

**MINUTES
CITY OF FORT MYERS
PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE
JANUARY 25, 2021**

The Public Art Committee of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met in regular session at Oscar M. Corbin Jr. City Hall, 2200 Second Street, its regular meeting place in the City of Fort Myers, FL, on Monday, January 25, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. Present were: Carolyn Gora, Chair, presiding, Committee Members, Betty Adams, David Meo, Leila Mesdaghi, Bettye Middlebrooks, Ava Roeder and William Taylor. Also present were Tom Hall, Art Consultant, Grant W. Alley, City Attorney, J.B. Schuetz, Parks & Beautification Manager, Sheri Shifrin, Fort Myers Mural Society Executive Director, Abraham Luna, Senior Supervisor, Michelle Jones, Administrative Assistant and Reva Daly, Fiscal Coordinator. Absent: Sharon McAllister.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gora called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Gora led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken by Michelle Jones. Ms. Collins arrived to the meeting at 4:34 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Gora asked if anyone from the public would like to speak. J.B. Schuetz, Parks and Beautifications Manager introduced Abraham Luna, Senior Supervisor to the Public Art Committee. Mr. Schuetz announced his retirement with the City of Fort Myers, February 26th being his last day. Chair Gora moved to regular items on the agenda.

REGULAR ITEMS

1. Minutes of the December 15, 2020 Public Art Committee meeting

Ava Roeder, Committee Member changed under section three: Update on Annual Plan for FY20-21; the word person to percent. To read, Ms. Roeder asked, if there are any projects CIP's recently that might qualify for a *percent* for art to go into our budget.

MOTION: Committee Member Meo moved to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2020 Public Art Committee meeting; seconded by Committee Member Middlebrook; motion carried 7-0 with the changes.

2. Update on Bucks Backyard Mural Project

Sheri Shifrin, Executive Director of the Fort Myers Mural Society provided an update on the Buck's Backyard Mural Project presenting the progress with photos of the panels that artists Eric Schlake and J.P. Almonacid are working on at McCollum Hall. She

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reviewed the details of the procedure, supplies and background of the portrait's importance, such as the commemoration of Paul Dunbar and his legacy with-in the community. Ms. Shifrin spoke on two additional projects; Hall of 50 States where they will have 8 x 12 panels that will be attached to the plywood already in place on the windows and a temporary project Music Legends Never Die where they will have 4 x 4 primed panels for artists to choose a Music Legend to paint, which can be seen at Art Walk on March 5th. Ms. Shifrin explained the type of materials and paint, informing its expandable properties. Tom Hall, Art Consultant asked Ms. Shifrin if she had experience with painting crosswalks and asphalts and discussed the art hub plan that is in the annual plan, which he agreed to send her a copy of. There was discussion of DOT specs. Ms. Collins, Committee Member mentioned a PDF document that she sent Mr. Hall, confirming that the colors are limited. Mr. Hall discussed Cranford and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard area being a good place for a crosswalk mural.

3. Update on Forum Call to Artist

Tom Hall, Art Consultant announced the reestablished presence on CaFE, that the Call to Artist had been uploaded and that it is live with an extended submission deadline of midnight, Friday, March 12th. Mr. Hall asked the committee if the deadline was adequate or to extend the deadline even farther. The committee agreed that the current deadline was enough time for an artist. Mr. Hall asked the committee how they wanted to evaluate the Call to Artist submissions. Ava Roeder, Committee Member recollected the narrowing down of past Call submissions. David Meo, Committee Member inquired about the RFQ's and the Call process. Mr. Hall instructed the intended procedure for the Winner of the Forum's Call to Artist. Thus, concluding that they will place this item on next month's agenda and how to review submittals. The amount of time to give the three finalists to come up with their proposals was not determined. Ms. Roeder inquired if the finalist will be stipend \$500. Mr. Hall replied yes, it is built into the Call. Mr. Schuetz confirmed that the park is still in the conceptual planning stage and the Public Art Committee will be ahead of the curve allowing time for the contestants to be presented with the opportunity to consider scale and to look into other options around the park.

