

**MINUTES
CITY OF FORT MYERS
PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE
APRIL 20, 2021**

The Public Art Committee of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met in regular session at Oscar M. Corbin Jr. City Hall, 2200 Second Street, its regular meeting place in the City of Fort Myers, FL, on Tuesday, April 20, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. Present were: Carolyn Gora, Chair, presiding, Committee Members, Bettye Middlebrooks, Betty Adams, David Meo, Leila Mesdaghi, and Ava Roeder. Also present were Grant W. Alley, City Attorney (left meeting at 4:20p.m.), Tom Hall, Art Consultant, Abraham Luna, Parks Senior Supervisor and Reva Daly, Public Works Fiscal Coordinator. Absent: William Taylor and Patricia Collins.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gora called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Gora led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL - Taken by Reva Daly.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Allecia Thomason Hamilton spoke over the phone to item number three and followed up to concerns that she addressed in July 2020, in reference to the Bucks Backyard Mural Project.

REGULAR ITEMS

1. Approval of March 16, 2021 Minutes and March 30, 2021 Workshop/Meeting Minutes

Committee Member Adams corrected the March 16, 2021 minutes under section two, to state that she received an email at Black History Society from the Dunbar Festival Committee letting us know that they were doing the Easter Parade. Committee Member Middlebrooks requested a correction to the spelling of her name, noting that Bettye Middlebrooks is spelled with an "E" and Betty Adams without an "E".

MOTION: Committee Member Adams moved to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2021 meeting and the March 30, 2021 meeting; seconded by Committee Member Roeder; motion carried 6-0.

2. Update on Budget and Annual Plan

Donna Lovejoy, Assistant Director of Public Works brought forth the annual budget to the committee. She stated the year started off with \$103,659 and presented what the committee spent thus far, totaling \$2,159, leaving a balance of \$101,500. Ms. Lovejoy expanded on the committees upcoming commitments and concluded the allocated

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amount of \$36,425 right now. She noted that money is due from the solid waste building, maybe from the parking garage and verified the fact that the Harborside renovations did not meet the 50 percent rule. She informed the committee on other upcoming projects such as Fire station number 17, a smaller maintenance building for the solid waste department and possibly a utility building at the Public Works Center. She noted other projects where money will come into the fund, as well. Ms. Lovejoy spoke on voluntary contribution to the Public Art Fund from people who do their permitting. Chair Gora requested the addresses of those who donated, so she can send a thank you note from the Public Art Committee. Committee Member Meo suggested the possibility of using the donation wall for contributors. Ms. Lovejoy stated that the wall is for donors for the Beautification Trust and it is very specific, noting she was unsure if the ordinance can be amended. Ms. Lovejoy spoke on the Sponsor-a-Sculpture program about some highlighted comments to the document that she sent back to Mr. Hall. Ms. Lovejoy announced that it is slated to go on the May 17th meeting. She suggested that the application be approved by the committee before it goes to City Council since the committee will assign the costs for conservation, so the application won't be final until the costs are attached. Mr. Hall noted that time permitting the committee will discuss her suggestions and make changes on them this afternoon. Ms. Lovejoy provided a copy of the budget for the committee members. Mr. Hall inquired if there was a certain amount of money that was deposited in the fiscal year that is covered by the budget into the Public Art Fund. Ms. Lovejoy noted that the City of Fort Myers did not approve any additional money to come into the Public Art Fund this year, but some deposits were made by private donors. Mr. Hall referred to the ordinance that requires us to put between 10 and 25 percent of all new revenues for maintenance and the need to justify that percentage to City Council. Ms. Lovejoy stated she will identify that amount. It was agreed for the Annual Plan to go to Council on May 17th, as well.

3. Update on Bucks Backyard Mural Project

Sheri Shifrin, Fort Myers Mural Society updated the committee on Buck's Backyard Mural Project noting that they are nearly finished with the first 12 panels. Ms. Shifrin informed the committee that now that the egress to the rest of the walls are available to use, the artists are prepared to begin a phase two portion and finish the wall in October based on funding and availability. It was mentioned that the artist have their renderings ready, but they are open to suggestions to take into consideration. Ms. Shifrin presented current pictures of the panels on the wall in detail and emphasized the amount of research of history and commitment the artists had to the project that resulted in such a phenomenal job. She noted the attention from media and the many positive accolades the wall has received. Ms. Shifrin stated that the budget for this project has exhausted itself with supplies and materials exceeding the original budget. She anticipated \$6,500 to complete the last five panels. Ms. Shifrin went over supplies, costs and artist salaries for the project, noting that the Mural Society is a non-profit. Ms. Shifrin stated that with grant season she is confident in the ability to fund and complete the project should the CRA like us to. It was assumed that a dedication might be best to take place when REVA

