

**Franklin Cultural District Committee
Minutes of Meeting
June 21, 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; Kaye Kelly, Franklin Cultural Council; Judith Lizardi, Recording Secretary.

Chair Schoen opened the meeting at 7:08 PM.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2021 Franklin Cultural District Meeting Minutes. Motion by Ms. Trahan to approve the May 17, 2021, Franklin Cultural District meeting minutes. Seconded by Mr. Barrett and accepted with a roll call vote of 6-0-0. Roll Call Vote: Schoen-Yes; LoPresti-Yes; Carlucci-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Barrett-Yes; Adams-Yes.

May 17, 2021 Franklin Cultural District Partners Meeting Minutes. Motion by Ms. Carlucci to approve the May 17, 2021, Franklin Cultural District Partners meeting minutes. Seconded by Ms. Trahan and accepted with a roll call vote of 6-0-0. Roll Call Vote: Schoen-Yes; LoPresti-Yes; Carlucci-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Barrett-Yes; Adams-Yes.

June ArtWALK Celebration Review

Chair Schoen thanked everyone for their parts in planning the ArtWALK Celebration as there were many pieces to plan. She stated that she has received much positive feedback, and the Town Administrator said that it should become an annual event. She mentioned that she tried to attend every event during the weekend; she noted that many events were well attended and others were not so well attended. The Historical Museum had to put out additional chairs for seating the attendees. She stated that Mr. Don Krishnaswami was happy about his event at THE BLACK BOX. She discussed that when she was walking through downtown to see all the art, she spoke with Pete Roachat, owner of Pete's Nerd Emporium, who noted there has been a lot of foot traffic. Chair Schoen stated that the Committee needs to reflect, learn, and modify from this year's event and then do it again. She stated that she sent out 19 thank you notes to participants and received 15 responses. She discussed that attendance at the Farmers' Market was good. She attended the 67 Degrees Brewing events; it was hopping, and there were no seats to be had. She noted that there was no representation from the Town administration/staff at the ArtWALK Celebration. She stated that the Committee did not reach out and personally invite anyone; they will do that in the future.

Mr. LoPresti stated that he attended the event on Friday; the crowd on the Town Common was electric. It was a great time. He noted that it was difficult to see the art displays through the

windows; they may want to light them up in the future. He stated that the foot traffic was greater than what has been recently. Mr. Barrett agreed it would be good to light up the artwork. Chair Schoen suggested the Cultural District Committee logo be on display along with the artwork. She agreed there was glare in the display windows which will need to be addressed in the future. Ms. Trahan said that it was a great weekend; she thought the museum venue and event was great. She stated that the reception was a little disappointing; it would have been nice to have had a few more people there. She stated that she was shocked that there were no Town staff at the event. She agreed with Chair Schoen that they will have to reach out to the Town staff in the future and personally invite them. Ms. Carlucci noted that there were two musical performances, and people went because of the music even though the event times were not the most convenient. Chair Schoen noted how many families attended the events. Ms. Trahan stated that the art packets were amazing. Chair Schoen discussed that many people want this to be done again. Ms. Trahan stated that more help from the partners would be better; she suggested the CDC oversee the event. She stated that if the Committee runs the event again, they may need to review the Committee's goals and mission. Mr. LoPresti stated that the original mission provided by Town Administrator Jamie Hellen was that the CDC was not an event planning committee. Chair Schoen said that is not the feeling she is getting now; things have changed. Ms. Trahan said that this should be reviewed including who will do the work and who will fund it. Chair Schoen agreed that she would like more clarification from Mr. Hellen.

Festival Data Collection and Reporting Update

Chair Schoen said that she sent a form to all the businesses that had artwork displayed. She has heard from no one. She is coming up with attendance data from observational accounts. She stated that it is not exactly clear what data she is supposed to collect. Mr. Taberner stated that data collection has always been a little difficult. They are supposed to come up with real data that proves they are doing better than the year before. Chair Schoen said that this year they are providing the baseline data. She stated that some people thought the foot traffic was better than it had been. Mr. Taberner stated that they are doing an annual report at the same time they are applying for next year's funding; it all has to be done by the end of July.

Franklin Cultural District Committee Presence: *Franklin Cultural Council Festival Sunday, September 12, 2021; Franklin Downtown Partnership Harvest Festival Saturday, October 2, 2021*

Chair Schoen thanked Ms. Kaye Kelly, Franklin Cultural Council, for attending the meeting. Ms. Kelly stated she is amazed at the great feeling when she attends the Farmers' Market on the Town Common on Fridays. She stated that the idea of a food truck there would good. Chair Schoen stated that a beer garden and food truck would have increased attendance. Ms. Kelly stated that there are many new members on the Cultural Council. She explained that she only put one advertisement on the Cultural Council community page and got some new members. There is a new group of people that are excited and eager to do festivals. She discussed the Festival in September and stated that she has spent time trying to get permits, etc. There are four parts to the festival: the main stage with live music, artisan vendors, food trucks, and beer garden. She stated that people are slow coming out of the pandemic. She is waiting for many people to get back to her about the festival. She has not secured the land for the beer garden yet; she hopes to hear back soon. She stated that La Cantina Winery and 67 Degrees Brewing are onboard for the beer garden. She stated that they are in a position to pay for the event; she wants to move forward to fund it. This year the goal is to offer the festival for free to the community; it is a six-hour event. She noted that people will have to pay for the food trucks. She discussed the ticketing process at a previous festival event. She stated that the only reason they would want donations is so that they will not have to start at zero dollars next year. She noted that they have a little extra money as during the pandemic many programs did not run. She

