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MAYOR

Salem Public Art Commission
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Public Art Commission
March 30, 2023, 6:00pm
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 6:12 pm.**
- **Roll Call PAC:** Norene Gachignard, John Andrews, Janine Liberty, Carly Dwyer-Naik & James Bostick. The Public Art Commission welcomes new member Hannah Gathman. Absent: Gwen Rosemond
- **Meeting Minute Approvals**
 - o February 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes- Norene entertained a motion, Janine made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, Carly seconded. Norene and Hannah abstained. Motion carried.
- **Samuel McIntire Statue Deaccessioning Vote**

This piece was never formally accessioned or purchased by the city. Julie and John wanted to mention that we are getting rid of the piece as it was moved from someone's garage to artists row so it wouldn't be destroyed, but the city never put through any paperwork to own the piece, therefore a vote is not needed. It has been mangled by squirrels, with a large hole in its head, and it will be taken care of by DPW.
- **Art Box Deaccessioning Vote-**

The proposal is to clean, paint, and set a new canvas for the art boxes. John mentioned that these art boxes are in failing quality and because of how much they are loved, the plan would be for PAC to add part of their future upcoming budget on getting them repainted.

Norene entertained a motion to deaccession the following five boxes: Marooned Pirate by Jeremy Lowther, Migratory Behavior by Jes Townsend, Fragments by Leah Grimaldi, Over The Bridge at Dusk by Jennifer Hale, and Salem's Mini Aquarium by Emily Larson. Jim motioned and Carly seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Barrio Mural Review-**

Maggie Osborn is proposing a mural on the exterior of her new business Barrio on Lafayette Street in Salem. The first bit of concern comes from the owner of the building, as he endorses the mural on the building, but wants the responsibility of maintaining and or eventually removing the mural be the responsibility of the business owners of Barrio. Maggie and partner agreed to the responsibilities of maintaining the mural, and or removing it if need be. Maggie assures us that her artist is very experienced and they signed a lease for 15 years, previous installments in other cities have had no issues with disintegrating prematurely. For the idea of the installation, she brings to the commission a standard picture of a young woman in traditional Dia de los Muertos garb. The example in the proposal is not the artist's work, but his plan is to recreate this image himself.

John is worried about approving an image without seeing it first. He mentioned that having a rough sketch is fine for indoor projects, but states that this area of Salem's downtown is very busy and very public. Hannah and Norene share the same concern.

Maggie wants to reassure the PAC that his rendering will be very similar to the piece that is proposed, but it will not be plagiarized or duplicated.

John states that because of the mural's potential location, the SRA gave approval for the building to be painted, but has sent the proposal to PAC for design approval.

Hannah is concerned about the possibility of approving a mural that could be viewed as cultural appropriation.

Carly does not feel comfortable voting on and approving a mural to which the final design is not shown.

Maggie asked for direction from PAC on how they would like her to submit the artist's design. She referred to Seagrass and the Real Pirates Museum as examples. PAC shared that the artists gave full renderings as examples, but we have gone so far to approve rough sketches with pencil and paper before.

The PAC has ultimately requested a rough sketch of the proposed mural in order to approve. Maggie will bring this to her artist, and get back to us. PAC mentioned the possibility of approving a special meeting for them if need be.

Hannah wonders if there are multiple avenues that the artist is willing to explore outside of the theme of Day of the Dead, or if that is his hard take.

Maggie said the artist studied the area, and feels that this mural would fit the local atmosphere. She will try to get the artist to come to a follow up meeting to explain his thinking.

This conversation has been tabled for another meeting.

- **Palmer Cove Mural Review-**

Luisa is the enrichment director for SPUR which is based in Marblehead, Massachusetts, but they serve the

entire North Shore community. They have been working in Palmers Cove for about a year in a few different projects. The first started in June 2022 with a grant from Essex County Community Foundation and New England BioLabs for a course for local students in the point neighborhood and Saltonstall School. They are partnering with the Salem YMCA and Saltonstall School on larger community engagement and beautification efforts at Palmer Cove Park. They have secured \$10,000 in grant money to work with Ana Dugan to occupy the YMCA Green Space in Palmers Cove Park along with Saltonstall's "Friday Club". The students would take part in erecting a mural, to be completed in paneled sections then hung on the chain link fence looking towards the park. The mural is approximately 40 ft long. Start date would be toward the end of April 2023, and work would be conducted every Friday, and presentation date would be towards the end of June 2023.

Jim is concerned about securing the murals and how stable they will be, as well as what the mural would look like from the back. Luisa said that the Salem Community Gardens had the same concerns to which have been addressed by the artist. Luisa is unsure of the method in which the panels are secured, and she will get more information from Anna about the exact method of hanging. The back of the mural will be painted and the entire piece will be weather proofed as well so it will look nice from any angle. All six panels are about 8 ft tall (40 ft together).

