

**CITY OF NORWALK
ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
October 4, 2022**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board: Chairman Marc Alan, Brian Kaspr, Elizabeth Tardif, Ava Jacobs, Janet Evelyn, Melissa Matuska, Bob Abriola (6:15), Nori Grudin (6:30)

Staff: Sabrina Church

Other: Mj and Josh Lindo, Geraluz and Werc Lozano, Ernesto and Hilary Maranje, Sonny Behan

Chairman Alan called the meeting to order at 6:05. A quorum was present.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

III. ADMINISTRATION

Approve the minutes of the August 2, 2022 regular meeting.

**** **Mr. Kaspr moved to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2022 meeting.**

**** **Ms. Tardiff seconded the motion.**

**** **The motion passed unanimously.**

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review of Monroe Street Bridge proposals

Mr. Kaspr confirmed that we now have four artists putting together final proposals for the mural. Mr. Kaspr invited four of the artists to the meeting so the board can address any questions or concerns now.

Mr. Kaspr introduced Mj and Josh, two artists from California who presented their concept for the mural. Mj presented the artists' background and experience. She then presented their preliminary design ideas and the meanings behind them. Their budget is roughly \$50,000.

Mr. Kaspr asked about how long it would take them to paint the works. Josh estimates that it would take about a week.

Mr. Alan how they came up with the costs for travel and lodging. Mj said these estimates were based on their past experience traveling for work.

Both Mr. Alan and Mr. Kasp really liked the image of the girl laying down because it was compelling and unexpected in the scale and image.

The second artist to present their concept is Ernesto Maranje, based in Florida. Hilary, Ernesto's wife, gave the presentation. She presented his background and his design concept for the design.

The main subjects are gorillas doing what humans can relate to and Weaver birds. Organic materials, ie leaves and plants tie the different sides of the mural together.

Ms. Tardiff said she loves the presentation of wildlife in a city setting. All agree that using the trusses really ties the two sides of the underpass together.

Mr. Maranje said the apes were chosen because they are so close to us. We are the fifth ape in viewing the work.

The budget is about \$50,000.

The third artist to present is another artist from California, Sonny Behan. His intention was to honor the city and the community. The focal point are a pair of eyes on each side, one side are bobcat eyes and the other side are a child's human eyes. He would like the human eyes to represent a resident of Norwalk. The two eyes are looking at each other. Surrounding the realistic images are abstracted color.

The budget is about \$40,000.

The last artists to present are Geraluz and Werc from Brooklyn. Their concept incorporates local elements of nature interacting with human eyes set on a geometric pattern that pays tribute to the indiginous people of the land.

The colors were meant to transcend the space of reality. They are meant to open up the space and draw attention in the dark underpass. They were designed to create different patterns with RGB lighting.

The budget is roughly \$50,000 with additional costs to add additional spaces.

The average lifecycle for a mural like this is five to ten years. It is subject to variance in weather which can cause damage, however, since it is in an underpass there is little sun damage.

Mr. Kaspr made the point that all of these artists are experienced muralists. They are willing to take direction on content, and budgets are somewhat negotiable. There are opportunities to save money by prepping the wall for the artists, etc.

b. Approve the proposed traffic graphic boxes

Mr. Abriola is a member of the Saint Phillips Artist Guild (SPAG) who are designing the traffic boxes. They are experienced in designing and producing these boxes.

The design presented nods to conservation, and each side of the box has a bold graphic of a different local bird in bright saturated color.

******Ms. Tardif moved to accept this design.**

******Ms. Grudin seconded the motion.**

******The motion passed with Mr. Abriola abstained.**

The second box design presented was from David Shockley. It is an abstracted design on a blue background, with two small figures in the upper right corner. The abstraction is fine, but the two figures are the organization's logo which is problematic.

******Mr. Kaspr moved to table a decision on this box pending a discussion of the design.**

******Ms. Evelyn seconded the motion.**

******The motion passed unanimously.**

V. COMMITTEE STAFF UPDATES

a. Budget Committee Update – Nori Grudin

Ms. Church presented the budget. The next expense will be installing the hanging systems in City Hall. The Mayor's Gallery showing will cost money as well. There is money left for curating more events in person. The committee should spend the entire budget. They have applied for a grant for a part time employee to help with all the art commission projects.

There will be money left over after lighting the MLK boulevard which can be used to light the new mural.

All together there is about \$75,000 left for the year.

There was discussion about the Yankee Doodle Garage updates. It is being painted and new lighting is being added, but the Arts Commission is not included in this project.

b. Communications Committee Update – Marc Alan

Mr. Alan would like to bring back the Art Speaks in person event. This would be a regularly occurring event to bring the art community together.

c. Infrastructure Committee Update – Brian Kaspr

i. Route 1/West Ave Bridge Art – Sabrina Church

The committee has not yet met. The next steps are to collect all the mural proposals and make a decision. The final choice will go to the Mayor's office. It will also need to go through the Parks and Recs department or the Economic Development Committee to approve the contract. The goal is to start painting in the late spring.

The next project to be addressed will be the underpass across the street from Matthews Park. The first steps will be measuring the space. The budget ask will be included in next year's budget.

The final project will be to clean up the Vines; remove shrubbery, make them more visible and update the look.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

*****Ms. Grudin moved to adjourn the meeting.**

*****Mr. Abriola seconded the motion.**

*****The motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Chapple
Telesco Secretarial Services