

**City of Norwalk
Arts and Cultural commission
Tuesday, March 5, 2024
Via Teleconference**

ATTENDANCE: Brian Kaspr, Chair; Robert Abriola; Steven Rust;
Melissa Matuskka; Nori Grudin; Marc Alan (6:07); Naomi Clark (6:27)

STAFF: Sabrina Godeski, Director of Business Development & Tourism.

OTHERS: Janay Sylvester.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman, Brian Kaspr called to order at 6:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Janay Sylvester joined the call to watch the involvement, conversation, and protocols of the call because she is interested in joining the commission. She moved to Norwalk 4 years ago, she does marketing during the day and is interested in music.

ADMINISTRATION

- Approval of the minutes of February 6, 2024

****MOTIONED BY MR. ROBERT ABRIOLA TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**

****SECONDED BY MS. NORI GRUDIN.**

****MR. MARC ALAN JOINED THE MEETING AT 6:07 PM.****

****THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NEW BUSINESS

1. Budget Review

Mr. Abriola went over the Budget Summary for FY23-24. Only \$12,460.17 has been spent, mostly from secretarial and other professional services.

Ms. Godeski added from the Capital Accounts the line "You Are Not Alone" is there because they paid with two separate (inaudible) but once contract is signed, the account will be \$50,000 less which will clear out the MLK Blvd account, the first Art in Public Places line, and some of the second Art in Public Places line. The account should be left with \$220,000 dollars.

2. Events Update

Mr. Kaspr shared that Ava stepped down from the commission so there is an open seat. But he has been working with Mr. Alan to create a live art series event in Norwalk. Mr. Kaspr has spoke with Ms. Godeski regarding spending the remaining operating budget to pay for the live music event in conjunction with the SONO stride event hosted by Ms. Godeski.

Ms. Godeski carried on to share about the SONO stride event, which would carry on monthly. It will begin on the weekend of April 13th, and will be hosted on Washington street with a bunch of vendors and musicians, each store front will have a different theme.

Mr. Alan added he is excited to recreate the porch music events that occurred on Wall Street but in different locations that will bring people into retail stores. He added he can connect with artists by posting a casting call on social media.

Mr. Kaspr added they can also just work with those in their network but he is not opposed to a casting call or connecting with new artists.

Ms. Godeski added they have the next three months planned but they would like to continue the program without an end date. The Sunday program will start from noon and end at 5 pm and Saturday the program will go from 3pm to 8pm. The markets will run in each of the stores and Mr. Alan can coordinate the live music.

Mr. Alan said it could be a two set situation but he would like to look at the scheduling and budget to make sure they aren't spread out too thin. He'll get back to the commission with his recommendations then they will start the artist search.

Mr. Kaspr added the search can be between artists from all over, they do not have to be local in Norwalk and not all three spaces have to have live entertainment going on at the same time.

Ms. Matuska added she would like to help with the project.

3. Discussion on the Port Laureate Process

Mr. Alan shared he got an email from the city of Windsor regarding the Port Laureate program they have in Norwalk, they would like advice to begin their own program. The original program was funded by the Library and old Art Commission.

Ms. Grudin added that the Library took the lead on this program and the arts commission funded the program.

Mr. Alan said he has seen zoom events being hosted but if they want to reintroduce that into the commission then they should take a look at the program and their involvement. He recommended them creating a junior laureate to open up the program to a younger audience.

Ms. Matuska said when the new director came in it was during the covid pandemic so the activity went down. She can reach out to the Library board to reconnect and get back to what they were doing before.

****MS. NAOMI CLARK JOINED THE MEETING AT 6:27PM****

4. Art Teaching Fellowship

Ms. Clark said she has been in contact with the assistant superintendent of the Norwalk Board of Education and has been working with Mr. George on an attendance incentive program. Regarding the Artist residency, she believes the \$35,000 stipend is enough for part time teachers as she has seen other positions advertised just as such. The position would start at a high school, move along the others and hopefully be in every K-12 location. The program would run during the day, a couple days out of the week alongside the Art teachers to come up with collaborative objectives.

5. General Committee Member Updates

Mr. Alan shared his recommendations on the Mayor's gallery in the City Hall building. He would like to use only \$10,000 dollars for the SoNo stride event and use the rest of the funds to update the Mayor's gallery. Prior to the commission changes there is an exhibit dedicated to the history of the fire department and hasn't been changed since. He would like to renovate the space for famous artists who came from Norwalk.

Mr. Abriola said he likes the idea and would like to help.

Ms. Matuska said there is a lot of money in the budget and they can also find some way to present it at the train tracks to make it more entertaining.

Ms. Grudin asked if they are going to be spending money, can they add the traffic graphic boxes that are in need of updating onto the agenda for next month to discuss.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Approve the relocation of the Vines to the suggested location.

Mr. Kaspr said they are going to be recommending the relocation to the Vines project to the city redevelopment program. Once the location is approved on a commission level, they will reach out to the artist to get their opinion and help with placement at the location.

****MOTIONED BY MR. ALAN TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION OF RELOCATION OF THE VINE ARTWORK TO THE PARKING GARAGE OF THE MARITIME AQUARIUM TO REDEVELOPMENT.**

****SECONDED BY MR.RUST.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

****MOTIONED BY MS. MATUSKA TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

****SECONDED BY MR.ARBIOLA.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Vianca Rivera,

Telesco Secretarial Services.