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does their grand opening and the whole McCullum Hall project is complete. Ms. Shifrin noted the amount of publicity the wall received and that the artists couldn't feel better about the attention for doing this project. She presented to the committee the available stats and analytics from their social media marketing and their marketing manager. Chair Gora asked that even though it's not a public art project if it could be part of Otocast? Mr. Hall replied that it can be. It was agreed that Mr. Hall would submit a summary to the Florida Association of Public Art Professionals that could go on next year's Agenda in Sarasota. Ms. Shifrin commented on the notion of completing the project at this point in hopes that the Public Art Committee would be sensitive to that. Chair Gora thanked Shari for all the effort. Committee Member Adams mentioned that artist J.P. Almoncid came by the office to thank Black History Society for making stuff available.

Michele Hylton-Terry, Executive Director of the Community Redevelopment Agency was apologetic that she missed Ms. Shifrin's update noting a little confusion to the status of their project. Ms. Hylton-Terry stated to the Public Art Committee that our impression is that it was completed, so I understand that information was shared to lead you to believe that there was a phase two. We have not had that discussion with her and so I want to have that discussion with her, as well as some other information that does need to be cleared up before anything else happens. I just wanted to put you all on notice, I know you are expecting to see those other panels done and we would love to have that happen, however there are some things that need to be worked out before we can say that we are going to move forward.

4. Forum Finalist Update

Tom Hall, Art Consultant informed the committee that he spoke to each three finalists and they are working on their designs and concepts. It is anticipated that all three finalists will end up making virtual presentations. Mr. Hall noted that we will officially request a Zoom meeting from I.T. and then we will get the invitations out to not only the artists, but to members of the Public who might want to attend via Zoom, but we will be meeting in person. Committee Member Roeder inquired where the artists are from. Mr. Hall replied that Michael Broth is from Richmond, Virginia, John Davis is from Albuquerque, New Mexico and Nathan Pierce is from Missouri. Mr. Hall reminded the committee as the agenda indicates please plan on being here through 7:00 p.m. next meeting. He explained the allocated 30 minutes for each finalist to make their presentations with an opportunity for the public to provide input afterwards then the committee can discuss the merits of each proposal and then make your selection. It was thought that the presentations are the only thing on the agenda other than approving minutes. Committee Member Roeder recollected previous in person presentations and that candidates waited in a room, so they couldn't hear each other's presentations to prevent having an advantage. Committee Member Mesdaghhi noted that there isn't a way for them to completely not see the other ones, because those Zooms are also available on the TV for the public to watch it. Committee Member Adams suggested Zooms breakout rooms where you can isolate candidates. The committee voiced their concerns

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in reference to the finalists hearing the other presentations by going second and third, therefore having an unfair advantage. It was decided to have three individualized Zoom meetings based on the situation.

5. Update on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Veronica S. Shoemaker Blvd.

Antoine Williams, Assistant Director Fort Myers CRA gave an update on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Veronica S. Shoemaker. He noted that the CRA facilitated a Community meeting via Zoom and following that meeting a survey went out to the community to engage them further about the type of landmark/sculpture they would like to see in that area. Specifically, we asked them to think about the theme of the sculpture, so that we could use that information to inform the Request for Qualifications and the further steps of the process. Mr. Williams reviewed stats on the progress the CRA has made with public input and informed the committee of the links to the survey on the CRA webpage, their newsletter and social media page. Chair Gora asked if they anticipated knowing what the outcome will be next month. Mr. Williams noted that the survey closes at the end of this month and that information will be used in regard to the RFQ starting next month with Mr. Hall. Chair Gora noted that many of the committee members were on the Zoom and filled out the survey. Mr. William's stated to feel free to share it too. Chair Gora thanked Mr. Williams for coming.

6. Temporary Art at Sidney and Berne Davis Art Center

Tom Hall, Art Consultant presented a photo of a sample of the work that is going on the rooftop Sculpture Garden at the Sidney and Berne Davie Art Center. Mr. Hall noted that the sculpture has nothing to do with the Public Art Committee, but, because it was on the sidewalk next to the light sculptures, that it was important for the committee to know that it was there. Chair Gora stated that in the future we would like to know beforehand that there is going to be something of that magnitude.

7. Raising/Relocating What Dreams We Have Sculpture & Associated Conservation

Tom Hall, Art Consultant recollected the damages What Dreams We Have has suffered. Mr. Hall informed the committee that he received a proposal from Rosa Lowinger and Associates in the amount between \$19,500 - \$24,500 to conserve and remediate the sculpture, assuming they would not have to remove all of the mosaic glass. Therefore, Mr. Hall stated he contacted two metal sculptors, Steve Kalb and Byron Wood of Metalsmith Designs Inc. who met with him at the sculpture and examined it. Mr. Hall read for the record the letter in response to the inspection Mr. Kalb and Mr. Wood conducted, ultimately diagnosing their assessment of the damages and declining to make the repairs. Mr. Hall stated that originally it was believed the corrosion occurred, because the piece had been bathed in reclaimed water from the sprinkler system, but Mr. Kalb and Mr. Wood thought that the problem is the fact that it was never properly sealed. Mr. Hall showed the committee pictures of the sculpture's damages explaining the results of the assessment and the increase in costs should they have to remove the tiles. Committee Member Meo inquired how much the piece originally cost? Mr. Hall

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replied \$20,000. Committee Member Roeder asked if there is a place to put it indoors. Mr. Hall replied it could be moved indoors, but if there is this much corrosion as Kalb and Wood fear, there is a possibility the piece could disintegrate when they unbolt it from the footer and try to lift it. Mr. Hall stated that it's up to the committee what our next step is, whether we go to the artist and see what she would do and how much that would cost or invoke the deaccession procedures that we adopted several months ago. It was noted the art piece was installed in 2015. Committee Member Adams stated that the public is very vested in this, it is their piece. The structure of the art piece was noted, the committee viewed pictures and discussed the materials and the damages. Committee Member Meo asked to have a discussion that would include the artist. It was agreed that Mr. Hall would try to set up a Zoom meeting with the three of them, the artist, committee member Meo and Mr. Hall, to get thoughts and report back to the committee in June. Committee Member Mesdaghi was interested in hearing what they have to say for personal interest. Mr. Hall noted he would check with Grant Alley, City Attorney to see if that was acceptable, then she could be included on the Zoom call. Committee Member Middlebrooks inquired where the proposal to the new location is. Mr. Hall noted that the CRA is willing to pay to have the sculpture relocated and raised at the entrance way in the southeast corner of Clemente Park and they would provide a new foundation. The Parks department will handle the landscaping and we would work with the Fort Myers Mural Society to include some kind of an asphalt mural that would complement the sculpture. Chair Gora included that it would be a hub. Mr. Hall spoke on the CRA's willingness to pay the cost of moving the sculpture so that it would complement the piece that is going to go at Veronica Shoemaker and MLK. Committee Member Roeder inquired if there was a price to move it yet. Mr. Hall noted that Flint and Doyle have all the information aside from a foundation plan, but we need to determine whether the piece can be saved before asking the City Engineer for a foundation plan. Mr. Hall concluded that once they have the foundation plan, they would be able to provide us and CRA with an estimate.

8. Approval of Otocast flyer for use by hotels, theaters, etc.

Tom Hall, Art Consultant suggested for everyone to pull out their phones, to take them through the features of Otocast. Mr. Hall showed logging into the App., landing on the main screen and going past the initial screen to the map. He explained that Otocast uses GPS and automatically presents the guides that are geographically closest to the user's location, adding that it is accessible in 150 cities in 27 states. He explained the City of Fort Myers Public Art is represented by green push pins on the map. He mentioned other ways to access information is through the thumbnail photographs that are towards the bottom of the page. Mr. Hall noted that we can create a welcome message to provide an overview of what our Public Art Program is all about. He showcased the three types of information that are provided for each point of interest, such as a brief narrative or text, photographs and audio. Mr. Hall spoke to the importance of Otocast's capabilities in relation to our Sponsor-a-Sculpture program, with benefits to a potential sponsor to include links to their Facebook, social media or

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websites. Mr. Hall instructed the committee how to access all of Otocasts features that encourage social media engagement from within the App. Committee Member Roeder inquired if the features have always been available. Mr. Hall replied yes. He continued and explained the purpose of a splash page that can be created to promote activities, advertise or display other notices with no limit on the number of times the information can be changed. Mr. Hall shifted to explain the new feature Otocast has to offer called layered content, which means the App. can accommodate sponsors and other points of interest, such as historical sites, parks, and so on. He continued that the pushpins on the map would be color coded to signify different levels of interest with a legend explaining what the colors represent. Mr. Hall stated that adding historical content derived from a suggestion from Grant Alley at a previous Public Art Committee meeting, noting that Mr. Alley mentioned Otocast to the Historic Preservation Commission and they indicated their interest. Mr. Hall noted he will be making this presentation to the Historic Preservation Commission next week. The committee discussed the costs for Otocast and some problem solving with possible grants, advertising and the benefits of cross marketing. Mr. Hall explained increased usage of Otocast through gamification would encourage and reward users to visit points of interest. Mr. Hall spoke in detail how gamification on Otocast with the passport challenge works, how to earn badges and how to participate. Mr. Hall highlighted Otocast's ability to show which public artworks are being visited and how long people are playing the audio. If historical sites get added, then the committee can decide to add a third layer of content to include murals, or parks. Mr. Hall had a meeting with the marketing director at the new Luminary Hotel, to discuss their interest in making their guests aware of Otocast, but they do not want to be responsible for doing it on their letterhead with the thought that it should come from the City. Mr. Hall presented a one-page introduction to Otocast with the intensions of having it condensed and made into 5X7 format that can easily be added to programs and playbills to generate excitement. Committee Member Roeder suggested placing information about Octocast on the information rolls on their TV stations at local hotels. Mr. Hall noted if the Luminary Hotel is on board and we can provide them with a handout that they can use whether it is a physical handout or something they can use in their roll. Committee Member Roeder mentioned the need for a graphic designer to make a page that is attractive, concise and informative. It was concluded to check with Donna Lovejoy to see if the City may have a graphic designer or what other suggestion she may provide.

9. Approval of Sponsor-a-Sculpture Program

Tom Hall, Art Consultant reviewed with the committee the Sponsor-a-Sculpture program and discussed the highlighted materials where Donna Lovejoy had either questioned or commented for corrections to be made. Mr. Hall took committee member Roeder's suggestion at a previous meeting to perform the conservation maintenance every two years. Elaborating on the benefits that the agreements would not have to be changed as often, the committee would not have to ask for renewals and additional monies as often, and the signage would not have to be changed as often. Thus, leaving

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the discussion and final decision up to the committee. Committee Member Mesdaghi affirmed, so they are paying for one maintenance that will last for two years. Mr. Hall responded that they would receive two years worth of advertising or two years worth of recognition. Mr. Hall noted that the Sponsor-a-Sculpture is scheduled to go before City Council on May 17th and the committee will need to pass a resolution. Mr. Hall spoke on the different costs associated for each of the major artworks and installations from Rosa Lowinger. Expanding on the fact that a sponsor would choose an artwork based on the amount and if you recall in the Sponsor-a-Sculpture program you request a quote. Chair Gora confirmed they are getting a two year contract and they are only paying that one amount. Mr. Hall noted that's the major variation from the last time we spoke about this, is that we do this every two years. The sponsors will be able to participate and look in while Rosa Lowinger and Associates is in town. Mr. Hall touched base on the individual maintenance manuals for each of the artworks with instructions of what needs to be done on a periodic basis, by Abraham Luna and the Parks and Recreation department. The maintenance manual includes photos, maintenance sheets which works as a registration point. Abraham Luna, Park Senior Supervisor noted that there are daily cleans on all of the sculptures that are water features, Monday through Friday. He explained that the work orders are made ahead of time, self-populate and they hand them out to maintenance, including that it is usually just pressure washing and other small things. Chair Gora asked if it is for all the Public Art that we have or just certain ones. Mr. Luna would have to look and make sure that it is for all of them. Mr. Hall concluded that what we are asking the Sponsor to do, is to defray the cost of having an outside conservation team whether it's RLA or somebody else in the future to come in and do the heavy lifting to maintain that work. Chair Gora followed up and stated the need for someone to make a motion.

MOTION: Committee Member Meo moved to approve the Sponsor-a-Sculpture plan subject to the changes discussed; seconded by Committee Member Adams; motion carried unanimously.

