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**CITY OF NORWALK
ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 6, 2020
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Marc Alan, Chair; Robert Abriola; Janet Evelyn; Nori Gruden; Brian Kasper; Melissa Matuska; Matthew O'Callaghan; Kadeem Roberts; Helen Roman; Peter Smyth; Emerson Straniti

STAFF: Sabrina Church, Director of Business Development and Tourism

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Alan called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Alan called the Roll as indicated above.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public wished to participate this evening.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

b. Approve the selection of Bob Abriola as Vice Chairman of the Norwalk Arts Commission.

Mr. Alan noted that in the last meeting, Mr. Smyth stepped down as Vice Chair. At that time, Mr. Straniti expressed interest in that position as well as Mr. Abriola. Mr. Straniti withdrew his name.

**** MR. SMYTH MOVED TO NOMINATE MR. ABRIOLO AS VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NORWALK ARTS COMMISSION**

Mr. Smyth spoke in support of the nomination. Mr. Roberts also spoke in support of this nomination. Ms. Roman recommended Ms. Grudin. Ms. Grudin declined, stating that she was busy as the Treasurer of the Commission. Ms. Grudin suggested Ms. Matuska. Ms. Matuska declined

**** MOTION PASSED BY ROLL CALL VOTE WITH NINE (9) IN FAVOR (MR. ALAN; MR. ABRIOLO; MS. GRUDEN; MR. KASPER; MS. MATUSKA; MR. O'CALLAGHAN; MR. ROBERTS; MS. ROMAN; MR. SMYTH) AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (MS. EVELYN AND MR. STRANITI)**

Mr. Alan welcomed Mr. Abriola as Vice Chair.

c. Infrastructure Committee Update

iii. MLK Corridor Update – Janet Evelyn

Ms. Evelyn reported they had a couple of tours. She and Mr. Alan met with a potential curator for the project, Julio Prada. She said he is very interested, and he is ideal, because of the work he has done with the Arts Commission. Ms. Evelyn said they are working to identify some locations. Those locations will have to be vetted. From there they will need to develop ideas around themes and bring in groups of artists to do the work. Ms. Church noted they may need to do an RFQ to meet the City's procurement procedures.

a. Approve the minutes of the September 1, 2020 regular meeting.

**** MR. SMYTH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED
** MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (MS. MATUSKA
AND MS. ROMAN)**

c. Approve the reorganization and leadership of the Budget Committee, Communications Committee, and Infrastructure Committee as denoted in the meeting.

Mr. Alan reported that he is working with Ms. Rakowsky on social media and therefore, it would be appropriate for him to be the head of the Communications Committee. He said he would like to re-organize that committee.

Mr. Alan explained that the Infrastructure Committee deals with galleries and art collections. He said it was important to determine who would serve on that committee and suggested that Ms. Evelyn or Mr. Abriola join that committee. Mr. Alan opened up the discussion. Mr. Abriola said he would be happy to join the Infrastructure Committee, but wanted the whole group to have an opportunity. Mr. Straniti said he would like to be a part of the Infrastructure Committee. Ms. Roman declined.

The members of the Commission had no objection to Mr. Alan moving to the Communications Committee. He said he would send a summary e-mail to the Commissioners.

V. COMMITTEE/STAFF UPDATES

a. Budget Committee Update

i. Finance update – Nori Grudin

Ms. Grudin reported that they have a budget of \$6,940, not including the funds allocated for the voting banners. She said she will not know about the status of the rollover funds until November. Ms. Grudin said that amount is about \$7,000.

ii. 2021-2022 Budget Season – Sabrina Church

Ms. Church said the budget season is starting and suggested that the Commissioners think about requests now for the 2021/2022 budget season.

Mr. Allen said that in reading the old by-laws, there was something in there that indicated that the Arts Commission could hire an Executive Director to work 19 or so hours a week. He said they should re-visit the by-laws and bring them up to date.

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b. Communications Committee Update

i. Social Media update – Michelle Rakowsky & Marc Alan

Mr. Alan said that he and Ms. Rakowsky are working together. They want to try to reach maximum diversity in the arts. He said Ms. Rakowsky is doing a great job.

ii. Identifying remaining budget for social media boosting and advertising

ii. Updating email list for newsletter

Mr. Alan reported they are working to clean up the e-mail list.

c. Infrastructure Committee Update

i. Public Art Policy Update – Marc Alan & Sabrina Church

Ms. Church said they are waiting for a review of the review process so there is something to follow. Mr. Alan said there was a public art application of what had previously existed. Ms. Church said that process was not approved correctly, so in the eyes of the Law Department, they do not exist.

Mr. Alan said the Commission needs to decide the process on how to accept items into the collection. The City of Norwalk has an extensive art collection that is controlled by various City of Norwalk groups, including the Historical Commission. Mr. Alan said a lot of the art work is in storage and it is very confusing to keep track of the art.

ii. Walkbridge materials for art projects – Marc Alan

Mr. Alan reported that following a tour of the Walk bridge, a request was made for some structural material pieces that can be used for art work.

iii. Maritime Gallery Update – Bob Abriola

Mr. Abriola explained that this is a virtual show. It supports boating. He noted that the art work coming in is interesting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Sono Arts Festival – Arts Commission Banner

Mr. Alan reported that the Sono Arts Festival would be a mini arts festival this year.

b. Public Art Re-Definition/ Inventory Project

Mr. Alan said he has been talking to Mr. Westmoreland about creating an inventory of all City owned art pieces. He noted that this would be a collaborative process. Ms. Church suggested hiring a consultant to take photographs of the art work and include the cost in the budget. Mr. Alan said it was important for the City to have a unified list of all the art work the City owns. He said it was a massive collection.

Mr. Alan said that when the Norwalk Museum building closed, the art work went to the Historical Society. He added that art work is currently on display at various locations in the City, including City Hall, the South Norwalk Train Station, the Transit District building and the Norwalk Historical Society building.

c. Approval of traffic box painting by entrance of Webster Lot in SONO

Mr. Alan explained they ran into issues with the owner of the land (64 Wall Street) where a traffic box was located. He said that because they do not have an opinion from the Legal Department, they decided instead to paint the traffic box at the entrance of the Webster Lot. He described the design and said it was a Maya Angelou tribute. Mr. Abriola spoke in support of the design and said that Ms. Angelou was a remarkable person.

Mr. Alan asked if there was enough time to paint the traffic box. Mr. Abriola said if they get the approval they could start working this weekend.

**** MR. SMYTH MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRAFFIC BOX PAINTING BY THE ENTRANCE OF THE WEBSTER STREET LOT IN SONO AS DESCRIBED**

**** MR. STRANITI SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE (MR. ALAN; MR. ABRIOLA; MS. EVELYN; MS. GRUDEN; MR. KASPER; MS. MATUSKA; MR. O'CALLAGHAN; MR. ROBERTS; MS. ROMAN; MR. SMYTH; MR. STRANITI)**

VII. **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Alan said he would provide an update on the boat banners off line. The Commissioners discussed various locations where they could hang the banners.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

- ** MS. GRUDIN MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- ** MR. STRANITI SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE VOTE (MR. ALAN; MR. ABRIOLA; MS. EVELYN; MS. GRUDEN; MR. KASPER; MS. MATUSKA; MR. O'CALLAGHAN; MR. ROBERTS; MS. ROMAN; MR. SMYTH; MR. STRANITI)**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services