



CONNECTING THE ARTS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Tuesday, May 10, 2016 8:30 AM

City Hall Room 101

MINUTES

Present: Becki Christopherson, Nori Grudin, Kathy Hebert, Diane Jellerette, Lynn Massey, Judith Bacall, Tony Velez, Jennifer Bangser, Chris Bradley, Susan Wallerstein, Melissa Slattery, Helen Roman; Absent: Sophia Gevas, Jeff Price, Shruti Chalamani, Dorothy Mobilia

Guests: Janet Evelyn; Elsa Peterson Obuchowski, Gerald Myles

CALL TO ORDER @ 8:34 AM

INTRODUCTIONS WELCOME GUESTS – Gerald Myles, Elsa Peterson

- Gerald Myles, musician, different music businesses, private lessons, online recording business, DJ, freelance drummer
- Elsa Peterson Obuchowski from Nature Park @ Oak Hills, Nature trail, 2 large gardening areas to plant; looking for visual and musical activity at the park.

UPDATES

Calendar

- Monday May 23, 3pm - Mobile App update for partners
- June 25/26 - Norwalk Arts Festival
- July 9 - NICE 2016 Festival, Oyster Shell Park
- August - SoNo Arts Celebration
- September - Boat Show, Live Green Festival

Yankee Doodle Garage

- Kathy - The parking authority is looking at a lighting installation for the garage; collaboration with the arts commission, redevelopment and parking authority; preliminary meeting with redevelopment for an outside lighting mural to provide safety, aesthetic qualities, etc. Looking to engage the public with a three-word/one sentence about what they think the lighting project should be. Should be up by spring of 2017.
- Susan - the commission has an arts policy, and we look to be stewards of the public interest in public art. There will be open and transparent opportunities who want to be considered for public art and people at the table who make the final selection who represent aesthetic interests. Steve Rust and Susan will represent NAC on this project.

Oak Hills Nature Trail

- Elsa - entrance to the nature trail to the east of the restaurant - used to be a rose garden, will now be the Fountain Garden. Artistic design, pergola, Great Lawn to south, suitable place to have an arts event for families. Hoping for fall, but the grass will probably not be mature until spring/summer 2017. Artist spoke about Native American art; more workshops planned, open to all kinds of ideas.
- Chris - a few years ago there was a library event at Fodor Farm, and they combined the mailing lists with the Friends of Fodor Farm.
- Susan – Arts Commission can help get the word out through the FCAA. Elsa is also on the Oak Hills Authority, which is part of the city government.
- Kathy - They are supposed to manage this city asset without taxpayer dollars like the parking authority.
- Susan – Arts Commission could be lead applicant for grant written by City grant writer.

- Lynn - not familiar with the park; how big is the area and is it next to the golf course? It is on the other side of the restaurant from the golf course, and the Great Lawn is the size of a football field, the Fountain Garden is about 1/3 of that.
- Susan - we will try to have meetings at Oak Hills and Fodor Farm next year.
- Elsa - the garden club is not getting involved, nor the tree advisory club. Lynn suggested the Rowayton gardeners club. They have been working with a landscape firm for over a year and the priorities do not match.

Mobile App

- Judith - download the app on your phone, Otocast; one tour from City Hall to the library that is live and we are tweaking it as it is used. The goal is to have all issues resolved by the end of the month. We contracted for 60 stops, and each stop has a narrator. We are looking for narrators who are connected to the site and have something to say. The remaining stops will hopefully flow well. A lot of information is getting put together about all sorts of different assets of the city with everything in one place.
- Lynn - is there a visual readout for hearing impaired?
- Judith - most of it is visual; the audio is just the introduction to the specific site. The audio is added value.
- Susan \$10,000 project, \$6000 to the vendor and \$4000 to the consultant. We have \$2000 from redevelopment and \$500 each parks and rec, parking authority, library and historical commission.
- Chris - Karen Delveccio - ask Jim Clark to give some original music for April jazz and poetry events; this music could be incorporated with the city "on hold" music and the app.
- Susan - we are using existing events as listed on the agenda to pass out flyers informing people about the app.
- Judith – branding users manual for the new city logo that we will need to use.
- Becki - suggesting an arts and culture calendar for the summer as a vehicle for promoting the brand.