10. Nomination & Election of Vice Chairman

Chair Gora spoke on the need for a Vice Chairman, due to the possibility of not being present for a meeting in the fall, explaining the need to have someone lead the meeting. Chair Gora asked the committee for nominations from the floor to be Vice Chairman. Committee Member Adams nominated Leila Mesdaghi; Seconded by Committee Member Meo.

11. FAPAP Zoom Conference – May 7, 2021 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Zoom call

Tom Hall, Art Consultant reminded the committee that the annual FAPAP meeting is by Zoom this year. Chair Gora noted that the FAPAP website lets anybody do it.

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12. Upcoming Public Art Committee meeting Tuesday, May 18, 2021

The Forum Park Public Art Finalists will present their designs to the committee at this meeting, which will thereafter award the commission for the winning proposal. As each artist will have 30 minutes for his presentation, this meeting will likely run from 4-7 p.m.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Committee Member David Meo responded to the public comment and suggested that she send the very same thing that she sent to him over the weekend to the people in the City. Chair Gora noted that she and Mr. Hall had a glimpse before it was chosen of what it looked like and one it is a combination of two artists, it's not just one artist. Chair Gora stated that she did not remember if it was similar to what they presented. Mr. Hall stated he did not recall what Ms. Hamilton's design looked like either. Chair Gora asked Mr. Meo if he had the visual. Committee Member Meo stated it was sent to him and he seen the images over the weekend, but he suggests that she send that to some other people if she has any problem. Chair Gora spoke on the packet of information that all the artists got with the same photographs in it, because it could be similar if it came from the same visual. Chair Gora invited Shari Shifrin, Fort Myers Mural Society (arrived to the meeting at 4:11 p.m.) up and explained to her Allecia Hamilton's complaint. Ms. Shifrin stated that all the works that are up on the wall are original works. She noted they were in the original portfolios that were presented at the time that they did their presentation. Ms. Shifrin continued that all the artists were provided with a historical package and references, thus assuming that they would all be somewhat similar, because they were provided with the exact historical package, given the specific styles to work with and given the same background materials. She continued that they were all given the same email, saying that the artist had been selected. Ms. Shifrin noted that one of her representatives came to the office and took pictures of the selection committees analysis sheets and we had quite a big discussion about how it went, so they were definitely made aware. Ms. Shifrin stated she would have copies of those emails available. She continued, as far as the similarity in all the projects, of course they would be similar, they were painting with in a very specific parameter. Chair Gora asked Grant Alley, City Attorney where do we go from here and if we need to answer her. Mr. Alley advised moving on to Agenda item number two, stating the point is, it is in the boards pleasure. Mr. Alley noted that Mr. Meo had a suggestion and that can be followed through on and you can move on, on your agenda.

Mayor Anderson addressed the Public Art Committee at the beginning of the meeting presenting them with a thank you note and a City of Fort Myers lapel pin.

Councilperson Bochette had a couple of updates. First referring to Committee Member Meo's point about the donation wall to Ms. Lovejoy. Councilperson Bochette noted that it can be amended, so if you wanted a side of it to recognize people who donate to art in public places, then we just have to go through the process of reassigning it, although it

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was paid for by a different budget. Councilperson Bochette stated that if the committee had a criterion for X amount of dollars that you get a plaque on the wall, Beautification can send that over to you. He noted that Beautification, Art in public places and Historic work so closely together, that it would be unfortunate not to share that resource, because if you have watched it for the past 20 years, nothing. Committee Member Meo mentioned that was the thing, he would like to see that active again. Councilperson Bochette informed the committee how to go through the formalities to get a side of the wall dedicated to Public Art and that the committee can follow the criteria already established or create your own. Councilperson Bochette's second item he discussed was the use of Grey Water down McGregor to Dunbar, noting that the line is active and if you have a sculpture nearby, you're going to have water every day on it. He made the committee aware, because of the previous mention of water damage to sculptures and that those grey lines are going to be pushed to be activated down McGregor and all the way out MLK, at the Council Meeting.

Tom Hall, Art Consultant shared a handout with the Committee that promoted International Sculpture Day or IS Day explaining its meaning.

Mr. Hall acknowledged Reva Daly's efforts to facilitate the completion of the finalist for Forum Park Call to Artist

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Committee Member Roeder; seconded by Committee Member Adams; to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m.