

The City of Knoxville: Public Arts Committee

Public Arts Committee Meeting: June 4, 2015

Meeting was called to order at 4:01 PM at the Knoxville Museum of Art.

Attendees Present:

Bart Watkins – Committee Member
Doug Gordon – City of Knoxville, Law Department
Duane Grieve – Committee Member, City Council Representative
Faris Eid – Committee Member
John Powers – Committee Member
Judith Foltz – City of Knoxville, Office of Special Events
Liza Zenni – Staff Liaison
Melinda Meador – Committee Member
Rachel Perkins – Committee Administrator
Sara Pinnell – Committee Member
Susana Esrequis – Committee Member

Approval of the Agenda: Sara moved to approve the agenda. Faris seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Approval of June Minutes: Bart moved to approve the minutes. Sara seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Liza read aloud the updated conflict of interest policy written by Doug Gordon. Feedback from several committee members expressed a desire to change the phrase “No artist sitting on the committee” to “No member sitting on the committee”. A suggestion was also made to change the “unanimous vote” to “a majority vote”. Doug stated that the committee should be wary of any changes that diminish the standards for the policy. Several members expressed concern that since the full committee is rarely present, a unanimous vote when all members are present would be difficult to achieve. Faris suggested the wording be changed to “When a quorum is present, a majority vote” Bart asked Doug if the committee can delegate a selection committee to whittle down the choices and the committee would then vote on a final three or five candidates. Doug stated this is acceptable. Melinda suggested requiring a 2/3 majority of the quorum for the new policy. Each committee member voiced agreement to this new language. Doug will adjust the policy and present it at the next meeting when a vote can be called to approve the policy.

Cradle of Country Music Park RFQ

Liza shared that she has been in contact with members of Cleveland and Nashville's public art programs and she has also met with Bill Lyons to discuss the funding for Cradle of Country Music Park. Liza's meeting with Bill confirmed the committee's thought the \$250,000 was earmarked for art. She also sought to clarify what should come first at the park: art or landscaping? Bill confirmed that the art should lead the discussion. Liza asked, what if we send out the RFQ to artists and pre-select three landscape architect firms for the eventual artist to interview and choose one firm to work with on the project? Faris stated that the committee should partner with the Parks & Recreation Department to develop an RFQ for landscaping at the park. Liza asked the committee if they would like her to contact Joe Walsh about collaborating on the project. Faris stated that before an RFQ can go out, money should be guaranteed for the project. A proposal can cost a firm \$5-10,000 and it would be unfair to ask for proposals for a project that does not have guaranteed funding. Liza asked Sara if she could give an estimate for what the landscaping aspect of the project would cost. Sara stated that it is almost impossible to determine without seeing what the artwork looks like: it could be a hardscape or several large pieces, and a design plan would need to consider those aspects. Sara added that the design should also consider how the public will interact with the space and the needs of the community. Sara asked if an RFQ from the city could cover the design fee. Melinda asked why the committee was separating the landscaping from the public art, instead of working together. Liza stated that at the June meeting, Jeff expressed concern that many artists, especially local artists, would not submit applications for the project because they are unable to engage landscape architects. Liza asked John if he felt similarly and John agreed. Duane stated that he was unsure if there needs to be a selection process for landscaping. Sara feels it is important to define the roles of the project participants and to encourage teamwork between the two groups, even if they are not selected at the same time. Sara stated that the RFQ should be written so the artist feels like they are leading the project – the art is still the most important part of the project. Liza suggested encouraging artists to apply with a partner, but it will not be a requirement. The RFQ will state that solo artists can submit and that the committee will help match a short list of artists with acceptable landscape architects at a later time. The committee could also include a list of local landscape architect firms with the RFQ. Duane made a motion

to approve the new language and inclusion of the list of firms for the RFQ. Faris seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Dividing the Grid or Public Art Locations

Liza reminded the committee of the 9 downtown districts that have been identified for consideration by committee members for potential locations for public art. Liza confirmed locations with a few members and she will follow up with the remaining members to assign locations. Liza shared a slideshow of possible mural locations she photographed with Faris on a trip around Knoxville. Each committee member will visit their assigned location in the next month and make recommendations to the committee for potential sites with high visibility and impact for the community.

Walnut Street Garage Project

Liza shared details of her discussions with representatives from the Cincinnati and Philadelphia mural programs. In Cincinnati, mural costs average between \$50-60,000 each. The cost is higher than average because high school students are involved in the projects, and while it is an excellent opportunity for the students and helps ArtWorks reach new members of the community, it does make projects more expensive. Many of the murals are done with the support of local businesses. Companies that own the buildings partner to create murals are given one equal vote to determine the content for the mural – they do not select the design themselves. ArtWorks is continually seeking new sponsors and partnerships. The murals help to define the city. Liza suggested that similar themes could be quite successful in Knoxville. Liza feels it is important to start connecting with potential sponsors and she recently asked Rachel to create a draft sponsorship book to be presented to sponsors.

Liza shared that the city is interested in creating something for the Walnut Street parking garage. The owners have broken up the large wall into four vertical frames and Bill Lyons recently convened a meeting with key stakeholders to brainstorm ideas for temporary images for the space. Bill suggested printing images of old postcards or photographs and installing them on the wall as a temporary installation in time for Knoxville's 225th birthday celebration next fall. Mark Heinz (committee member) was part of that meeting and encouraged the group to think

creatively about the project. Liza promised that the Public Arts Committee would help brainstorm possible design concepts for the building and she asked the Committee if they would be interested in attending a brainstorming session for that purpose. Eventually, three finished designs will be presented to the public for selection. Faris asked if a budget was announced for the project. Liza stated that she was still waiting for more details about the project and she has asked Rick Emmett for a budget and a production timeline. Sara asked where the funding came from for the project. Judith stated that the money came from Rick Emmett's budget. Liza asked if the committee was interested in providing input. Sara stated that she hopes the committee can eventually become more proactive about developing projects, rather than simply reacting to projects as they are presented. Faris stated that he feels it is important for the committee to participate. Liza will send invitations to the committee for a brainstorming session.

Everly Brothers Park

A dedication will be held on Friday, August 7 to celebrate the naming of the park and to kick off fundraising efforts. Duane stated that the Design Center estimates that \$120,000 will be needed for site design and an additional \$150,000 for the artwork. Liza stated that any public art designed for the park will come before the committee for approval.

Chilhowee Park

East Tennessee Quality Growth (ETQG) is working to develop a mural project to beautify a series of retaining walls and a public walkway tunnel at Chilhowee Park. Liza will share more information as the project develops and the ETQC is aware that any designs will need to be approved by the committee.

Burns Memorial Update

Liza reminded the committee about the possible sculpture of Harry Burns that Wanda Sobieski hopes to have installed in downtown Knoxville. Wanda initially hoped the sculpture could be located in Market Square, but the committee encouraged her to look elsewhere for a less crowded location. Wanda is now considering an area outside the East Tennessee History Center, but Judith stated that the current design (14 feet x 11 feet) is too large for that space. Several committee members expressed concern that the statue could be installed without approval or

oversight from the committee. Duane will speak to the Mayor, Bill Lyons, and Rick Emmett to share the committee's concerns about the project.

Future Meetings:

- A. The next regular meeting is Thursday, September 3, 2015 at 4:00 PM.
 - a. The meeting will be held at the Knoxville Museum of Art boardroom.

Meeting adjourned at 5:13 PM.

Excused Members:

Erin Donovan
Marcus Hall
Mark Heinz
Mike Fowler
Jeffrey Lockett
Chuck Morris
Elizabeth Wright