

MINUTES

May 9, 2024 at Noon

Public Art Advisory Commission

Studio, Muscatine Art Center, 1314 Mulberry Avenue

Present: Brad Roeth, Paul Minicucci, Jim Elias, Rich Klimes, Melanie Alexander

By Phone: Carolyn Levine, Thalia Sutton

Guest(s): None

Melanie Alexander, City staff liaison to the Public Art Advisory Commission, called the meeting to order.

Minutes from the March 8, 2024 meeting were reviewed. Paul Minicucci moved to approve the minutes, Jim Elias seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alexander provided updates regarding the art alley project. Citizen Joshua Baker who had proposed the community art wall is being relocated out of state and may be able to help a little if the project moves forward in the next few months. In the meantime, artist/illustrator Laura Palmer is returning to Muscatine. Locally, she is known for creating the graphics on the water tower. She has worked as an artist in residence for elementary schools in Des Moines, California, and Florida. If funding can be secured, there is an opportunity to have connect with students participating in the SPARK summer school program in July. The students would create drawings and identify words that represent their hometown of Muscatine. Palmer could then turn these into a cohesive mural. A downtown building owner has been identified in the block where Sherwin Williams, the Brew, and Fresh Home are located. The Muscatine County Arts Council intends to be the applicant seeking funds for the mural / student engagement project. The plan to create an event around the painting of the mural will be discussed at a later date pending funding of the mural project. Notification of grant funding is expected by July 1st. Eventually, an art alley may be created in this area, and this project could help kickstart interest in the art alley concept. For 2024, the plan will be relatively simply, focusing on this one mural rather than creating a temporary "doodle wall" or installing multiple murals in the alley.

Thalia Sutton and Jim Elias will work together to create an inventory of public art installations to include murals, sculptures, and landmarks. The inventory will start as an internal document, pulling together what is known about each item. Eventually, a more public facing list, map, or other document would be created.

Carolyn Levine will rotate off the Public Art Advisory Commission at the end of June. She was among the original five members appointed by City Council to the Advisory Commission in 2019. Prior to that, she was instrumental in studying how other communities manage public art projects and structure public art commissions. The City's Nominating Committee will meet on May 23rd to review applications for the vacant seat. At the end of June 2025, both Jim Elias and Brad Roeth are due to rotate off. The Advisory Commission members are encouraged to help identify possible candidates. Levine may rejoin after being off for a one-year period.

Alexander responded to a question regarding the MuscaBus shelters. She is waiting for a response from the Transit Supervisor with a cost estimate. She also noted that Laura Palmer has completed a bus shelter art project in Des Moines and could be a resource for obtaining estimates, etc. Alexander responded to a question regarding the pavement murals proposed by the Community Foundation of

Greater Muscatine and the Community Development Office. At this time, the groups are waiting for feeding from the State of Iowa.

Meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.