Janine is requesting a rough sketch from the artist just as they had done with the Carlton School mural project. Luisa will get it to us as soon as possible.

Hannah asked about the placement of the garden. They plan to hang it within 10 feet overhang of the garden, and the Salem Community Garden has approved of the placement. The raised beds in the green space are pretty high and Charity, who is part of the Salem Green Space, is not concerned about the overhang.

Luisa will get us more details of the method the mural will be attached to the fence, a rough sketch of the mural, and still needs to get approval from Salem Parks Commission in April.

- **Individual Project Application(s) Review & Selection**

Dennis Shafer of ChagallPAC and Jose Reyes- The proposal is to present a student recital for students that need scholarships for free music lessons. Clarification was needed from Dennis about the funding listed on the proposal. Dennis clarified that this grant might not be a good fit because of the other projects looking for funding. He assumed that there were multiple small grants of \$2,500.

Yinette Guzman- The board welcomed Yinette Guzman from the North Shore CDC, and works as the design and placemaking project manager for the Punto Urban Art Museum. She is looking for funding opportunities for a sculpture to be placed in the point neighborhood. Their ask is for \$2,500 which would cover artist fees and supplies. They are currently designing the structures that will be proposed to be installed in Palmers Cove Park.

Lydia Lucas- The board welcomed Lydia Lucas who brought the Commission her proposal for a day-long stretch of mini concerts featuring and highlighting female performers. In her experience, female musicians haven't gotten the recognition they deserve. As a percussionist herself, she notices that stereotypes have affected her career, and many of her students have encountered the same thing. This concert would feature works by drummer Viola Smith, and Florence Price who was the first female African American composer to have her works played by a major orchestra. Lydia would rent out Old Town hall for the whole

day, and play on the first floor. She has played at OTH previously and the first floor had "done the job". This performance would take place in July 2023. The mini concerts would take place throughout the day, for example, one at 12:00pm, the next at 2:00pm and the last at 4:00pm. The concert would be free.

Jim asked about advertising the event. Lydia would reach out to communities such as Salem State, schools, and rely on social media advertising. Lydia has put on concerts previously, but nothing as big as this.

Indra Persad Milowe- Indra Persad Milowe brings to the PAC her proposal for painting the 22 ballards in and around Artists Row. She submitted 6 examples to PAC. Hannah asked if there is any regulation to them. John believes the permission from DPS would be needed to paint. Jim asked about the type of paint involved. There is no specific type of paint listed on the proposal. PAC wants to make sure that the Sherwin Williams paint that was mentioned is not "exterior house paint".

Katie Pustizzi- The proposal from Katie involves a 30-minute dance taking place in the Fountain in the Essex Pedestrian Mall. It would be free and accessible to the public. Some funding has been received for the project already, and the extra grant money would go towards recording the performance. Carly would prefer to give the funds elsewhere since it seems it's happening whether PAC funds it or not.

Norene feels strongly about having a performance on the first floor of the OTH in July. Questions on the funding of the hall, and getting people to go to a free performance seems like it was not thought through and the PAC is unsure of its success. Jim suggests if the grant is chosen, we do not charge her for use of the hall.

Norene and Hannah are in favor of Yinette Guzman's proposal with the Punto Urban Art Museum. Hannah's only concern is that this project's budget is large. She recalls that the project is going to take a lot more money to recreate fiberglass structures and feels that the full funding of PACS \$2,500 is only going to be a "drop in the hat" towards their project. It is in Hannah's interest to use the PAC funds to fund a smaller project fully.

Jim agrees with Hannah and would rather see funding for something more contained rather than someone who is trying to break ground.

Jim supports the proposal to paint the ballards in artists row if he had more information about their stability to make it happen. He thinks it would be a great addition to the color and collection of Artists Row.

Carly adds to the point of Lydia's proposal- asking for money to fund OTH only to take it back again for use of the space. She believes that we should not charge her for the space if the grant is awarded to her.

Hannah likes the idea of Indra's painted ballard proposal as it is a small contained project, & visible. She thinks that the sweet spot of this small amount of money would actually make a difference and get a project done.

John feels that the idea of Dennis' proposal is that the event is happening, it is going to be free, but it would help pain and suffering a bit by throwing money at the producer.

John believes that language listed in the grant going forward may need to be changed in order to get more people to apply for small grants instead of just awarding the whole amount of grant money to one person or organization.

Jim is leaning towards supporting the Punto project, as it is a beautiful installation. Yinette was invited back into the meeting to answer a few questions. They have 7 sculptures to be installed in the parks, the one that they are attempting to get funding for is the one that they want in downtown Salem. Each installation would cost them \$15,000. They are working with Salem Maritime and PEM to install in the park areas outside the establishments.

Jim and John wonder if the effort that PAC makes will be lost in the Punto project. Hannah reminds the PAC that this decision right now is not the end all be all for these projects, it seems that Yinette's proposal will get the help and recognition it deserves via other means.