Mayor's Gallery Update - Melissa

SPAG is the next exhibit; they have an annual event when they go to paint on Sheffield Island and have an exhibit there. This year they will put their work up in the Mayor's Gallery. June 11 is their trip to go to the island. The opening will be after July 4. Themes - youth, creative economy, diversity, artists; will do the art show awards again; Norwalk's Got Talent; reaching out to arts organizations in town; Mayor's gallery doesn't have to be just visual; we have been talking to the poet laureate for summer events. May 16 - we are recruiting retired art teachers and Norwalk graduates to come back and select the award winners. This year we have Danielle Calloway, Louise Flax and Barbara Newman, Joe Fucigna.

Public Art Update

- Helen - Ziggy Bober wanted to put a sculpture in Oyster Shell Park; in June he will be showing the sculpture in Madison and Helen will go and see it. It is quite large. He has been given the guidelines. He would also like to sell his art to Norwalk, but there is no budget for that. He was very happy about the Otocast app.
- Susan - background on public art in Norwalk and lack of policy for acquisition and maintenance; most of the sculptures are Carol Eisner's work; she is NYC and Weston sculptor and she got permission to put it around Norwalk rather than pay for storage. New Risk Manager based at City Hall looks at the artwork from a value and maintenance point of view.

Poet Laureate

- Chris - Developing a webpage on the library website and linked from the city's site. She wrote a poem about Oyster Shell Park. Chris wants to see a permanent installation of the poem at the park.
- Susan – Nice outdoor signs are \$2500, Mike Moccia might have the money to do one for the poem.

NICE Festival Update – Janet Evelyn

Posters for Norwalk transit and the parking garages; digital billboard at exit 25 going up soon; 12pm-9pm; 12-4pm children & family activities with Maritime and Stepping Stones, poet laureate with multiple languages with parents reading poems in their native language and the children translating them. They will be positioned between Irish step dancing, belly dancing, Latin dancing, drumming, etc. Dre Towey is coordinating Child of the

World activity center. Interactive art mural for ethnic heritage that will serve as a backdrop for future festivals. Center for Global Studies will be bringing their kids. International Kite Flying company. 4pm-9pm live music. There will be a food court of food trucks.

Social Media – Nori Grudin

Taking announcements from Facebook to #livelovenorwalk on Instagram.

Arts Festival

We will have a big canvas; kids from 20 West will be selling magnets; Becki will run volunteer sign-up sheet.

Human Relations Public Hearing

- Tony - It was a packed house with 5 people defending the piece and Jeff's presentation was the most researched and sincere. The response from the community was incredible, with a black minister from LA and a white minister from Westport. The consensus was to remove it. City Hall is not the appropriate place to have the mural, but the objection was not to showing the mural at all.
- Diane - The mural is in storage now and it will be moving to the new museum with other WPA murals. It's very big so they have to figure out where to put it with a consultant.

Chair Update

- SLOW Art Day was terrific at the Aquarium focusing on the mural. The Middleton family was there, descendants of the black oystermen. Arts Commission is being considered to be an official commission.
- Public art walking tour on June 11 with 20 West Ave housing students. They will meet with Jahmane at his traffic graphic and John Cusano who is explaining the history of SoNo. They need some caring adults to practice with them. WPA docents are also meeting.
- Accepted two donations that we facilitated. David Cole donated his temple rubbings to the Center for Global Studies; Bruce Mellion donated pieces to the city; those went to the 3rd floor here and the sculpture is in front of the museum.
- LaTanya Autry is a curator who works with arts and cultural organizations can be more inclusive.
- We need signage for the public art in room 101. There are two more upstairs that Melissa would like to relocate to room 101.

BUSINESS

- Motion to accept April minutes by Melissa seconded by Nori. Accepted unanimously.
- Financial Report -
- 15-16 \$14000 down to the last \$1000; we have used our resources well.
- 16-17 \$13,715, added in \$1500 for poet laureate; will present a proposed budget at the June meeting

SHARING

Tony - Westport Arts Collective at Lockwood Mathews Mansion on art from/reflects the '60's. Miggs Burroughs is leading it. Contact the mansion if you know someone who might have work to show.

Lynn moved, unanimous vote to adjourn at 9:58 AM