



METUCHEN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

501(c)(6) Nonprofit Organization

323 Main Street - Suite B, Metuchen, NJ 08840-2433

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September 17, 2021

2021 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Jacque Zuvich - President
Re/Max Competitive Edge
Colleen Hanson - Vice President
Cai's Cafe
Robert Matland - Treasurer
Kicks Are For Kids
Lorraine Mulligan - Secretary
Manasquan Bank

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Moshe Atzbi - Hailey's Harp & Pub
Joseph Cascio, Jr. - Brainsy Borough Brewing Company
Robert Diken - BaseCamp Studio & Gallery
James Jones - Fresco by Jimmy
Jan Margolis - Applied Research Corporation
Gabe Rosanio - Provident Bank
Leon Schwartz - Carpet Maven II
Larry Sclafani - LJS Tech Consulting
Dan Slobodien - Friend of the Chamber
Gary Wade - Wade Appraisals
Lisa Weidmaier - Western Pest
Susan Wilcox - eDynamic Marketing
Dottie Winhold - Re/Max Competitive Edge
Deborah Zupan - Dirty Jersey Roller Derby

PAST PRESIDENT

Brendan J. Flynn, Jr - Flynn & Son Funeral Homes

REPRESENTATIVES

Rob Donnan - Metuchen Fire Department
Nancy Goldberg - Metuchen Recreation Department
Fred Hall - Metuchen Department of Public Works
Daniel Granato - Metuchen Police Department
Chrissy Tolley - YMCA of MEWSA
Dorothy Rasmussen - Metuchen Borough Council

STAFF

Tyreen Reuter - Executive Director
Jennifer Cascio - Admin. Assistant
Wendi Richards - Admin. Assistant

During the past century, the Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce has been dedicated to its mission of advancing the civic, industrial, professional, and commercial interests of our area. At various points during the years since its initial founding in 1918, the Chamber has expanded and contracted its operations in response to the changing times; wars, fluctuating economic conditions, global and health crises. Since its formal reincorporation in 1950, the Chamber has enjoyed decades of strong partnerships with businesses, residents, and the local government.

Some of our historic accomplishments during these many decades include:

- Leading efforts to plant street trees and install Victorian lamp posts, benches, and planters in the business district, as well as successfully advocating for Metuchen to be included in the exit names for major roadways
- Fostering and collaborating with local Arts organizations
- Founding and incubating the Metuchen Farmers Market
- Hosting decades of Seasonal Fairs, Town Wide Garage Sales, and Ribbon Cuttings for new businesses
- Organizing and funding Winter parades, celebrations, downtown decorations, and shopping promotions.
- For nearly as long as there has been a Borough of Metuchen, hosted the Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony
- Firmly established monthly summer Cruise Nights events
- Funneled nearly \$300,000 directly into local businesses, with all fees, administration, and costs being absorbed by the Chamber
- Donated thousands in cash and/or goods to our many local nonprofits
- Maintaining the Welcome signage at Metuchen's main roadway entrances
- Provided leadership and assistance for innumerable observances, events, and programs

Recently, in the years just prior to and then during the pandemic we have:

- Released the Metuchen profile magazine
- Issued a new edition of *Metuchenopoly*
- Launched new events such as Restaurant Week
- Provided New Resident Welcome bags and shared weekly e-newsletters promoting our members
- Offered thousands of dollars in direct funds to businesses with Bounce Back Gift Certificate promotions
- Organized a very successful donation effort for the local hospital's Covid-19 Response Team
- Advocated for the establishment of a Business Improvement District
- Provided referrals, networking opportunities, notary services, and more.



While we have often been too busy to broadcast and self-promote our value, we are all extremely proud of the efforts of our board, members, and staff who have so tirelessly worked for the good of our whole community.

Rather than slowing down during the last year and a half during the pandemic, we altered course where possible to be of the most assistance to our members. While working through these changes, we have been given the opportunity to mentally reflect upon our direction and future in light of how best we can serve.

As with most decision-making processes, the wisest course is to consider the parameters and impacts broadly. Rather than being an obstacle, the pandemic has served as a mental pause that has provided us the time to consider, reflect, and consider again.

Therefore, after much consideration, we have decided to begin the process of planning for the Chamber's voluntary dissolution, one that will allow us to leave a legacy that we are proud of by closing our organization at the right time with integrity and dignity. We have determined that no one individual factor has overwhelmingly steered our thinking, but that it is the breadth and variety of new and changing conditions that has guided our decisions.

This dissolution is not an organizational failure, but rather a retirement. There have been changes in our community that challenge the sustainability of an entirely self-funded membership organization committed to supporting the business community. By dissolving now, we can retire in a methodical and organized fashion, passing on funds and critical information to those nonprofits that are willing and able to take on some of our long-standing events and initiatives.

We realize that some initiatives, like our gift certificate program, are not transferrable to other organizations as they require a significant and specific investment of time and money. To that end, we will cease new Chamber Gift Certificate sales immediately, but will continue to redeem them for our participating member businesses until the end of 2022. For now, note that the physical Chamber office at 323 Main Street will remain open until the end of this year and we will continue our regular services and events until December 31, 2021, including our scheduled Ribbon Cuttings, Cruise Nights, Town Wide Garage Sale, and more.

Please know that we have taken a great deal of time to come to this decision, and that we have only done so with consideration of the road ahead as we can best see it. We feel we are choosing the best path forward, with a rationale that is based not in decline, but in pro-active planning. Thank you for your thoughtful understanding and know that we most sincerely appreciate being allowed to serve the Metuchen area for as well and as long as we have.

Sincerely,
The Board and Staff of the Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce