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MAYOR

Salem Public Art Commission
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Public Art Commission
April 25, 2023, 6:30pm
Meeting held remotely via zoom

MEETING MINUTES

Note: All proposals, presentations, and/or documentation to be reviewed and discussed at this meeting can be viewed online at the following link: <https://bit.ly/SalemPACProposals>

- **Meeting called to order at 6:36 pm.**
- **Roll Call PAC:** Norene Gachignard, Janine Liberty, John Andrews, James Bostick, & Hannah Gathman.
Absent: Gwen Rosemond, & Carly Dwyer-Naik.
- **Meeting Minute Approvals**
 - o **March 30, 2023 Meeting Minutes-** Norene entertained a motion, Janine made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, Jim seconded. Motion carried.
 - o Julie would like a comment to be read into record on the behalf of Hannah Gathman in regards to the March 30th meeting minutes. On page 2 of the minutes in the Barrio review, there is a note that reads "Hannah is concerned about approving a mural that could possibly be misconstrued as cultural appropriation." and Hannah wanted to clarify that statement. It should read, "Hannah is concerned about the possibility of approving a mural that could be viewed as cultural appropriation."
- **Remote Meeting Update**

The Governor has formally approved remote meetings through March 31, 2025. These meetings can be either fully remote or hybrid meetings. There will be more specific directions coming from the city as to how to manage our virtual meetings. We assume that by the May meeting, we will know more about how new policies will change our meeting structure. As of right now, there are no full in person meetings within the City.

- **Claudia Parashciv Artists' Row Public Artist in Residence Project Update**

2023 Public Artist in Residence (PAiR), Claudia Parashciv shares her plans for her 8 month residency. She brings to the PAC her timeline of events. Claudia brings to us her plans for her art project "The Tree of Care and Wonder" which consists of two components, the first being weekly workshops that she will be sponsoring, and the other is six specific art events that will happen throughout the City of Salem within a 15 minute walking radius of Artist's Row. Claudia shows the PAC her plans for the workshops in her residency season including Wonder Kids Art Days, Process Art Mornings, and the Wonderful Self-Care Café.

Next Claudia brings us her events planned for various Salem co-sponsored opportunities, such as: Salem Arts Festival, Pride, and Heritage Days celebration, among others.

Julie asked Claudia to explain more about the Tree of Care and Wonder. The main structure of the tree will be a metal ladder from 8 to 10ft. It will be used as scaffolding for tree limbs that Claudia will scavenge for around the City. Everything will be painted shades of green, and the foliage will feature different aspects of the events.

Claudia has already been approved as the PAiR, so no vote is required, but as the PAiR she wants to update us with the plans and events she has planned.

Janine asks about the safety with the tree, asking specifically if it is weather-proof or lightning safe. Julie stated that it is lower in height than the metal roofs of Artist's Row, so there should be no issue with lightning. Otherwise the tree branches and metal ladder are completely weather and waterproof. Claudia would like Julie to send a few more surveillance video monitoring signs for after hours.

- **Salem Arts Fest Community Art Project Review**

Claudia Parashciv, Kylie Sullivan, and Alexia Coleman are excited to talk about their project planned for the 2023 Art Slam. In the February 2023 meeting, the PAC voted to allocate the remaining \$5,000 in the Downtown Programming/Activation Funds to the Community Art Project at the Salem Arts Festival in June 2023. The funding for the project was approved, but the project itself, its placement on Artists' Row, etc., was not.

The theme of the project is "For the Record: Food Confessions", the idea is to ask different groups of people "how does food influence you, & What connections do you have with food?" Alexia comments that food influences everyone in some way, from how they connect with their culture to their body to their memories. They will ask community members of all backgrounds to reflect on how they connect with food, and to record those thoughts and stories visually on upcycled vinyl records. Alexia and the group have had 5 workshops so far, and have changed the questions based on the group participating; i.e. school age children, high school students, college aged social workers, ect. "For the Record" will be assembled in an interactive way on Artists' Row that will allow visitors to read, spin, and ponder their own food confessions. This display will be ongoing for about a month or so- the display structure will allow for any quick decisions based on the health of the display. John suggests putting them on casters. Julie says she has a box if needed. Claudia suggested that casters might make them too easy to move, which could be problematic. John is very interested in this project and during the mall pop-up, noticed the humanity and love that went into each piece. This can also be a project that can be brought to other locations, it seems to have a large draw to people of all ages. John commented that he likes the food pantry tie in as well. The next event is coming up in two days at the CLC, where folks can come and paint a record. May 7th from 11:30-2:30pm

they will be at residency records, and finalizing plans for Bambolina on May 11th.

Norene entertained a motion. Hannah motioned to approve the installation on Artists Row, and Norene seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

- **Linda Mercer ArtBox Proposal**

Linda was unable to attend tonight's meeting but the proposal was introduced and read by Julie Barry. Linda Mercer, a senior at Salem High School and a member of the National Art Honor Society, is interested in painting a mural on the electrical box located on the intersection of Highland Ave. and Wilson St. She will be working with a fellow honor society member Chloe McGee, a junior at SHS who will be helping her design the electrical box. She states she thinks "this would be a great way to add some color to the city and the community" and a "very fun opportunity to showcase my art for my senior year". Her specific design includes painting all sides to resemble blocks from the video game "Minecraft". This reference will be relevant to students from both Salem High School and Horace Mann School. She would like to work on the project next week with the goal of completing it by the end of the week. The teacher in charge of the National Art Honor Society, Jennifer Toler, will oversee the project. If approved this work would become part of our permanent collection. The paints and materials have been purchased. They are not the greatest as indicated by John, but they will work. Julie will remind her not to paint the meter.

