



**CONNECTING THE ARTS WITH THE COMMUNITY**  
**Tuesday September 13<sup>th</sup> 8:30 AM**  
**MINUTES**

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**PRESENT:** Becki Christopherson\*, Nori Grudin\*, Jennifer Bangser\*, Chris Bradley\*, Jeff Price\*, Janet Evelyn\*, Lynn Massey\*, Dorothy Mobilia, Kathy Hebert, Karen Spencer, Melissa Slattery, Judith Bacal, Diane Jellerette, Cristina Sarno, Jim Clark, Lillie Fortino, Liz Stocker, Laurel Peterson. \*Voting members

The chair called the meeting to order at 8:33 AM

**UPDATES & SHARING**

- Poet Laureate (Laurel Peterson) - Poets in Conversation - two invitational poets at each event, 15-20 minutes of reading, moderated conversation between them about their work, then audience Q&A. Raining Poetry - spray paint poems on the sidewalk that can only be seen when it rains; they will last up to six months; partnership with FiveFingaz Ekphrastic (writing poems about artwork) at the Rowayton Arts Center Sept. 21, 6:30-8:30 City-wide contest in the winter with a reading in the spring Chris Bradley - these are co-sponsored by the library; please make sure you are on the library's email list to find out about these events.
- Introduction to music/visual arts concept (Jim Clark) - Releasing an album of original jazz music with his quartet. There are 10 songs, and each song has a clear theme and story. He wants to collaborate with artists to curate art around these themes, either as projected art or an art gallery experience. April is Jazz Appreciation Month and National Poetry Month so they will have a joint event. Please contact him at jim@jimclarkjazz.com if you are interested in collaborating. There will be a website for the album with videos and music. Event at the library Oct. 8 Meet the Composer, 3:00pm, album release, what's it like to make an album, etc.  
Jennifer - April could maybe have a call to art for a show to be part of the event. Jeff - would like to do something at Artist's Market. Jim also spoke about the need for "world class performance space" designed for different styles of music.
- Mobile app (Judith Bacal) - Two virtual tours are up on the Outcast app; there will be five. Two more should be sent this week. They will post and then there will be another round of review. We can comment on the app if we have input. Melissa is working on the fifth tour of WPA.
- Mayor's Gallery Update (Melissa Slattery) - Show with SPAG this summer which came down yesterday. The new show is going up today, the student award winners for the Ralph Slone Gallery. Tuesday, Oct. 11 at 5:30 is the opening, she needs a voting member to help with the event. The jury who selected the artwork will also be featured. Everyone in the public schools will be invited. The next show, November through February, will feature with the Norwalk City Hall employees. She would like to incorporate Jim Clark's idea in the March/April show.
- Yankee Doodle Garage & MGG (Kathryn Hebert) - Rachel Calemo has been hired as a consultant to work on the Yankee Doodle garage. They are doing the wall as Phase 1 and the towers as Phase 2. There needs to be aesthetic functionality with art, light, security, and way finding centerpiece of the district. The next viewing will be in October. Maritime Gallery opening is Sept. 21 at 5pm for Kismet.
- Third Thursdays (Jeff Price) - He would like to have a program on the Third Thursdays as a sort of salon to make the store an event space as well as retail. The first one is the Poetry event this Thursday. He is trying to create a sense of Uptown in that area.
- Social Media – FB, Instagram, Twitter (Nori Grudin) - FiveFingaz and Jahmaine are tagging us so we can co-promote. #livelovenorwalkct We are developing a group of virtual members who tag us.
- Karen Spencer - Show in Mexico for six months; Now at the Norwalk Public Library in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month; official opening is this Saturday at the library from 3-5pm.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Susan discussed 3 goals - Sustainability, Capacity, Succession Planning

- Sustainability - There is an ordinance going before the Norwalk Common Council Ordinance Committee to create an Arts Commission. The hearing is on Sept. 20th at 7pm. Eloisa Melendez is the chair of that committee and will meet with Susan in advance of the meeting.
- Sustainability/Capacity - We have learned what our business is and what we are about. Everyone is encouraged to put their name by an activity and take ownership of an assignment. If you think of other things that should be on the list please let her know.
- Succession Planning - To be a really successful commission we really need a staff person, a Cultural Affairs Officer. This is part of the ordinance. By next spring, we should reform and think about nominations for a new chair, committees, etc.