4. Update on Annual Plan for FY20-21

Chair Gora moved to discussion about the annual plan inquiring if there was a budget yet, there being none, she moved to the next agenda item.

5. Update on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard/Veronica S. Shoemaker Boulevard

Mr. Schuetz informed the committee about the Black History Society meeting on Friday, January 29th, to discuss a theme for the art piece on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

6. Centennial Park Art Pieces

Mr. Schuetz, Parks & Beautification Manager asked for a motion to approve the proposed locations for the monuments in the restructuring of Centennial Park east. The proposal document of the placement of the monuments was reviewed by the committee

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members confirming that the movement location is still accessible by the public walking by.

MOTION: Committee Member Taylor moved to approve the proposed location of the Centennial Park Art Pieces; seconded by Committee Member Meo; motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hall informed the committee that he asked RLA Conservation about the movement of the three pieces and it was recommended that they should be supervised, specifically the Civil War Monument. Mr. Schuetz confirmed that this is an item that needs to be discussed between Engineering and Wright Construction in determining the right format to safely move the pieces through a subcontractor. Mr. Hall clarified that the committee does not want to get involved with who is selected to move the pieces, but rather having the committee's conservator work with who is selected and inspect the pieces after the art has been moved and reassembled properly. Mr. Hall raised discussion with the Committee of who then would bear the cost of the conservator. Mr. Schuetz replied that he can check with Engineering and Wright Construction.

7. Purchase Order for Annual Conservation of Conserved Artworks

Tom Hall, Art Consultant reviewed the conservation of artworks in 2018 for the new members at the meeting. Mr. Hall resolved that at that time the conservator RLA, provided an annual maintenance plan. Mr. Hall has requested that RLA provide an updated proposal to include *Uncommon Friends*, *The Florida Panthers*, *Wes Knott* and *The Spirit of Fort Myers*, and a separate line item for *Lorelei*, because the Fort Myers Lee County Garden Counsel pays for her to be maintained. Once those proposals are in, a purchase order can be issued. Ms. Roeder asked when the last work was completed on the artworks, because the costs seem high with an anticipated \$15,000 - \$20,000 annual cost to maintain them, she suggested to do it every three years. Mr. Hall replied that when the work is completed, we will see how well they weathered over the past two years since they have last been done. The materials, maintenance and condition of the fountains *The Spirit of Fort Myers* and *Uncommon Friends* were discussed. Mr. Taylor, Committee Member inquired why these sculptures were the ones selected for maintenance and to consider other pieces to swap out. The need for maintenance on *Firedance* and *The Caloosahatchee Manuscripts* were then discussed, confirming that cost and budget is the factor for these artworks. Chair Gora confirmed that the Public Art Committee needs to see what the budget is before we know what we can afford. Mr. Hall suggested continuing the discussion at the February meeting, where RLA's proposal, possibly some information on the budget and discussion of the Public Art Committees priorities can be addressed. Mr. Meo inquired about a report they were to receive on raising the sculpture at Clemente park above the foliage, so that it would be considered for annual maintenance. Mr. Hall confirmed the information will be available at the February meeting and CRA has offered to provide the funds for that subject to the cost.

