

CITY OF NORWALK
ARTS AND CULTURAL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

ATTENDANCE: Brian Kaspr, Chair; Danny Loftus George, Vice Chair; Robert Abriola, Naomi Clark, Nori Grudin, Ava Jacobs, Melissa Matuska, Steven Rust

OTHERS: Sabrina Godeski, Staff

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kaspr acknowledged those in attendance as above noted. There was a quorum present.

NEW MEMBER INTRODUCTION

Mr. Kaspr welcomed new member Naomi Clark and asked her to introduce herself. Ms. Clark provided an overview of her background and is looking forward to serving on the Commission.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present for Public Comments.

Approval of the Minutes – August 6, 2023

Mr. Kaspr requested a correction on page 1 to change ‘Mr. Alan’ called the meeting to order to ‘Mr. Kaspr’.

- ** MR. ABRIOLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AUGUST 6, 2023 AS AMENDED WITH CORRECTION NOTED.
- ** MS. GRUDIN SECONDED THE MOTION.
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH SIX VOTES IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED AND ONE ABSTENTION (CLARK).

NEW BUSINESS

Budget Review

Mr. Abriola noted that he has formatted the budget to track monthly expenses, and he referred to the excel sheet as sent by email. There was difficulty in displaying the worksheets, and it was agreed to move this item to later on the agenda, after the documents were available.

Update on Current Projects

a. Approve the amendment to the You Are Not Alone Mural proposal to include an additional location on Wilson Avenue. – YANAM Team and Brian Kasper

Mr. Kaspr referred to the ‘You Are Not Alone Murals’ and explained the program at Brien McMahon High School needs to go through the process of the Board of Education approval. He noted that the method of affixing the mural has to now be determined if adhering the panels rather than painting the bricks. He added that there could be an additional cost associated with the method, but at this time the issue is whether to add another location.

There was discussion on murals and how to address the efforts to provide education on the arts and engage student involvement to address social emotional learning and mental health. Mr. Loftus-George expressed concern that while murals are good there are other programs that the Commission could develop as a more comprehensive use of budgeted funds to include school educational efforts with student engagement.

There was further discussion on how to fund these programs and how to address unspent capital budgeted funds. Mr. Abriola asked if capital budgeted funds could be used and Ms. Godeski explained capital projects include large programs that would be under Arts & Public Spaces for the annual Capital Project request. It was agreed to collaborate further with development of educational programs and events.

- ** MR. ABRIOLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO THE ‘YOU ARE NOT ALONE’ MURAL PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE AN ADDITIONAL LOCATION ON WILSON AVENUE.**
- ** MS. JACOBS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE VOTES IN FAVOR, (ABRIOLA, KASPR, JACOBS, MATUSKA, RUST), TWO OPPOSED (LOFTUS GEORGE, CLARK) AND NO ABSTENTIONS.**

Budget Review (continued from previous agenda item)

Mr. Abriola shared the budget spreadsheets and noted the following:

- There is \$14,400 in the Arts Commission budget.
There was an overview of the expenses by category.
There was discussion on how to fund programs such as education.
-The capital ledger budget was outlined and Ms. Godeski noted that it is separate and can be allocated for the larger capital projects.

Mr. Abriola noted that if members have any projects that you'd like to be discussed for budget considerations, please email them to him to summarize for next month's budget meeting.
Capital Accounts. Ms. Godeski fielded questions and comments on the annual process of applying for capital funds.

Other Business

Mr. Rust mentioned times when a stage is set up for art programs that take place along 50 Washington Street, such as the SoNo Arts Festival that require power. He asked what the process for the City to install power. Ms. Godeski noted that it would be something that Dept. of Public Works would do. She noted that as more programs take place, she will reach out to get more information and what should be done by the city departments. It was agreed to add this to next month's agenda and she will provide more information on what would be involved.

There was no further business.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MS. CLARK MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEEING.
- ** MS. MATUSKA SECONDED THE MOTION.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Telesco Secretarial Services