artists should get paid for what they do; however, on a committee, you have to be very sensitive to conflict of interest and how people on the committee are benefited. The perception may not look good. Mr. Barrett stated he loves being part of the Committee, but regarding the conflict of interest and ethics piece, it is a very uncomfortable feeling. Ms. Adams said she seconded that. She stated that this is why from the beginning she said she would do the series without pay because she does not want it to look that way. Ms. Trahan stated she understands about the conflict of interest, but it comes to the point that nobody that does work would do it for free. She stated that it is important to acknowledge that artists are oftentimes not compensated. Chair Schoen stated it is important to support our artists and musicians. Ms. Carlucci agreed. She asked if the Committee should reach out to Mr. Luis Cotto of the MCC to see how they handle this with their artists who give of their time and talents. Mr. LoPresti stated he does not think members of this Committee should be compensated for their work regardless of what the MCC says or does. There are too many opportunities for conflict of interest and perception from the outside about members being compensated. Ms. Trahan stated she would like to hear what Mr. Cotto has to say. Chair Schoen agreed that it would be important to know what Mr. Cotto has to say. She stated that what we have to do as a committee is encourage other places to sponsor things that we are not running that Ms. Adams, Mr. Barrett, and any artist can be part of.

June Arts Celebration Art Walk Update

Chair Schoen stated that there has been a lot going on behind the scene. She met with Ms. Caleigh Keating, Youth Services Librarian. Pam Warren and Peg Munson from the Franklin Art Association are very excited about the idea. About two weeks ago they already had nine artists onboard. Chair Schoen stated that she received four responses from merchants: Franklin Mill Store, Franklin Agway, Thru the Looking Glass, and the former Emma's Quilts space if there is not tenant. She stated that Ms. Lisa Piana of the Downtown Partnership said she would put the notice on social media. Chair Schoen noted that the Rockland windows and their boardroom are considerable. She confirmed that Ms. Raye Lynn Mercer stated the hallway windows of FSPA could be used for a short time. Ms. Adams asked about funding to prepare the windows for the businesses. Chair Schoen stated it is part of the grant money. She stated they are applying for a festival grant for \$500 which could be used to take care of the windows for the art hanging, as well. Ms. Carlucci noted that the business owners are applying for the grant money for the windows.

Cultural District Signage

Chair Schoen stated that she had asked Committee members where they thought the three signs should be located. She stated that she met with Town Administrator Jamie Hellen who said if the Committee provided a list of about eight different locations, he would be happy to take it from there and get the signs up. Committee members reviewed their suggested locations. Chair Schoen stated that she would create a spreadsheet for Committee members to indicate their top three locations. Mr. Taberner stated that the signs would most likely be on their own posts. He discussed that the Historical Commission suggested two signs on one post if the locations coincided. He noted that most likely the DPW will make adjustments to the specific locations the Committee indicates. He noted that the State provided three signs; the Town can make additional signs. He recommended Chair Schoen indicate to Mr. Hellen how many additional signs the Committee would like the Town to make and install. Committee members discussed reusing the old signage. Chair Schoen confirmed she would send out the list and noted she would ask for two additional signs from the Town.

Grant Applications

Chair Schoen noted that Ms. Carlucci prepared a spreadsheet outlining the grant requests. She stated that she would like to support something for everyone. She explained that some requestors indicated many requests, but were not expecting to receive it all. She confirmed the total grant is \$7,500 and that \$19,300 in grant requests was received. Committee members discussed the grant requests. Mr. LoPresti suggested funding groups that have not been funded by the Committee in the past. Chair Schoen reiterated that she would like to give some funding to everyone. Members reviewed their funding recommendations and reasoning. Mr. Taberner discussed the timing of the events and noted that if events were scheduled too close together, they would be competing against each other. The calendar and scheduling must be coordinated. After it is put together, they can speak with Mr. Hellen about permitting. Ms. Carlucci noted that in the past, an area for the alcoholic beverages was closed off with a police officer monitoring the area. Mr. Taberner stated that Ms. Anne Marie Tracey and others would be working on marketing; therefore, the Committee may not need to fund groups' requests for marketing. Chair Schoen and Ms. Trahan agreed.

Mr. LoPresti suggested hiring someone to coordinate all the events. Chair Schoen stated the grant would not cover this. Mr. Taberner stated the MetroWest grant was all about marketing. He suggested trying to reach out to the region and not just making this a Franklin event. He stated that Ms. Piana was thinking of applying for a grant to update the downtown area map. He stated THE BLACK BOX will install their tent on April 10th and removed it on June 20th; we would not be involved with the tent until the kick off around June 10th. That is about one-seventh of the time period for the tent and the lighting; with the reception included, the total would be about \$1,500. He noted that the Franklin Art Association had a grant from last year that they did not use which could be added to their funding. He stated that the Committee also has some money available from left-over expenditures. He noted that his budget also has a little money, if needed. Chair Schoen recommended also applying for the Festivals Grant and to MetroWest for marketing.

Motion by Chair Schoen to appropriate the Mass Cultural Council funding amounts as discussed:

- Franklin Performing Arts Company: tent \$1,120, lighting \$300, reception \$400 = \$1,820
- Franklin Downtown Partnership: ladybugs \$750
- Franklin Art Association: easels \$500, packets \$1,200 = \$1,700
- Franklin High School Orchestra Program: \$1,000
- LiveArts: three concerts \$600; piano transportation \$850 = \$1,450
- Library: puppeteer \$300
- Veterans: engraving fee \$500
- 67 Degrees Brewing: \$750

Total: \$8,270

Seconded by Ms. Carlucci; voted and approved unanimously.

Mr. Barrett discussed the costs of renting a digital piano versus purchasing a digital piano. Ms. Carlucci stated that the Committee needs to help and guide the partners in doing these events. Chair Schoen noted the grant is due by the 19th. Mr. Taberner stated that he needs a description of the project and the purpose of the funding; most of the grant is ready. Chair Schoen stated she would send a letter to the partners after the grant is received. Mr. Taberner stated that Chair Schoen could contact the partners and let them know that pending approval of the application, their funding should be forthcoming. Ms. Carlucci stated she is nervous about saying money is available until they receive the letter of approval. Chair Schoen suggested she would ask Mr. Cotto at the next Community Check-in event when the Committee could expect to hear if their application was approved. Ms. Trahan stated they are trying to accomplish getting the partners together to do events. Mr. Taberner

suggested refining the marketing wording, and a map is needed; this should be discussed at the next meeting. Chair Schoen stated that she has received suggestions for the name of the event; she will share these with everyone. She stated that Ms. Keating had suggested providing QR codes for information on each artist. Ms. Carlucci stated that an electronic rather than printed map would keep costs down. Committee members discussed the possible need for providing masks at the event. Ms. Adams agreed digital is better. Chair Schoen stated she would send out a list of locations and an updated funding appropriation spreadsheet to everyone.

Franklin Cultural District Mission, Vision and Goals

Mr. Taberner said that at a future meeting he would like to discuss the goals of both MCC and the Committee. He also wanted to talk about a few things related to the structure of the management of the District. Chair Schoen stated this could be put on next month's agenda.

Next Cultural District Meeting Dates

Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Monday, April 19, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Monday, May 17, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

Next Cultural District Partner Meeting Date

Monday, May 17, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Carlucci stated the next newsletter would come out on Thursday.

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 8:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary