

VILLAGE OF MAMARONECK ARTS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Monday, May 3, 2021

via Zoom

1. Attendees:

- a. *Members:* Melinda Buie, Larry Cohen, Jane Dorian, Marina Kiriakou, Jacqueline Meier, Elizabeth O'Rourke, Violet Useda-Linder, Carrie Vaccaro Nelkin
- b. *Volunteers:* Chari Allison, Solange De Santis, Melissa Moak, Joyce Marie Washburn
- c. *Village of Mamaroneck / Westchester County:* Nora Lucas, George Latimer
- d. *Absent:* Heather Capelle

2. Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Buie and seconded by Useda-Linder.

3. The April meeting minutes were reviewed. Dorian made a motion to accept and O'Rourke seconded.

4. Poetry Live!: Dorian recapped the April 25 Zoom event. Dorian and Kiriakou reported positive feedback from participating students, teachers, parents, and viewers. Cohen asked if the number of students differed from that of previous years and how the quality of entries compared. Dorian responded there were roughly eight fewer students and the work was exceptionally well done, comparable to or better than that in other years. O'Rourke, guest poet at the event, mentioned being moved by the mutual support of the student poets. Kiriakou gave a shout-out to Buie for designing the print anthology cover and mentioned that a couple of the books will be available at the Library for those who would like to read them.

5. Mary Louise Cox Memorial Bench / Outdoor Poetry Garden: Update provided by De Santis and Kiriakou. The planned May 7 dedication has been postponed, as the base for the bench has been started but not poured and the plaque is being shipped on May 17. Ms. Cox's family has offered to fund additional plantings to replace the dying Colorado spruce behind the bench; Ms. Cox's son John, an arborist, made the offer, which would expand the original garden concept. Lucas advised Kiriakou on proposing the expansion to the Board of Trustees and Parks & Recreation, since the Village would need to approve, execute, and maintain the garden, which has not been named yet. DeSantis explained the garden is meant to replicate Ms. Cox's indoor poetry room at home.

6. Essential Workers Tribute: Meier and O'Rourke will propose the concept they have developed to Parks & Recreation: a 75-foot circle of eight to ten trees (alternating tupelo and white oak), with two or four curved and backless benches between each tree and a raised compass at the circle's center representing the essential workers who have been—and continue to be—the “compass” on which the rest of us depend. O'Rourke mentioned the last open item is how to group the workers and whether and how to engrave a verse into the benches or the compass. Useda-Linder suggested adding the element of gentle sound. Cohen recommended minimizing the number of items at ground level so the design does not change much as the earth settles. Meier will come up with basic sketches to present to the BOT.

7. County Executive George Latimer joined the meeting to speak about the summer reopening plans of New York State and, concomitantly, Westchester County. Giving a statistical overview, Latimer mentioned, for example, that outdoor events of up to 500 people and indoor activities of up to 250 people will be allowed, with continued precautions in place. Latimer stated the County must follow State regulations, which may differ from CDC guidance, and that the County Health department will be happy to assist with questions on planning feasibility. Several ideas were floated, including staging a couple of concerts in conjunction with the Emelin Theatre and holding events around Labor Day if they cannot be pulled together in time for summer.

8. Arts 'n Eats: Useda-Linder and Kiriakou provided an update. The festival has been postponed until Spring 2022 to let restaurants “catch up” economically first, and to allow time for an increased comfort level among the public.

9. VOMart Tote Bags: O'Rourke suggested the name of someone who can instruct Meier and Washburn on how to screenprint the bags with the Arts Council logo. Useda-Linder offered to also watch and learn.

10. Restaurant Barrier Art Project: Meier and Buie have painted the barriers with the “Savor the Avenue” logo from last year's outdoor dining initiative. Barriers can be seen in front of Le Provençal Bistro and SmokeHouse Tailgate Grill. The remainder are in storage.

11. Summer Update—Concerts, Shakespeare in the park, etc.:

- Meier reported that Hudson Valley Shakespeare Co. is not touring this summer; will check on their Fall schedule.
- Meier also proposed that the Council help put on two summer concerts, splitting the cost with the Emelin, which is in talk with two bands, working on feasible dates, probably Wednesdays. A discussion followed on how the Council could be involved in promoting the concerts while strengthening the its imprint. A vote was held on whether to proceed. All voted affirmative.
- Discussion of various related topics ensued, including whether Thursday Night on the Avenue concerts will take place this year (they will not) and whether the 4th of July concert can be revisited. To the latter, Lucas replied there may be logistical issues concerning crowds, rehearsal space, and so on. Different individuals spoke to the idea, initially mentioned by De Santis, that the standard concert model is only one prototype, and that smaller events, like chamber orchestras and informal pop-up quartets around the harbor and in Village parks, might work. Cohen stated that small events in a diversity of venues other than Harbor Island Park might appeal to a greater diversity of population that might otherwise miss out on them. Meier and Kiriakou asked Cohen and De Santis to spearhead inquiries into this idea and to come up with a proposal that includes budget and dates.

12. Useda-Linder made a motion to end the meeting; Buie seconded.

13. The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.