



## Minutes of the Meeting

MCA Music Subcommittee  
Tuesday, November 9, 2021  
7:00 p.m.  
Via WebEx

**Present: Barbara Arafeh, Domenique Thornton, Neely Bruce, Anne-Marie McEwen, Domenique Thornton**

1. Call to Order – 7:09 p.m.
2. Public Session – no one present
3. Remarks from the Chair – remarks are noted in Old Business
4. Old Business
  - a. Pandemic influences on music in Middletown - B. Arafeh spoke on how the pandemic in 2020 has definitely slowed things down for organizations. However, it has opened up this year with events like those at the Wadsworth Mansion, Summer Sounds Concerts and the like. Additionally, organizations like the Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords, GMChorale and GMCA are hosting in person performances during this winter season approaching. It was mentioned that N. Bruce performed a concert recently at the New Britain Museum of Art. It was noted that Wesleyan Univ. is holding concerts that are only “in house”. B. Arafeh has kept abreast of the advice given by Yale medical experts that suggest audiences wear masks during performances while and even though performers can perform without masks.
5. New Business
  - a. Music Ambassador Choices – Committee members recapped on the last recommendations for music ambassador being Carolyn Halstead, Michael Arafeh and Noah Baerman. Discussion ensued on all recommended candidates. B.Arafeh suggests that the choices be broadened to include directors, composers, producers and volunteers that have brought music to the attention of the community. N.Bruce stated that Michael Arafeh with his “extensive background and expertise” be recommended for the honorarium. A.McEwen recommends Michael Arafeh and thinks he can and would have a “great reach” and this honorarium would bring to light what he has done in his career. N.Bruce stated that Carolyn Halstead has spearheaded a national program with the American Teachers Association by promoting the music of teenage composers, and fits the profile of a musician/educator. D.Thornton believes that M.Arafeh fits either as an arts advocate and/or music ambassador being an engineer and musician.

N.Bruce made a motion that a recommendation to the full commission be made to honor Michael Arafeh with the 2022 music ambassador honorarium. Motion was seconded by A.McEwen and passed unanimously.

N. Bruce suggested that Carolyn Halstead be considered for the 2023 honorarium.
  - b. Commissions 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, music records and participation – B.Arafeh began the conversation of this topic by asking what ideas would enhance the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the MCA and asked for ideas to be put forth that would bring groups together. K.Michael, Staff suggested that Summer Sounds concerts could be a platform for such a thing. B. Arafeh stated that the

past has shown that music has happened in several different places throughout the city. N.Bruce gave examples of spaces that could be utilized like: the waterfront, MxCC, CVH grounds and CFA courtyard to name a few. B.Arafeh proposed the idea of a First Night celebration revisit with lots of music and a good mix to bring people from the outside but to focus on in town artists/musicians. This event can be designed to close out the 50<sup>th</sup> in December of 2022.

6. Announcements – A.McEwen announced that the Buttonwood Tree (TBT) has collaborated with FUTURES, Inc. and is hosting their member’s art work for the month of November in TBT’s gallery. To note, pieces of their work are for sale, and some pieces have been purchased since being on display. Additionally TBT will be featuring the House of Moses and the Lost Tribe this month. A.McEwen also mentioned that TBT is looking for other venues for TBT concerts, and looks for suggestions.
7. Adjournment – meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Submitted by,  
K.Michael, Arts Coordinator/Staff