

**City of Norwalk
Arts Commission
Regular Meeting
February 1, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Mark Alan, Janet Evelyn, Steve Rust, Brian Kaspr, Heidi Alterman, Liz Tardiff, Robert Abriola, Melissa Metuska, Nori Gruden (6:20)

STAFF: Sabrina Church

OTHER: Julio Pardo, Artist; Duvian Montoya, Artist; Marina

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Alan Called to meeting to order at 6:00.

II. ROLL CALL

Chairman Alan gave a roll call of the members present.

There was a quorum present.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Marina spoke about the Georgetown school of Arts at the Senior Center. Her children took classes with the school pre-covid. As the senior center is not available to host these lessons, she is asking the commission to help her find a space to hold classes. Brian Kaspr suggested the wallpaper space. Chairman Alan asked her to email more details and he and Mr. Kaspr will follow up with her. Mr. Montoya offered to hold classes in the Art Space.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

- a) Approve the minutes of the November 9, 2021 regular meeting.

******Ms. Tardiff moved to approve the minutes with a name change in section 3.**

******Mr. Metuska seconded the motion.**

******Ms. Alterman and Ms. Evelyn abstained. The motion passed with a quorum of six.**

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b) Approval of the minutes of Dec 7, 2022

**** **Mr. Kaspr moved to approve the minutes of December 7, 2022.**

**** **Ms. Metuska seconded the motion.**

**** **Ms. Evelyn abstained. The motion passed with a quorum.**

V. COMMITTEE/STAFF UPDATES

a. Budget Committee Update

i. Finance update – Nori Gruden

Ms. Church gave an update. The request for \$50,000 for art in public places was put in. The Public Art Maintenance Fund will come out of the American Recovery Act.

Ms. Church gave an update on the public art inventory. The last time this was done was 2016. Once it's completed, the inventory will be put online so the public can access information about the art and its location.

A request was made for the same operating budget as last year; \$14,000.

Ms. Church reached out to the Visit Norwalk team, to see if they will take over the social media and newsletter. A new special events staff person should be on board in the next month.

There is a balance of \$8,000 remaining in the budget.

Mr. Alan discussed how it is unclear what is appropriate to support with the events budget. Ms. Church explained that the Arts Commission should only support events where they have a physical presence there to promote the commission.

There is \$13,000 left in the MLK art project capital budget.

There is \$25,000 left in the art in public places budget.

b. Communications Committee Update

i. Social Media update – Michelle Rakowsky & Marc Alan

Ms. Rakowsky is continuing to handle social media which has been going very well. Chairman Alan put out a newsletter on MLK Day about the MLK project.

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The newsletter had an open rate of 37.5% and received positive feedback as well as emails in response.

c. Infrastructure Committee Update

i. Underpass Update - Brian Kaspr

Mr. Kaspr reported that they are wrapping up the final piece of the MLK project. He would like to use what is left in the capital budget for a mural in another underpass in the MLK Blvd.

Ms. Church stated that the commission can move forward with a call for artists for the next mural and choose a location. These will then need to be voted on and approved.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Rust gave a proposal for installing lighting over the finished mural on the MLK corridor. Four floodlights will be installed to highlight the artwork. This will increase visibility and security.

A motion and photo sensor switch and a timer will be used. It requires very little power. Estimates are 140 watts for the course of the year for a total 1600 hours, well under \$50/year.

The next steps will be to reach out to Public Works and OMI which owns the facility. Ms. Church mentioned the utility company may cover the cost of the electricity through a community fund.

Mr. Rust will continue to gather more information, and sources will be researched to cover the funding.

Ms. Metuska had an art teacher from the Narimack School reach out to the commission asking about artists coming to classes to talk about what it is like to be an artist, share their work, etc. Currently, all campuses are closed, this would be when the schools open up again.

Chairman Alan suggested that the communications committee could work on this. Mr. Kaspr volunteered to be the first artist.

VII. OLD BUSINESS - MLK Project - Janet Evelyn and Julio Pardo

Ms. Evelyn reported that there is \$7,500 allocated for the student part of the MLK project. Mr. Pardo presented the students artists project budget, and how it will be implemented. It will be a

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four-class structure, taught by Jahmaine West. It will be a total of 50 hours of his time. Eight students and four sites will be chosen. The timeframe is February - June 2022.

Chairman Alan asked about the materials costs. Mr. Pardo explained this would cover the cost of paints and brushes needed to create the artwork.

Chairman Alan asked for clarification on the insurance cost. Mr. Pardo took this number from previous similar projects and clarified that this was to cover the students and teacher for any accidents or liabilities.

Chairman Alan asked about the costs for the Art Space. Mr. Pardo explained that this would cover the time spent in choosing the students and keeping the space open while the students were meeting there.

Ms. Evelyn asked if the students would come from the MLK Corridor. Mr. Pardo confirmed that this stipulation could be included.

Ms. Evelyn discussed some reservations with having the program run through the Art Space. The first is that it is a for profit business, and it is not in the MLK Corridor. Mr. Pardo mentioned other spaces he has looked at, but none of them are set up for this type of project.

Chairman Alan expressed concern with spending money allocated to enhance the MLK corridor in this way.

***** Ms Metuska Moved to approve the project as presented.**

***** Mr. Kaspr seconded the motion.**

******The committee voted against going forward with this project as presented.**

The committee would like to have the program reevaluated, with lower costs and have it presented it again to the commission for possible approval.

Ms. Evelyn clarified that the goal is to ensure that the student art learning program includes students in the MLK corridor. And that the \$13,000 earmarked for the MLK Corridor stays within the corridor.

Chairman Alan would like there to be more public art in Norwalk, and more opportunities for working artists.

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VIII. ADJOURNMENT

***Mr. Alan moved to adjourn the meeting.

***The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50.

Respectfully submitted,

[Amy Chapple](#)

Telesco Secretarial Services