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The Public Art Committee of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met via Zoom, on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. Present were: Carolyn Gora, Chair, presiding, Committee Members, Betty Adams, Bettye Middlebrooks, Ava Roeder, Sharon McAllister and Patricia Collins. Also present were Tom Hall, Art Consultant, J.B. Schuetz, Parks & Beautification Manager, and Michele Jones, Administrative Assistant. Absent: Robert Ferry, Robert Sanford, and David Meo.

CALL TO ORDER

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG

Chair Gora led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken by Ms. Jones.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Gora asked if anyone from the public would like to speak, and Allicia Hamilton stated that her and her sister, Challen Rivera who are two of the submitting artists on the Buck's Backyard Mural Project had some input on the project and wanted to see the working parts of the Public Art Committee. Chair Gora said that Mr. Hall was going to be giving an update on that item and had all the information.

REGULAR ITEMS

1. Minutes of the July 21, 2020 Public Art Committee meeting

MOTION: *Committee Member Roeder moved to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2020 Public Art Committee meeting; seconded by Committee Member Collins; motion carried 6-0.*

2. Update on Buck's Backyard- McCollum Hall Mural Project

Mr. Hall gave an update on the Buck's Backyard, a mural project that will be painted on seventeen concrete panels on the eight-foot-tall wall that separate McCollum Hall from the residential neighborhood just to the north. Mr. Hall stated that the Selection Committee met last month, and three chosen finalists will be finalizing their presentation to bring to the next Public Art Committee meeting that will be held on September 15th. Mr. Hall stated that each of the finalists will have 10 minutes to do a formal presentation, committee members will then do questions and answers, followed by any public or stake holders input, and then the Public Art Committee will vote and choose a winner. Chair Gora asked if Mr. Hall would explain the process for the two local artists, Ms. Hamilton and Ms. Challen who were in attendance. Mr. Hall stated that the Public Art Committee has partnered with the Fort Myers Mural Society, Community Redevelopment Agency, and the Reva Development on the mural project. Mr. Hall stated that the Call to Artist went out in March, with an original submission date the end of May that was extended to June, and in July a Selection Committee of five was empaneled. The five panelists graded the

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nine submissions on five separate categories and the three submissions that received the top number of votes became the finalists. Chair Gora asked Mr. Hall about the panel representatives. Mr. Hall stated that there were two stake holders from the Dunbar Community, and Reva Development and the CRA both appointed a committee member. Mr. Hall stated that Shari Shifrin, Executive Director of the Fort Myers Mural Society presented the nine submissions while he presided giving an overview to the Committee Members on what to look for when evaluating. Chair Gora asked Mr. Hall if it was anonymous and that Selection Committee just seen two pictures and Mr. Hall said yes. Chair Gora discussed that they had a rubric that they scored and had no idea who presented and just had pictures. Ms. Hamilton said she had a couple questions and discussed problems she seen in the procedure. Ms. Hamilton said that the person that received their proposal asked them to change it twice before they resubmitted and is the same person who was presenting. Ms. Hamilton said based on the rubric versus the Call to Artist there was a couple of things that did not make sense and a couple of things that were added on when it came time for scoring and judging; dates of judging, when artists would have a chance to present their full proposals to the Public Art Committee that was verbalized by her conversations with Shari Shifrin. Ms. Hamilton said that after the three finalists were selected she had a few questions and complaints directly related to; who was part of the judging panel being the Mural Society and that all three of the finalists belonged to a paid membership to Fort Myers Mural Society, and it looked like Mr. Hall also sat on the board. Ms. Hamilton stated that she was interested in the ethics in how the contest was handled, the diversity in which the finalists where chosen, and how the end result deviated so much than what she was informed by Ms. Shifrin via email, submission, and Call to Artist. Ms. Hamilton stated that finalists only seem to have one panel when the Call to Artist requested 17. Mr. Hall replied, it was based on the images that were reviewed. Mr. Hall stated that there were nine submissions overall, two images from each submission were presented to the Selection Committee for everyone was given an even footing. Ms. Hamilton asked who choose the two submissions out of each one of our proposals that had 17 panels. Mr. Hall replied that Ms. Shifrin choose the two submissions. Ms. Hamilton stated that this is also something that is an issue and Mr. Hall replied that she would need to take that up with the Fort Myers Mural Society. Ms. Hamilton asked if this was a city project and contest that was submitted to the community as a contest run by the Mural Society and presented by the Public Art Committee. Mr. Hall replied that the Public Art Committees function is going to be to select a winner from the three finalists that were selected by the Selection Committee. Mr. Hall stated that the Call to Artist was issued by the Fort Myers Mural Society and that the Public Art Committee, CRA, and Reva Development are a partnership in the project. Mr. Hall stated the that Call to Artist and the submissions were solicited by the Fort Myers Mural Society. Ms. Hamilton asked Mr. Hall if he was part of the Fort Myers Mural Society and Mr. Hall replied no that he is the Cities Public Art Consultant. Mr. Hall went over how the process was done with Ms. Shifrin choosing two

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images from each of the nine submissions and then those images were evaluated anonymously by the Selection Committee. Mr. Hall stated he prepared the score sheet that has five categories that each of the submissions were evaluated on, which were how well it expressed the Buck's Backyard theme, style, originality, visibility by passing motorists on MLK Boulevard, and technical ability. Ms. Hamilton said that her question would still be that the scoring rubric was not presented to artists along with the Call to Artist and how would you judge technicality and quality of an artist work off a comp design if you don't know the background and experience of the artist. Ms. Hamilton discussed that a larger art community and a large diversity has a lot of questions so she would like to know which channel they should go and if any complaints have been brought to the Public Art Committee on how the contest was handled. Mr. Hall stated that he wouldn't categorize it as a contest that it was a Call to Artist. Ms. Hamilton stated that it was competition that not only would the artist be paid; they would be judged and have a chance to present. Mr. Hall said that there was no indication in the Call to Artist that you would be given a chance to present at the Selection Committee Stake Holders Meeting. Ms. Hamilton stated that this was verbal by Ms. Shifrin who also told her that her proposal was too professional and that she needed to cut it down before she submitted it to her. Ms. Hamilton said that she had email conversation back and forth with Ms. Shifrin which is why she is concerned with her participation or how it was handled in the first place. Ms. Hamilton stated that in the communication it was stated that the community was suppose to be a part of choosing this and we as artists would have an opportunity to present to you the committee, and then from there have the three finalist chosen. Ms. Hamilton stated to Mr. Hall that she had communication with Ms. Shifrin and that he was copied on a few of the emails asking what the dates were that the presentations were being made and that she asked that question because they were communicated that they would get that chance. Mr. Hall said it sounds like there may have been a misunderstanding in terms of when public input would be sought, that we are asking stakeholders and the public to attend our September 15th meeting to voice their preference on which of the three finalists they would like to see awarded the commission. Challen Rivera stated to Mr. Hall that you cannot resolve an issue with the person the issue is with and this needs to be addressed by an outside party and not the Fort Myers Mural Society. Ms. Rivera asked Mr. Hall as members of the community and who have submitted proposals within the guidelines requested, what channel should they take their concerns and complaints too. Mr. Hall asked Ms. Rivera if the basic tenant of complaint that Ms. Shifrin choose the two images that the Selection Committee evaluated, and Ms. Rivera replied no it is just one. Mr. Hall asked if you had to boil it down to one or two sentences on what the thrust of your complaint is what would that be. Ms. Hamilton replied that what was promoted to the artist as a fair, city backed, community backed contest on a community wall did not follow through with the information that was given from the beginning. Ms. Hamilton also stated that the absolute unadulterated discrimination that our proposal was dealt

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with needs to be addressed. Mr. Hall stated that since all nine submissions were evaluated anonymously, he fails to see how there could be any discrimination at all. Ms. Rivera stated that if Ms. Shifrin chose 2 of the 17 images from the original proposal and if there were any issues she had with the proposals; what she chose to present as the anonymous submission, she had her hands on it first so she don't understand how it could be free from the bias. Mr. Hall stated that they would need to talk to Ms. Shifrin about that issue. Ms. Hamilton stated that you cannot address an issue of the person, if the issue is with that person and that the governing body would need to address that. Mr. Hall stated that the governing body is the Fort Myers Mural Society and it is their Call to Artist. Ms. Hamilton stated that if they dealt with the Fort Myers Mural Society then they would need to take it up with the people that granted the project which would be the City of Fort Myers or whoever the next channel would be. Ms. Hamilton expressed that they were born and raised in this community, love this community, and already have art in our family in part of the community. Ms. Hamilton stated that their first and biggest goal in this situation is to have proper representation of a community and that she sees very few people on this panel have, besides maybe Ms. Adams and Ms. Middlebrooks. Mr. Hall stated that he would have personally loved to have African American or people of color the ones to have put in this mural. Ms. Hamilton stated to Mr. Hall that he was part of the email chain from the very beginning and that he was aware of African Americans that did submit. Mr. Hall stated that there were nine submissions that were evaluated anonymously by five members of a Selection Committee that he feels has extremely exceptional credentials to evaluate art. Mr. Hall discussed that all nine proposals were excellent and all certainly were meritorious and deserving, but the nine submissions were evaluated based upon those criteria and it was unfortunate that they were not chosen. Ms. Hamilton agreed that there was extremely talented artists, but the problem is that the rubric that it is based on was not given to the artist; the rubric that we were judged on was not given to the people giving the proposal in the first place; the process was not given in email when she specifically asked and copied Mr. Hall, Ms. Shifrin and Greg Morris, along with having a phone conversation with Mr. Shifrin about the process. Ms. Hamilton said as long as the process is sound, we have absolutely no issues. Ms. Hamilton stated that if the process had been done in an upright and fair way that they would not be bringing these complaints before the Public Art Committee who has a large hand in seeing how this art project is going to be done moving forward. Ms. Hamilton stated that she would like to see some kind of results from the Public Art Committee based on the information they are receiving and if they need signature of the others with the same questions and concerns they will do so but they need to know what channel to go through. Chair Gora stated that the Call to Artist that have come through the Public Art Committee we like to narrow it down to usually three because its time consuming to have nine and that's why we have a prejudging before we have the artist able to present. Committee Member Collins stated that it is very unusual that they were asked to do 17 images for a proposal so that

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someone else would pick two to present and that it sounds like something you would ask the final three to do. Ms. Hamilton agreed and said that all 17 panels were to be a comprehensive story. Committee Member Roeder discussed if you unaware or confused with the criteria that would be a legitimate concern to take to the CRA and the Fort Myers Mural Society. Committee Member McAllister agreed with Ms. Roeder that if the call didn't match rubric and the information was not clear that it is a concern. Ms. Hamilton stated that the process must be done right and they be treated fairly. Ms. Hamilton thanked Ms. Roeder and said that she was going to send an official email complaint to the CRA and that she will copy everyone. Ms. Roeder said we should have been on the project from beginning but we were not involved in that part. Ms. Collins stated that she was surprised that it wasn't the artists choice on which two images to present. Chair Gora asked Mr. Hall if it required all 17 panels and he replied that it did not. Mr. Hall discussed that the Call to Artist was only for a single sketch and that he did not see all nine submissions but he understood from comments that the Selection Committee made that two of the nine artists drew out all 17 panels while the other seven were just a representative sketch. Mr. Hall said that as far as rubric, the Call to Artist basically says that they will be judged in terms of scope and how well the submissions expressed the Buck's Backyard theme and originality. Mr. Hall stated that one part of the criteria that was not part of the process was style. Ms. Roeder stated that she thought style was part of it and Mr. Hall replied that it was, but the word style just doesn't appear in the Call to Artist. Ms. Hamilton stated that they were given a bank of images and that she could share with the committee members everything she was given including email transcripts. Mr. Hall stated that was to give you an overview of what the project consisted of. Ms. Hamilton discussed the expectation of style and asked Mr. Hall what is the rubric for style. Mr. Hall said that all he can say is the five Selection Committee Members had no problems with the five criteria they used in judging the nine submissions. Ms. Hamilton stated that her question is due process, proper due upright and ethical process with all 360 degrees part of the perspective of the Call to Artist, and of the community should be taken into consideration. Ms. Rivera and Ms. Hamilton discussed what was listed on the criteria and the 17 panels they submitted. Ms. Hamilton said based on the rubric and the judging that happened, the selections ran into an issue before they ever got to the people choosing. Ms. Hamilton said that they done everything they were asked to do which included Ms. Shifrin's request for them to change their proposal twice and chop it down; only to find out that she was the one who chose the two panels out of their work to present to the committee. Ms. McAllister said she takes their concerns seriously and the Public Art Committee should do some more research until we have the rest of the information, and the other Committee Members agreed. Ms. Hamilton asked how they can get involved to work together for they can communicate with other artists also. Mr. Hall stated that the Public Art Committee meetings are on the third Tuesday of every month and are open to the public. Mr. Hall also mentioned that when Committee Memberships open up you could go to your City Council person to seek an

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appointment or an At Large Membership which is appointed by the Mayor. Mr. Hall asked Committee Members what they would like to do about the September 15th meeting with the three finalists and if we should communicate with the Fort Myers Mural Society and the CRA beforehand. Committee Members agreed that we need to contact them and get all parties involved on this issue. Mr. Hall asked for Ms. Hamilton to send him the correspondence again and he will do a formal notice to Ms. Shifrin, the CRA, and Reva Development and let them know that there is an issue that needs to be resolved before proceeding with the finalists. Ms. McAllister asked if any of the funding for this project is coming from the CRA and Mr. Hall replied no that the Fort Myers Mural Society is providing all of the funding.

3. Edgardo Carmona Artwork Relocation Project

Mr. Hall presented a slide show presentation for the Carmona Artwork relocation project with pictures of different location options for each Ward. Mr. Schuetz stated that the Forum concept plan had now expanded to 23 acres with 11 of the acres being across the road. Mr. Hall stated that the next step would be to present to City Council to get their input with approval and then certain locations can be picked when we get further down the road. Committee Member Roeder stated that we had a list of the cost to move the sculptures but still no plan on how to obtain the money. Ms. Roeder also stated that she doesn't see why the Juggler would be moved to the Collaboratory because she thinks that the location of Hendry and First Street where it is located is a good spot and Committee Member McAllister agreed. Mr. Hall explained that it was Liston Bochette's plan and he would have to check with him on why he thought it was important. Mr. Hall stated that once we come up with a plan that were comfortable with than we can submit the request to City Council to make the plan a reality. Mr. Hall stated that City Council could approve the funding, ask us to scale back or make any changes. Mr. Hall discussed that the present City Council made the recommendations of moving them to different Wards when the purchase was made in August 2018. Mr. Hall stated that by the time it takes to do a green sheet on this item where they can present the plan to City Council, we will have a new Mayor and City Council will be shuffled a bit. Mr. Hall said that he believes we are obligated to give them a plan and he can make any adjustments before it would be presented to the new City Council. Mr. Hall asked committee members if they were comfortable in presenting this to City Council or another option to consider would be to scale back to two pieces per ward but that would require a change of Resolution of Committee Adoption of 2018. Mr. Schuetz said that he didn't think we were ready for a green sheet because we don't have the funding. Mr. Hall replied that part of going to City Council would be to ask for the funding from the estimates that were received from Flint and Doyle in the range of 20k-25k. Chair Gora said she will let Councilman Burson know the timeline to make a decision and Mr. Schuetz said he would check with Donna Lovejoy on presenting to City Council. Mr. Hall said we will revisit this next month and if we are ready the committee can make a motion to proceed to get this item on the City Council agenda.

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4. Draft of Annual Plan & Determination of Goals for FY20-21

Mr. Hall stated to the committee that it is time to adopt new annual plan as well as a new Master Plan. He mentioned that two items that were accomplished on the agenda that can be taken off are the launch of Otocast and the completion of all but two of the maintenance manuals. Mr. Hall asked the committee members what they would like included in the new annual plan and stated that the top of the list remains using the Carmona pieces as art hubs throughout the city, supporting the Buck's Backyard Mural Project and moving two of the pieces to that location. Committee Member Collins discussed ideas from Calls that she has seen outside the area such as crosswalk murals, and traffic or electrical boxes that could be small projects for local artists that would bring attention to different neighborhoods around the city. Mr. Hall stated that those are some items that can be added in the annual plan which would be to explore the options and pursue them. Mr. Hall presented an annual plan summary of items for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Mr. Hall suggested adding a section of participatory art projects that he said would go along with what Ms. Collins was suggesting that would better involve the community. Committee Members discussed the different ideas of crosswalk murals in Fort Myers as a participatory art project that could be restricted to Fort Myers residents. Ms. Hamilton stated that she is part of Gulf Coast Leisure and they work with a large community of creative artists and she would like to know how the Public Art Committee is promoted and who it is promoted too. Ms. Collins replied that there hasn't been that many calls going out. Ms. Hamilton asked how opportunities to either participate or cause awareness can be presented to a more diverse group. Committee Member Roeder said that anybody can approach us with a comprehensive project idea and bring it to the committee to see if it's something that we can help with. Ms. Collings stated that it seems like it has always been an issue of funding for the projects. Ms. Hamilton asked if they have a company that is willing to partner and sponsor an artist could they put that into a proposal. Mr. Hall stated that the Committee is always looking for opportunities to partner with the private sector and you can always be proactive if you have an idea and have the funding, even if its partial funding to see if we can collaborate. Ms. Hamilton asked about getting involved with volunteering for things like disaster preparedness and helping the Public Art Committee. Mr. Schuetz said that he will check with Donna Lovejoy and the Public Information Officer to see what can be done on the City's website. Chair Gora stated that she believes Lily Baker has been working on the webpage and Mr. Hall stated that there is a Public Art page but believes Ms. Baker would be able to add a section on news and current development. Mr. Hall asked Committee Members if they have anything to add before he comes up with a final draft of the Annual Plan that he will present at September's meeting. Ms. Roeder asked about the parallel park and if it's something that should be added. Mr. Hall stated that he can add it to the part of the conservation of Caloosahatchee Manuscripts and Fire Dance. Mr. Hall stated that he has open discussion right now with Marylyn Dentafoss about refurbishing the

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parallel park that Lee County has money set aside for and he is waiting to hear if there is a way she can transfer the images to a slotted aluminum panel or something that would be more permanent. Mr. Hall discussed another option and of taking panels down and having a Call to Artist for a treatment that would be more permanent and able to withstand the Florida weather. Ms. Roeder asked if someone is reviewing our newest ordinance to make sure that if there are new projects going up that we have an awareness outreach to the developers and that the brochure that Committee Member McAllister made is being promoted. Chair Gora asked if Ms. Lovejoy would be the one to know about these items and Mr. Schuetz replied yes.

6. Upcoming Public Art Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

Chair Gora stated that the next Public Art Committee meeting is on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Mr. Hall stated that Committee Member Adams is requesting that we have the Buck's Backyard finalist to be done in the City Council Chambers for the Committee Members can review the proposals in person. Ms. Hamilton discussed with the Committee Members that she believes the judging should be postponed due to the issues they spoken about with the selection process. Mr. Hall asked if Mr. Schuetz could check to see if the finalists can do their presentation in person when appropriate and Mr. Schuetz agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Committee Member Roeder; seconded by Committee Member Middlebrooks; to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 p.m.