

**Franklin Cultural District Committee
Minutes of Meeting
March 7, 2024
Held as a Virtual Meeting
via Remote Access Zoom Platform**

This meeting was held in the Campanella Boardroom at the Dean College Campus Center. Citizens were allowed to attend in person, and also able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number or participate by using the Zoom link provided on the agenda.

Members present: Chair John LoPresti, Vice Chair Amy Adams, Clerk Katherine Botelho, Sue Cass, Dr. Pandora Carlucci, Roberta Trahan, Patrick Conlan

Members not present:

Also in attendance: Bryan Taberner, Planning and Community Development Director; Cory Shea, Director of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy; Stephen Sherlock, Franklin Matters; Amy Frigulietti, Deputy Town Administrator; Peg Munson, Franklin Art Association; John Ristaino, Franklin Cultural Council; Rosann Fleischauer; X, First Universalist Society in Franklin,

Upon achieving quorum with the required minimum of members present, Chair LoPresti opened the meeting at 7:01 PM

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chair LoPresti motioned to approve the February 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Clerk Botelho. Motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Introduction and Discussion Cory Shea

The Committee introduced themselves to Ms. Cory Shea, the new Director of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy employed by the Town of Franklin. Ms. Shea introduced herself and began presenting on a Volunteer Cultivation Event. She explained that the hope is to have curious members of the public be able to be directed to the various events, organizations, and agencies to, in turn, bring together art, culture, and business all at once. Ms. Shea added that a Maker Space is planned to be permanently established, but for now they are trying to find temporary spaces for people to meet and create together. Chair LoPresti remarked that Ms. Shea's help and expertise would be needed with regards to refining and revitalizing the Cultural District website. He added that it would be great if the Volunteer Cultivation Event could reinvigorate community engagement in the Cultural District to where it was before the Covid pandemic. Ms. Trahan added that one of the challenges that the Committee still works on is making the public aware of what the differences between the Cultural District and the Cultural Council are.

Ms. Shea then moved the discussion to talk about the Franklin Sculpture Park and plans to make a call for artists to see who would be interested in adding their artwork to it over the course of the next year. Vice Chair Adams reviewed the history and situation of the art that has been at or is currently in the Sculpture Park, along with the work needed to install and maintain the artwork. Ms. Shea thanked Vice Chair Adams and the Committee for sharing their knowledge of the Sculpture Park and how it, along with other programs in Franklin, have been able to connect with schools and the public to foster interest in the arts and culture of the Town.

Committee Reports-Artsy Box Project Part 2

Vice Chair Adams told Ms. Shea about the history and success of the Artsy Box Program and explained what the roadmap for the follow-up part of the project would be for the rest of the year. She explained that six boxes have been designated for art, and some preliminary selections have been made from submittals by artists in the community and nearby towns. An announcement will be made by the following Wednesday in the Newsletter.

Committee Reports-Porchfest Franklin

Chair LoPresti explained the plans and preparation for Franklin's first Porchfest to take place in the summer. The Committee discussed multiple factors they believed should be considered for the day of the event, including providing water and refreshments around the area. Ms. Shea also discussed how promotion of Porchfest would be planned for in the time leading up to the day of the event.

Committee Reports-Yarnbombing Franklin

Ms. Cass introduced the Committee to Ms. Rosann Fleischauer, the person whom she previously had mentioned learning about being involved in organizing similar yarn and crochet-related events. Ms. Fleischauer described how the program provides them with something to do with unneeded textiles and fibers that are not allowed to be thrown away anymore, in addition to how they bring the community together. The program itself would involve teaching participants in how to knit 'granny-squares' as an easy introduction to the craft and could each represent the community in of itself. Ms. Fleischauer also said that there would be no cost to participants if they are able to gather enough materials through donations of needles, hooks, and yarn. They are also hoping to have help from the Committee in publicizing the program on social media and finding an appropriate location in Town where it can take place. Ms. Cass then detailed how she envisioned the Committee being able to help with the Yarn-Bombing program, saying that, in addition to publicizing it, they could put out a call for yarn donations and place collections bins in different public places to collect as many materials without needing to pay for them before looking at what they would need financing to buy. Ms. Cass said the program would create decorations that likely could be set up around the time of the Harvest Festival and then taken down before the holiday decorating starts around December. Ms. Shea commented that she wanted to make sure doing such a thing would be approved by Town Administration, which Mr. Taberner added to be saying that he would speak with Town Administrator Jamie Hellen about it.

Committee Reports-Public Art at Rockland Trust

Mr. Conlan briefed Ms. Shea on the proposed public art project on the side of the Rockland Trust building. He updated everyone that he has been in contact with the branch manager, who is interested in helping promote more art throughout the Town, but the manager informed him that they had expended their available funds already. He continued by saying that the funding for the first phase of the project would cost \$6000, breaking it down to \$3000 each for two of the three archway-window spots for painting. The manager for Rockland Trust did tell Mr. Conlan that she is reaching out to a charitable foundation that she would be reaching out to for potential aid in funding the art. She also told Mr. Conlan that the site of the former Franklin Food Pantry would be taken down and the area where it stands will be renovated, and she would like the Committee to be involved in helping art be created there. Chair LoPresti commented that where the Committee's help should be focused on would be the actual carrying out of the finding artists, choosing their art, and coordinating its creation upon the site, and the financing would be

where other groups, charities, and organizations including the bank would help. The Committee clarified with Mr. Taberner about its responsibilities regarding private donations. Mr. Conlan said he would continue to keep in touch with the manager at Rockland Trust about their funding and what the Committee is willing to do.

Committee Reports-Joint FCC and CDC Event

Chair LoPresti briefed Ms. Shea on the event scheduled for April 4 by the Franklin Cultural Council that was introduced at the February 8 meeting wherein grant recipients will be celebrated and the arts and culture community can meet each other. Dr. Carlucci provided exposition about how the Cultural Council has typically held the event at the Historical Museum in the past but now wants to involve the Committee in it after working alongside them at previous Farmers Markets.

Member Roundtable

Ms. Peg Munson talked about the results and success of the Franklin Art Association's gallery in collaboration with the Franklin High School Art Department. Dr. Carlucci commented that it was a nice event where there were different levels of support and collaboration between the students, the faculty, and the members of the Franklin Art Association.

X of the First Universalist Society then discussed its affiliates—the Circle of Friends Coffee House and LiveArts—who hold multiple collaborative events each per year, and how they have worked with the Partnership for years. They are hoping to promote these events more widely than they have been able to in the past with the help of the Committee. Director Taberner added detail to the contributions made by the First Universalist Society and its affiliates, and they would love to continue the partnership in promoting their arts.

Mr. Sherlock discussed how the Cultural District website and the event calendar are undergoing maintenance and will temporarily need to be interacted with differently from usual. He added that he would love to work with Ms. Shea and talk with the artists chosen for the Artsy Box project to record interview like they had in the first iteration of the project. Mr. Sherlock also mentioned an upcoming collaborative art event between the Franklin High School and the Eighth Graders regarding four countries around the world.

Next Cultural District Meeting Dates

April 11, 2024 7:00 PM

Joint FCC and CDC Event, Thursday, April 4, 2024, 7:00 p.m., Dean College Memorial Hall

Additional Comments

Adjourn

Ms. Trahan motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Vice Chair Adams. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Paslaski
Administrative Assistant