Norene has entertained a motion. John motioned to approve Indra Persad Milowe as the recipient of the \$2,500 grant to paint the ballards in and around Artist's Row with the contingents upon permission from City services and a discussion is had about the preparation and materials used before painting begins. Jim seconds. Motion approved unanimously.

- **Updates on various projects**

Making it Public Grant- Artists "Mythmakers" have been approved to move forward, taking place to install in Patton Park April 3rd through April 7th. No votes needed.

Rotating Sculpture Garden- Approval has been secured to install sculptures at Leslie's Retreat. Location selected at the December meeting. Artists are under contract and installations will take place at various times during the first two weeks in April.

Artists Row- The new 2023-2024 tenants are to open their doors in April, Robber's Daughter, Chagall PAC, ShinDig, and Public Artist in Residence Claudia Paraschiv. A Call for Artists for the 2024 Public Artist in Residence will be released in mid-April or early May 2023 with review and selection taking place in June or July 2023.

Julie would like input from the PAC on the way she should send out the press releases. Half of PAC agreed that too many emails might get lost in inboxes, but too long of a press release would be a struggle for people to get to the end of. The idea of a press release title saying "Look how much the City of Salem is doing in regards to public art!" might be a good solution, and to focus on making sure social media posts reflect the individual projects being put forward. John summarizes that all these announcements kinda fit in the same mold, and if she wanted to do one big announcement of all triumphs, she has the full support of the PAC. Carly asks that if it is possible to strategically list the different projects, she thinks that would be better accessible.

John doesn't want to throw any extra work on to Julie but he suggests an "early in process press release" with quotes and interviews from artists would be a good idea as well.

Spring Activations- The PAC has allocated \$5,000 to funding programming in the downtown area in April & May. This funding was allocated to Lynn Music Foundation for a series of 3 Saturday night Hip Hop performance showcases to take place in Charlotte Forten Park in May 2023. These events will feature local artists from Salem, Lynn and Swampscott, and offer an open mic opportunity for even more local artist engagement.

John's comments that he is worried that Edwin and The Lynn Music Foundation do not know what they are getting themselves into with this using this park, but John is confident in the support he is getting. He's not sure that he knows there is limited power, no staging, no lighting. Julie and John want to get the word out to get more Salem people to participate.

An additional \$5,000, the full total of remaining Activation Funds to be allocated in the FY23 funding cycle, was approved to support the revamped Community Arts Project at Salem Arts Fest that now features a mentorship program for a young public artist in training.

Public Art Policies- A “Gifts of Art” policy as well as an “Accessioning & Deaccessioning Art Works in the Public Art Collection” policy were discussed as two other administrative policies that need to be established. Staff is working with the City Solicitors’ Office to draft these policies and will review them with the PAC when ready. This remains a low priority work in progress due to other demands on staff time.

- **Charlotte Forten Draft Call Review & Approval-**

The Charlotte Forten Call Discussion on the agenda will be tabled. All PAC members are asked and encouraged to read and review the draft attached to Julie’s email and provide any thoughts, comments, or suggestions you may have in writing directly to Julie, as to not break the rules of outside deliberation. We are specifically seeking your input around the value statements and review criteria elements of this call. Please submit feedback on the document by end of day on Thursday, April 6th at the latest so we can synthesize feedback and finalize the document for release. As a reminder this call has been created in partnership with the MAPC and the Charlotte Forten Advisory Group. Our very own Gwen Rosemond participates in that group and has provided the text on Charlotte’s life for the call.

- **Remote Meeting Update-**

The Governor has formally approved remote meetings through March 31, 2025.

Important notes to consider: If you wish to return to in-person hybrid meetings, it is important to understand that a quorum of board members, including the Chair, must be physically present in the room at every meeting. We would need at least 4 board members including the Chair (or in our case one of the co-chairs now that John and Norene share that role) to commit to being at the meetings in-person. Staff are also required to be in the room as well of course. Additionally for fully remote and/or hybrid meetings, ALL board members are now required to have their cameras ON during the public meetings. If you do not have this capability, please let me know and we can work with IT to help secure you a web camera if needed.

John and Norene are on opposite ends of the discussion, but the quorum has insisted that meetings via zoom are easier to attend with everyone's busy schedules, and the PAC will continue to meet via zoom every month. No voting needed.

- **Other Business-**

Save the date for Arts Fest! June 2nd-4th downtown Salem. John is always looking for help with Mural Slam.

Salem Arts is opening their newest exhibit called “Salem Roots Run Deep” next Friday, April 7th, which has a tie to Salem Ancestry days. No reservation needed.

- **Public Comments-**

None

- **Adjourn-** Norene entertained a motion to adjourn. Moved by Jim, seconded by Carly. **Meeting Adjourned at 7:55 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.

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A § 18-25 and City Ordinance § 2-2028 through § 2-2033.