stated that for the main stage events they will have a Salsa band that will perform at the end of the festival for a 90-minute set, the Franklin Pickers which is a blue grass group, and an Indian showcase. She stated that Rep. Becca Rausch may sponsor a folk-dance group. Ms. Kelly stated that she offered a spot to the FSPA but has not heard back; only the Salsa band is confirmed. She explained that the food trucks do not really like Franklin as they say Franklin has antiquated food truck laws; therefore, they have no interest in coming. She noted that Cousins Maine Lobster is confirmed and permitted. She noted there is another food truck interested and reviewed the list of possible food trucks. She will continue to reach out to them next week. She stated that she thinks they may have 5,000 attendees as at the last event when the weather was not good, they had 2,000 attendees.

Mr. LoPresti asked if there was any opportunity for local restaurants to be food vendors. Ms. Kelly stated that for this first year, it may work better to just have the food trucks. She would like to get the event up and going and make it better the second year; they will probably have to ticket the event the second year. She noted that she has three artisan vendors; she would like to get 30 professional artist vendors. She may have to advertise on Facebook. The costs is \$75 per booth; after August 1, the price will increase to \$100. They are trying to support working artisan vendors; she pointed out some of the criteria in the vendor application. She reiterated that they are trying to make the event free. Chair Schoen suggested the CDC's participation would be a booth. Ms. Kelly stated that she would love to have a How to Volunteer in Franklin booth. She agreed with Chair Schoen's suggestion of a booth for the CDC and noted that if the CDC wanted to do something else, that would be great. She suggested the CDC could have a tent area with a family activity such as sand art or have a hands-on art area. She stated that she would like the CDC to join with any capacity that they can. Chair Schoen suggested Ms. Kelly contact the YMCA. Ms. Kelly stated that she would like the festival to be busy and fun for kids. She discussed the possibility of jugglers, unicyclists, walking statues, etc. She stated that she will be working on getting some people confirmed within the next weeks. She noted that the last time they had a similar event, they spent \$400 in liability insurance; she will look into that for this event. She noted the lengthy procedure to have a beer garden last year. Chair Schoen stated that the Committee has some ideas now and will get back to Ms. Kelly.

Franklin Cultural District Newsletter Update

Chair Schoen stated that Ms. Carlucci has been collecting information from people as well as on her own for the newsletter, and the June newsletter is ready to be sent. Ms. Carlucci stated that it is a lot of work. She stated that the newsletter is exciting and noted that the mission is to support and reinforce arts, culture, and the humanities in Franklin. She stated that she often receives a link to a website which she reviews and then compiles an article for the newsletter. As well, some people submit a completed article. She stated that they have over 226 enrollments. Chair Schoen stated that the enrollments are double what they were last year in June. They received 40 new subscribers from ArtWALK; she stated there is interest out there. She hopes that this will continue to grow. She thanked Ms. Carlucci for all her hard work. She noted that Ms. Anne Marie Tracey has left for a new job.

Chair Schoen stated that Historical Commission Chair Mary Olsson is planning a Historical Museum grand re-opening reception on Thursday, July 15, 2021, at 5 PM; she will be sending all CDC members an invitation. Chair Schoen stated that she hopes all members can attend and show their support.

Franklin Cultural District Budget

Chair Schoen stated that the Committee has the Constant Contact expense, Ms. Trahan had some signs made, and Ms. Carlucci had some nametags made. She stated that the Committee

had talked about reusable grocery bags with the CDC logo on them which could be used as a marketing tool. The Committee would then have a little of the \$1,000 remaining. She talked about a digital map for the Cultural District with the remaining funds. She said it would be a great marketing tool, and they could give others a link to the digital map. She stated that she would ask Mr. Hellen for more funding for this. She suggested that possibly the Downtown Partnership could help support the digital map project. Mr. LoPresti stated that he thought the Lisa Piana, Executive Director of the Downtown Partnership, had mentioned that she was already working on a digital map. Ms. Trahan stated that she thinks Ms. Piana is going to do that; she will email Ms. Piana and ask about the digital map. Mr. LoPresti stated that maybe they could do the digital map as a partnership. Ms. Carlucci stated that the CDC map would be a partial part of the Downtown Partnership's map.

Chair Schoen stated that she does not know how the CDC wants to be part of the Ms. Kelly's festival. She asked Mr. LoPresti to look into the reusable grocery bags and pens for marketing. Mr. LoPresti noted that there were many promotional items remaining. He stated that he thinks a booth is the right idea for the festival. Chair Schoen stated that she would not want to spend more than \$100 to \$150 for 100 reusable grocery bags. Mr. Taberner stated that looking at the pricing is important. If the items are a printing cost, it could become part of his budget if purchased before the end of the fiscal year. He explained that he has some printing money left over as there was little printing needed during the pandemic year. Mr. LoPresti asked if the CDC paid for the layout, could Mr. Taberner pay for the printing. Mr. Taberner stated yes. Mr. Taberner discussed that if there were pens put in several locations at an event, it would be better; pens are good advertising.

Next Cultural District Meeting Dates

Monday, August 16, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Monday, September 13, 2021 6:30 PM

Next Cultural District Partner Meeting Date

Monday, September 13, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Chair Schoen thanked everyone for all their hard work in making ArtWALK happen.

Adjourn

With no further discussion, a motion was made by Chair Schoen to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Trahan; voted and approved unanimously (no roll call vote taken).

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary