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**CITY OF NORWALK
ARTS COMMISSION
DECEMBER 1, 2020
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Marc Alan, Chair; Robert Abriola; Nori Grudin; Brian Kaspr; Kadeem Roberts; Emerson Straniti; Peter Smyth; Janet Evelyn (6:06 p.m.); Melissa Matuska (6:06 p.m.)

ABSENT: Matthew O'Callaghan; Helen Roman

STAFF: Sabrina Church, Director of Business Development and Tourism

OTHERS: Julio Prada

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Alan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Alan called the Roll as indicated above.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public wished to participate.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

a. Approve the minutes of the November 10, 2020 regular meeting.

**** MR. STRANITI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED
** MR. ABRIOLA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED BY ROLL CALL VOTE WITH SIX (6) VOTES IN FAVOR (MR. ALAN; MR. ABRIOLA; MS. GRUDIN; MR. ROBERTS; MR. SMYTH; MR. STRANITI) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. KASPR)**

V. COMMITTEE/STAFF UPDATES

Budget Committee Update

Ms. Grudin reported that she received a copy of the budget. It appears they received roll over money on November 2nd. They are operating with \$13,500 until July 1, 2021, when the new funding comes in.

Ms. Evelyn and Ms. Matuska joined the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

Mr. Smyth said he believed there was a verbal approval for a few hundred dollars a month for social media. Mr. Alan said he will follow up with Ms. Church and Ms. Grudin.

Finance Update – Nori Grudin

Communications Committee Update

Mr. Alan reported that he spoke with Mr. O’Callaghan about getting him more involved. He discussed the newsletter and said he envisions it as a re-cap of the Art’s Commission news from the previous month. In addition he would like to create public awareness.

Social Media Update – Michelle Rakowsky & Marc Alan

Mr. Alan said he would like to figure out how they can allocate funding for social media. He noted they need to know what the objective is and then can drive the traffic a certain way.

Mr. Alan suggested that sharing Ms. Rakowsky's posts on each individual's Facebook page will help with the organic reach; every bit of engagement helps.

Infrastructure Committee Update

Mr. Straniti reported that the Infrastructure Committee will tackle the by-laws and will update the public art policy. He said the public art policy will not be an Ordinance; it is an informal policy. Ms. Church said it is a process document.

MLK Update – Sabrina Church and Janet Evelyn

Ms. Evelyn reported that since the last meeting, Mr. Prada has is working on creating an outline based on the timeline she and Ms. Church discussed.

Mr. Prada gave an update. He said he created a document that he hopes to share with the Commission outlining the timeline and next steps. He said he is also looking to share some of the site locations that are interesting for art.

Ms. Evelyn asked if this document would include themes and the different types of installation. Mr. Prada said he hopes to create a portfolio of the sites and then start to cultivate and vet the sites.

Ms. Church said that this project would have to go to the Common Council, through the Park, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Committee. She said that depending upon what it is, it may need to go through additional committees. The entire plan has to go to the Park, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Committee first so she can bring it to the Common Council. She said she hopes to get this out for public comment between now and mid December so she can post it on line and then hold a public hearing at the January 15th Arts Commission meeting.

Mr. Alan said they can incorporate this into the next newsletter. Mr. Prada said he hopes to complete the document this week.

Ms. Evelyn asked who would put out the newsletter. Mr. Alan said that he will, with the participation of other members of the Commission.

Ms. Church suggested involving the community churches in the area. Mr. Roberts said he has contacts and that the people in that area would be very uplifted seeing this.

It was suggested to hole a meeting for the public to ask for their input on the mural. Ms. Evelyn said she is on the distribution list for District B and said she can provide that list. She added that the list covers a lot of people who are involved in the community. Mr. Roberts said they could go to a District B meeting to notify the residents about what is

the Arts Commission is going to do and ask for their input. He said he can post it on his Facebook page and tag the people living in that area.

Ms. Evelyn said it would be helpful to have local art teachers involved and get their input. It was suggested that when asking for opinions that you may get 50 different requests and can only do so many. This may open the Commission up to criticism if they can't follow up on those suggestions.

Mr. Roberts said that the people living in the housing projects know each other. People have been asking about the mural. He said that Jermaine painted the mural at the basketball court. He would be receptive to offering suggestions for the mural. Ms. Church said they want people to comment on the plan, not make suggestions on the mural. She said that Mr. Prada will make a plan and then the public will comment.

Ms. Church said the important part is the outreach to the residents and get a sense from them what they would like to see improved. With this project she suggested having a conversation with the City about making MLK Drive safer. Ms. Evelyn suggested that a small aspect of this could be a community and family engagement activity.

Mr. Prada said that initially he would like to present the portfolio location. He said that it can only be one location and then he would share that with the public. He added that he would not want to present 20 different locations to the public.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approve a change of installation for the Washington Street Barriers to be executed in December.

Ms. Church explained that the art work is going to be changed and banners will be printed with a winter theme. The banners will be digital so they will last longer. The funding will come out of the Economic and Community Development budget. The banners will be stock imagery and Ms. Church said she will ask Mr. Morgan if he can create something.

Mr. Alan said that the Arts Commission should curate this so it does not look like clip art. Ms. Church said she would be happy to put whatever the Commission wants on the banners. She said it has to be executed quickly.

Ms. Church said she wants to return the exiting artwork to the artist. She said that Public Works Department will assist with the installation of the new banners.

Mr. Abriola and Mr. Kaspr will work on create winter themed artwork.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Abriola asked when the Commission could coordinate the first Art Speak. Mr. Alan said funding was allocated for this last year. Ms. Church said they will have to follow the procurement standards.

Mr. Abriola said he would love to host this event and suggested that it be a free of charge event. He said they would need to agree on a theme. The original concept was Urban Art. He said that he and Mr. Smyth will take the lead on this. He said he will create a committee.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. MATUSKA MOVED TO ADJOURN**
**** MS. GRUDIN SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services