

## MINUTES FOR PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE

City of Fort Myers, Florida

January 31, 2023

The Public Arts Committee met on January 31, 2023 at the Oscar M Corbin, Jr City Council Chambers located at 2200 Second Street, Fort Myers, Florida from 4 pm to 6:20 pm. Members present were Leila Mesdaghi, Victor Dotres, Carolyn Gora, Betty Middlebrooks, William Taylor, and Ava Roeder. Absent were Molly Deckart and David Meo. In addition: Tom Hall, public art consultant, Grant Alley, city attorney, and Patricia Howell, recording secretary were in attendance.

The meeting was called to order by Leila Mesdaghi at 4:00 pm.

Roll was called by the recording secretary, Patsy Howell.

Public Comments:

1. **Approval of December 20, 2022** minutes. Approved 6-0 Motion moved by William Taylor and seconded by Ava Roeder.
2. **Councilmember Bochette**, City Council Liaison, (Ward Four): Lee Trust is involved with repairs of Rachel at the Well. Council member Bochette has let the city manager know the public art committee is missing funds due them and he has asked the city manager to investigate. He floated the idea of changing the name of Centennial Park to Uncommon Friends Park because many communities have a Centennial Park. Bochette shared the plans for US 41 and Cleveland's medium. He suggested it was the perfect place to display a public art piece.
3. **Jose Parrilla, Parks & Beautification** – The Panther at the Uncommon Friends Statue has a Leak. Parks and Beautification department is working on repairing it, hopefully before the art show this weekend.  
There is not a contractor to repair the damage made by a driver at this time.
4. **Uncommon Friends** (Ward 4, Centennial Park East): Jeannie Wilken and Brent Scheneman spoke about sponsors to help with the repair and maintain of the Uncommon

Friends statue. At this point they have not found sponsors to help with the project.

Therefore this committee must vote on removing the water feature of the statue or keeping the water feature because this committee voted in May of 2022 to remove the water feature because of the cost involved in repairing the statue. A cost of \$7,000 a year is the average price to maintain the Uncommon Friends Statue. It can run more if repairs are required. If the water feature was to be deaccessioned, then approval must be obtained from the Historical Preservation Committee. *Is there a way to go in front of the city council to ask “what to do with the city artwork?” In addition, is there a way to have the repairs of Uncommon Friends Statue to be placed in the city budget for 2023-24. The budget line should read between \$10,000 and \$15,000 for repairs to the statue. **Motion Mr. Taylor: The topic of removing the water feature be tabled until next month. Mr. Hall speak to each councilmen and poll to see if there can be a line item budget to maintain The Uncommon Friends Statue with the water feature. Passed 6-0***

5. **The Spirit of Fort Myers/Rachel at the Well**: Noted the orange fencing that was covering Rachel at the Well has been removed. The committee asked Mr. Hall to contact Lawrence Voytek to speak at the next art committee meeting. Mr. Voytek’s committee is working on fundraising for the repairs of Rachel at the Well.

**Motion by William Taylor, seconded by Victor Dotres: Ask for an update from a city employee the status of FEMA reimbursement on Rachel At the Well. Passed 6-0.**

Mr. Hall will follow up with the request. Last month the committee approved the ROA contract to repair Rachel at the Well. *However, there were questions if the committee can front the funds for the repair of Rachel at the Well, does the contract need to be presented to City Council for approval, and do FEMA funds need to be collected before work may begin?*

6. **River Basin Mural Project** (Ward 4) The agreement between the City Art Committee and the CRA was approved by the CRA this month. 53 of 57 paintings have been completed. The balance is expected to be turned in within the week. Installing the paintings has

been held up by weather and repair of the stanchions and obelisks caused by Ian. *Can a request be made to parks and rec to repair the posts? Is there a way to expedite the repairs for the obelisks? Some art committee members plan to attend the city council meeting and ask for the obelisks and stanchions to be repaired sooner than later.*

7. **Buck's Backyard Mural Extension** (Ward 2) McCollum Hall: On Feb. 6, 2023, Mr. Hall will appear in front of the City Council to ask for approval of payment for the completion of Buck's Backyard Mural Extension. The payment of \$5,000.00 was approved for payout by this committee last month.

8. **Buck's Backyard Mural Guidebook**: The guide book has been completed and a copy has been sent to each art committee member. Please let Tom know of any typing errors so they can be corrected.

9. **Public Art Fund**: Tom requested this topic be rolled over until next month. ***Review the ordinance to make sure it reads at the time of permitting or CO. And what actions if any may be taken to follow up with this ordinance. The city attorney will follow up with the city manager. The city attorney will report back to this committee.***

10. **Carmona Sculpture/Art Hub Concrete Pads**: Tom has contacted an engineer firm that will design shop drawings for concrete pads and wind straps for this sculpture.

11. **USCT 2nd Regiment Monument** (Ward 4): Moved to next month

12. **Symphony** (Ward 5 Alliance for the Arts): Moved to next month

13. **The Knife Sharpener** (Ward 2, Urban Community Farm): Moved to next month.

14. **Cecilia Lueza & Journey of Hope** (Ward 2, Intersection of MLK and Veronica S.

Shoemaker Boulevards): ***Can the public arts committee spend funds without pre approval by city council? Mr. Alley will find the answer and let the committee know at next meeting.***

15. **Mickael Broth & Rise Above** (Ward 1, Forum Park): Holding pattern for phase 1 of this project.

16. **Stacked Brands** (Ward 4, Fort Myers Regional Library) They are evaluating to see if the art work can be painted. Expense by Lee County because of the local agreement.

17. **Parallel Park** (Ward 4, Lee County Justice Central Parking Garage): Inter local agreement with Lee County and the public art committee what rights and obligations

18. **Advertisement for Public Art Consultant**: May 31, 2023 the public art consultant position Ends. The city has to be advertised before this point and time. **Motion: William Taylor ask the city to do a 4-month contract for public art consultant and move to a yearly contract in line with the rest of the city budget. Carolyn Gora seconded and passed 6-0.**

19. **February PAC meeting has been set for February 22, 2023.**

**Meeting adjourned by Dotres – all in favor. 6-0**