CITY OF NORWALK
ARTS & CULTURAL COMMISSION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2024
VIA TELECONFERENCE

ATTENDANCE: Brian Kaspr; Chair, Marc Alan, Janay Sylvester, Melissa Matuska, Nori Gruden

STAFF: Sabrina Godeski

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Kasper called the roll as reflected above. A quorum was present.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

IV. ADMINISTRATION

a. Approve the minutes of the November 12, 2024, meeting of the Arts and Cultural Commission.

** **MR. KASPER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 12, 2024 MEETING.**
** **THE MOTION WAS APROVED WITH FOUR VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE ABSTENTION (JANAY SYLVESTER)**

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present to participate.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Budget – Sabrina Godeski, Bob Abriola, and Brian Kaspr

1. Current Budget Page 1 of 171

Ms. Godeski presented the budget as outlined in the packet. She explained the expenses, the capital account, and how the funds might be used. She indicated that capital funds could be used to purchase materials or fund a physical installation.

2. 2025-2026 Requests

Ms. Godeski outlined the budget requests for 2025/26. She stated all events would now be moved to the operating budget. She noted they requested a raise in the operating budget. Mr. Kaspr offered suggestions as to how the funding could be used. Ms. Godeski pointed out she had put in capital requests for the Heritage, Route 1/Connecticut Avenue walls, and the Arts inventory. Mr. Alan suggested lowering the ask for the Arts inventory and phasing it over several years. Ms. Godeski stated she was told to put in the request for the full amount.

B. NEA Grant Application Discussion

Ms. Godeski discussed the changes in the NEA grants outlined in the attached document. She noted that the amount of funding available was now between $10,000 and $100,000. She indicated they were applying to do a project involving the Heritage Wall. She explained that this would leave funds in the capital account that could be applied elsewhere.

C. Event Recap – Janay Sylvester

Ms. Sylvester discussed the hosting of the mixer that was in collaboration with Space 67. She noted it was well attended with a large number of people who RSVPed showing up at the event and a good number of walk-ins. She indicated they had the emails for everyone who attended the event. She also noted they sent out a survey and request for people to join the Norwalk Arts and Cultural Commission Database. Ms. Sylvester then thanked everyone who helped with the project. Mr. Kaspr said it was an inspiring night. He suggested projects to keep up the momentum.

D. Website Updates & Social Media – Sabrina Godeski

Ms. Godeski provided an update on the website and social media. She stated that the city's page had been updated and there was an active page for the Traffic Graphic program. She asked the commission to assess the site and suggest any additional editing. She also indicated they were getting an arts-related page on Visit Norwalk. On the social media side, it was decided to post daily on the Arts and Cultural Commission page and cross-post on the Visit Norwalk Page. Mr. Alan suggested collaboration with other arts organizations and the Chamber of Commerce.

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E. Review of the updates Traffic Graphic Guidelines and Application – Sabrina Godeski

Mr. Kasper said that the payment should be a flat stipend and they would cover materials. In response to a question about fees, Ms. Godeski stated there were no fees, just what they were paying the artist. Mr. Kaspr said they should at least be supplying the materials.

Ms. Matuska had a question about the total in the Capital budget and the possibility of putting together a proposal. She outlined her proposal listing the funding and how it would be applied.

In response to a question by Ms. Matuska, Ms. Godeski indicated there was a clause in the document about decommissioning boxes. She also noted as part of the contract artists signed over their control of what could happen to their work.

Mr. Kaspr made several; suggestions about what could be done with the decommissioned boxes. Ms. Godeski said that having a plan for the boxes should not appear in the actual guidelines.

F. Arts and Cultural Plan Update – Sabrina Godeski

Ms. Godeski discussed the selection of the Cultural Planning Group to creat their Arts and Cultural plan. She stated she would be meeting with them to discuss the various particulars. She stated funding was in place and they were all ready to go.

G. Upcoming Calls

1. City Hall Galleries

Ms. Godeski talked about the various city hall galleries and the plan to put out a call to find out who wants to do them, and what they want to do. She indicated the mayor would have some say in what gets installed.

2. Ely Avenue Fence

Ms. Godeski then described the MLK Grant and the new guidelines created for the selection of artists. Mr. Kaspr emphasized the transparency of these projects going forward. He also noted that the artist selection policy will also look to existing relationships. Mr. Alan suggested various outlets to increase publicity for open calls.

H. General Committee Member Updates

Mr. Alan questioned whether Capital funds could be used to do something with the wall on the side of the Benjamin Franklin School. Mr. Kaspr said it was possible they needed artists to propose something, get it approved, and have it painted. Ms. Godeski Noted that the wall may be part of a BOE facility, and they would have to be involved early in the process.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

** **MS. MATUSKA MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**
** **MR. ALAN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secrtetarial Service