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8. Stacked Brands

Tom Hall, Art Consultant presented a slide show of *Stacked Brands* a sculpture crafter by Peter Mitten in 2014 and the artworks weathered and stained condition. RLA and Peter were sent the pictures from the slide show and the Artist has suggested that if the piece is saved it should be moved indoors. The aesthetics of the piece was addressed opposed to the structure. Ms. Collins, Committee Member inquired if the County was supposed to do the maintenance on the piece. Mr. Meo inquired what materials were used. Mr. Hall replied with 1/8-inch cut and welded steel plate, rust color patina, fully sealed with sealer, being the patina that is washing off. Adding that the art piece was supposed to have a wax coating applied on an annual basis and was not designed to have the weather look like the Carmona sculptures. Mr. Meo suggested in the discussion of the restoration of the piece to consider asking the artist and RLA having it powdered coated to that chocolate color, so the maintenance would be much less over the course of time. The suggestion was agreed upon by the Committee Members. Mr. Hall announced that RLA's estimate to conserve the artwork runs between \$18,000 – \$29,000. The sculptor was loaned to Lee County under a formal loan agreement with the City of Fort Myers. Mr. Hall highlighted that Lee County in essence, has obligated itself to pay for the annual cost of maintenance and any damage to the sculptor and conserving the work could fall under the rubric of damage or just doing all of the maintenance all at one time. Mr. Hall told the Committee about his discussions with the City Attorney and that any communication from the City to the County needs to come from the City Manager or City Council, or they could instruct him to be a liaison from the City to the County. Mr. Hall notified the committee to consider adopting a resolution asking the City Manager or City Council to make that initial inquiry to Lee County to have this artwork conserved.

MOTION: Committee Member Taylor moved to have the City reach out to the County about conserving this particular artwork; seconded by Committee Member Adams; motion carried 7-0.

Grant Alley, City Attorney informed the committee on the process to empower Tom Hall to communicate with the County in reference to this particular art piece. Mr. Taylor clarified that his motion was for the City to reach out to the County and not to empower Mr. Hall. Mr. Schuetz agreed that the City can make that call and start a dialog with the County.

9. Adopt-a-Sculpture Legal Advice

Tom Hall, Art Consultant informed that the City of Fort Myers has 43 outdoor artworks. He summarized the cost to conserve eight of the artworks and the committee's annual plan to avoid the expenditure the City incurred. Thus, leading to the Adopt-a-Sculpture program to ensure there are sufficient funds to maintain all the artworks on an annual basis. Mr. Hall reviewed the concept of the Adopt-a-Sculpture program and the request for the City Attorney to provide some guidance of what can be done. Mr. Alley explained the ability and parameters to enter into the Adopt-a-Sculpture program, including authority to do so, earmarked payments, sign location and possible tax breaks for the

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donating company. He mentioned the Historic Preservation Commissions interest in Otocast, to synergize the city's Historic Structures with Public Art. Mr. Hall presented a list of additional questions for clarification from the Mr. Alley to complete the proposed draft. Mr. Alley provided the Committee with the answers and the results were as such; That a centralized City employee will be designated through the Public Works Department Manager with rules on how money can be solicited, however such rules shouldn't prohibit moving forward, with the thought that contributions can be made in any way that is recordable for tax purposes. Pledges can be made, however if someone withdraws their contribution you will need to know how you want to pursue a legal remedy of specific performance, but programs such as Adopt-a-Road or Adopt-a-Tree do not have such legal requirements. Adopt-a-Road was suggested as a good template to use, because it is already established. Mr. Alley continued that donated money would most likely be held in the Public Art Fund under maintenance and not have a legal requirement, but there are legal requirements if a sign is placed at the piece. Incentives can be offered to people/businesses who sponsor the artwork, however if something of value is created that is not available to the public it will need to be examined. A reception or mixer is not considered something of value for IRS classification purposes. Using Otocast for a point of interest for a donor is not prohibited, but a donor wall on the City website may be and needs further communication with the IT director. It is believed that expenses incurred to provide an incentive cannot be paid out the money collected for the Adopt-a-Sculpture, but it could be paid out of the Public Art Funds approved ways to collect money. Mr. Alley concluded that any additional questions that arise may be run by him.

10. Discussion of 5 Year Master Plan

It was determined that there was not enough time to cover the Master Plan at this meeting.

11. Upcoming Public Art Committee meeting Monday February 22nd

Chair Gora reminded the Committee, because of Presidents Day the meeting will be held on a different date in February and will return to the usual third Tuesday of the month in March.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Committee Member Meo; seconded by Committee Member Taylor; to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m.