Other news included info about 3 public art walking tours, gateway to Norwalk dedication event; we have Norwalk departments partnering with us in some capacity by writing checks, referring artists to us, etc. Susan was invited by the Cultural Alliance to review DECD regional grants. Plans under way to get labels for Margaret McKinnick prints in Room 101.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. The voting members unanimously approved the July 12<sup>th</sup> minutes with the addition of Lynn Massey's name as attending.
2. Financial report – reviewed noting \$13K total which includes \$1500 for poet laureate.
3. Proposal to decommission “Art Under the Bridge Installation” (Attachment B) The chair asked if anyone was present to speak about de-accessioning the Art under the Bridge installation. Since no one asked to speak, the chair reviewed the public art policy sections pertaining to commissioning new work and also decommissioning new work. We need to take down an art installation that is currently under I-95 bridge; it has been brought to our attention that the art installation that was put up is falling apart and filled with graffiti. VARA is a law that says that if a city or public institution acquires a piece of art and lets it fall apart the artist has recourse. Jeff Price made a motion made to de-accession the art installation under I-95. Discussion about location – safety and difficulty maintaining, monitoring. Every effort is being made to locate the artists as they will be invited to take their work if they want it. Janet Evelyn made a motion to amend the original motion by adding “with the hope it can be replaced with appropriate public art at some point.” The amendment and the main motion passed unanimously.
4. Recommendation to engage consultant to maintain public art inventory for an amount not to exceed \$500. Jennifer Bangser made a motion to engage Daryn Reyman-Lock for an amount not to exceed \$500 to maintain the public art inventory which resides in a database on a computer at the Historical Society Museum. This involves checking quarterly with various departments to find out about any new artwork which needs to be added as well as pieces which should be removed. “Gateway to Norwalk” will be added along with a quilt at the library. Ziggy Bober's works will be removed. The motion passed unanimously.
5. Nori Grudin made a motion to engage consultant(s) to develop additional public art tour(s) estimated at \$500/tour. After discussion the motion was passed unanimously.
6. Recommendation to engage consultant to manage public art tours (logistics, registration, docents, etc.), including but not limited to WPA. Discussion about the need and suggestion that Susan create a job description similar to the one Julyen provided for the inventory maintenance which includes key features of the position e.g., keeping the data, managing logistics, registration, scheduling, etc. It's busy in the spring - fall but winter is only the inside WPA tour.
7. Remembering our friend Tony Velez – There will be a memorial gathering at his home this Saturday; Jeff Price will say something on behalf of the arts commission for his dedication to diversity and passion for the arts. Lynn spent a lot of time with Tony and introduced her son to him. He really had a photographer's eye. He made a huge contribution to the anti-war movement with the Vietnam War. She would like to have a commemorative show of his work. He was an activist artist, talented photographer and passionate human. Susan made a motion asking Jeff to convey our sentiments at the service; passed unanimously.
8. Other new business discussion: Susan - it would be good to get a handle on his participation in the Washington Village transformation and connect with the 20 West project. When the WPA mural was removed, we committed to having a more contemporary exhibit for Norwalk's Faces and Places. That might be a space for Tony's work. Jeff has been looking at hanging systems and will follow up with Susan. Lynn - Atlanta Georgia pathway around the city, lots of public art. A grant is being written by Redevelopment to engage a consultant to create a master plan for public art is being created by Redevelopment. This will geographically identify opportunities for public art. Jim - we need a world class

performance space designed with the concept of being able to present music and gallery spaces so we can stop partitioning off music and art.

**THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:56 AM**