Norene entertained a motion to approve, Janine motioned and Jim seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Spur Mural at Palmer Cove Round 2 Review**

This discussion was brought to us last month, but the commission had concerns over materials and how the mural would be attached to the current fencing. A thorough assessment of all materials used has been brought back to the commission for review. The plywood that will be used is half inch MDO Fir plywood, it comes in 4x8 sheets and they will cut them to reach the height of the fence. A water resistant resin with an impregnated cellulose fiber will be bonded to the face and back of the board to make it even more durable and weather resistant, and less likely to split or splinter while cutting. The plywood will be adhered to the fence by using industrial ultra heavy duty multipurpose cable ties. The ties have a 250lbs tension strength, and are UV resistant.

The commission is very appreciative of the resubmission and appreciates the thought and thoroughness that went into the proposal.

Norene entertained a motion. Janine motioned to approve the proposed mural, John seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Salem Arts Fest 2023 Mural Slam Artists' Review**

A record breaking submission cycle has brought 65 submissions to the review of the Arts Fest. By default, the submissions were extremely diverse in terms of peoples styles, mediums, artist ages, subject matter, and cultures represented. Some of the designs stood out as possible art box submissions. None of the murals chosen have participated in the Mural Slam previously.

Norene entertained a motion to approve these proposed artists. Jim motioned, and Hannah seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

John will have the approved artists on the Mural Slam website, with information about the artists.

- **Charlotte Forten Draft Call Review**

Quick update- We are in an unfortunate holding pattern with this project because of the federal funding. We received a grant from the NEA, and as grateful as we are, it has hamstrung us as it is part of receiving a NEA grant, we are required to undergo an environmental and historical impact review. They are currently in between review officers, so there is no one in the position to conduct the review. The position has been vacant since January. Julie has inquired what would happen if we went forward without conducting an impact review since there is little cause for concern. They said that if it does come in violation, it could risk not only this particular funding, but all future funding. This launch of a call has virtually come to a halt, but in the meantime, there are other things that can be done- such as working behind the scenes to ensure that the call accurately represents what this body and advisory group wants to share with the community and accurately represents what we hope to achieve be the commissioning of the sculpture and that we are delivering it in a clear, concise, and effective manner. Julie asks the PAC for formal approval of the draft of the call for artists that has been created in partnership with the MAPC. Our own Gwendolyn Rosemund has written a large majority of the proposal in terms of the RFP, the contents of Charlotte's life, and why she is important to Salem. This is the PAC's opportunity to weigh in on the draft. However because of the regulations around procurement law, this draft has been sent by link, as it is not allowed to be shared publicly yet. If there are any thoughts, comments and concerns about the draft, Julie asks for them to be shared now.

Jim brings attention to paragraph 2, it says "local artists or artist's teams that live or work in the South shore are strongly encouraged to apply" where it should read "North shore".

The second piece of the call was the review criteria. Norene suggested tabling the second part for the next meeting after all PAC members were able to review it.

Norene has entertained a motion to approve the call. Norene motioned and Jim seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

- **Barrio Mural Review**

Statement was sent in from Maggie Osborn of Barrio, with an update of the design for the mural. The statement said that the image is going to look like the image provided to us last meeting. Julie wrote back to her that this information is not sufficient enough to the PAC, and that a formal mock up is needed. Maggie wrote back that she will see what she can do.

Hannah is a little unclear in what the role of the PAC is in terms of approving a project like this. Specifically in terms of approving based on content. Her question is of the PAC's role and additionally are there any other specifications because of the location.

Julie answers that our goal as the PAC is that we can advise an artist on appropriateness, but we cannot tell an artist that they can't paint another culture. *This body is charged with the approval for public art on public property or private property where there is an agreement made or directive made from the city for us to weigh in on.* During this review of the mural, the SRA made it a requirement for the PAC to approve of the materials and design. Part of the design review process is to acquire an actual piece of work that the artist has produced. In this case the art was clearly pulled from the internet, and if they are not capable of providing a sketch or mock up from the artist, we have grounds to not approve the mural.

John asks if the sketch comes back and it's awful, but they still have the materials and permissions, do we have the ability to still say no?

Julie confirms that you would need to clarify why you think it's awful, but if the group thinks it's just really bad art, PAC does have the ability to say no.

- **PAC Work Plan Project Updates:**

Making It Public- Making it Public Sculpture is up! Go play in the owls.

Rotating Sculpture Garden- The Garden is up on display except one of them, the artist couldn't get his stakes into the ground, they needed 2ft clearance and could only get about 1ft down. We are currently looking for another location for this particular sculpture. A lot of the sculptures are interactive, so go check them out, lots of fun to be had.

CLC Mural- CLC mural is completed please have a look if you haven't already.

Lynn Music Foundation- May 3rd, the Lynn music foundation will begin the first of three Hip-Hop performances at Charlotte Forten Park that the PAC funded, so get out and have fun on Saturday nights at 6pm.

Community Art Project- Community Art Project is running really well.

Artist Row- Opening soon! An RFP went out and we got a great response, and will be viewing them next week.

Charlotte Forten Activations and Shade Structures- We have proposals in front of us for shade structures. Currently looking at designs submitted, as we have the funding for it.

Old Town Hall- RFP bids came in strong, they are with the Mayor right now for final review and consideration. Hopefully there will be some news in May.

- **Other Business-**

- **Public Comments-**

None

- **Adjourn-** Norene entertained a motion to adjourn. Moved by John, seconded by Norene. **Meeting Adjourned at 7:58 pm .**

Persons requiring auxiliary aids and services for effective communication such as sign language interpreter, an assistive listening device, or print material in digital format or a reasonable modification in programs, services, policies, or activities, may contact the City of Salem ADA Coordinator, as soon as possible and no less than 2 business days before the meeting, program, or event.

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