

CITY OF ASHLAND

PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING June 17, 2022 *Draft* Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ken Engelund called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. via Zoom.

Commissioners Present:

Ken Engelund
Cassie Preskenis
Laura Bloom
Joel Frank
Destiny Young

Staff Present:

Johanna Tuthill, Associate Planner

APRC Liaison:

Jim Lewis (absent)

Council Liaison:

Stefani Seffinger (absent)

Absent Members:

Stanley Smith
Jennifer Longshore

Members of the Public:

Tía Laída Fé
Micah BlackLight
Max Malcomb
Peter Finkle
Andrew Stallman
Nixon Albertelli
Sandy Friend

II. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA - None

III. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public who wished to speak. Peter Finkle submitted a comment suggesting that the Commission request funding for small art projects involving blocks or groups of neighbors.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Public Arts Commission Regular Meeting, May 20, 2022

Commissioners Bloom/Frank m/s to approve the minutes as presented. Voice Vote: ALL AYES. Motion passed 5-0.

V. LIAISON REPORTS

- Community Development Liaison – Associate Planner Johanna Tuthill informed the Commission that additional funding for the artist had been secured.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

- Say Their Names Collective Proposal Presentation – Tía Laída Fé and Micah BlackLight
 - Ms. Fé began by conveying gratitude to Jessica Friedman. She expressed how the Say Their Names memorial is a very important place to remember, educate, mourn, and shows that the white community of Ashland knows and cares about the struggles that the black and brown community

CITY OF ASHLAND

face. Ms. Fé cited City Resolution 2020-17, and stated that this new art project would create a permanent and physical commitment to that resolution. She asked that the Commission and the City lend their support for the project and acknowledge Oregon's history with slavery.

- Mr. BlackLight is an artist and teacher in the community. He introduced the new art project as a physical reminder to the Say Their Names art installation, which would be titled Ancestor's Future: Crystallizing Our Call. He added that it would be donated to the City.
- The design of the project would be of an angelic winged-figure, and would symbolize a collective embodied ancestor. He would carry a book or tome holding the names of fallen black and brown people, as well as a message from the community. It would be installed in the Ashland Creek Park, a location that has already been sanctioned by the Ashland Parks and Recreation department.
- Mr. BlackLight described the materials for the design that would be chosen for long-term durability and maintenance. A ring of stepping stones would be placed around the statue that could be decorated by members of the community.
- The design team:
 - Jack Langford, sculptor and casting
 - KCI Waterjet Cutting, local fabrication
 - Eric Cislo, local metalsmith
- Mr. BlackLight estimated that the entirety of the project would cost between \$112,000 - \$140,000, which would largely be collected from grants, private funders, and donations. He emphasized that the project would be a gift to the City, but that funding for the site prep and installation is requested once the piece is completed.
- Chair Engelund thanked the applicants for their presentation, and there was general discussion about scale and dimensions of the project. Commissioner Preskenis gave appreciation for the comprehensive presentation and the depth of meaning behind each portion of the piece.
- Chair Engelund expressed concern that children could injure themselves by climbing on the statue. Mr. BlackLight responded that this was considered by the design team, and that there would be no sharp edges on the piece and few locations where one could fall and become stuck.
- Chair Engelund inquired what the dollar amount would be from the City for the installation, and Mr. BlackLight responded that the amount is not currently known, but that he could get an estimate.
- Commissioner Frank inquired about the statue being lighted at night, and suggested recessed lighting. Mr. BlackLight responded that solar powered lights for nighttime illumination were being considered, but that no decision had been made yet.
- Commissioner Frank asked how a five-month timeline had been generated, and if it could be followed with the current difficulty in acquiring building materials. Mr. BlackLight responded that the statue would be fabricated in Jack Langford's studio in Talent, which will supply a large amount of the materials.

Commissioners Preskenis/Bloom m/s to recommend that the City endorse the Crystallizing Our Call sculpture concept and that they allocate some amount of funding to this sculpture and its installation. ALL AYES. Motion passed 5-0.

- Presentation: Equity Lens II Follow Up: Cassie Preskenis
 - Commissioner Preskenis provided the Commission with a presentation on how the lens of equity can be used in the Commission's work, and recited a land acknowledgement to indigenous people. She discussed how public art could be used to combat injustice, using Seattle as an example.
 - Commissioner Preskenis encouraged the Commission to take substantive action in applying an equity lens to its work, as well as through actionable initiatives. She suggested that the Commission create a list of questions to apply to artworks that the Commission reviews, as well as reviewing the Commission's goals and missions in order to highlight an equitable lens. She added

CITY OF ASHLAND

that the Commission should consider reading a land acknowledgement at the start of their meetings.

- Commissioner Frank expressed support for the initiative, but noted that it was a difficult concept to apply without public involvement. He endorsed including a land acknowledgment at the start of the Commission's meetings.
- Chair Engelund agreed with Commissioner Frank, and noted that the Commission has a charter to search for inclusive art.

Commissioners Preskenis/Frank m/s to begin each Public Arts Commission meeting with a land acknowledgement.
ALL AYES. Motion passed 5-0.

- Marking Ashland Places
 - The Commission discussed where the next location for MAP II should be. Commissioner Preskenis expressed a desire for it to be located downtown, such as in the Plaza, to honor native people. Commissioner Bloom agreed, adding that it should be centrally visible. Commissioner Frank was concerned that downtown would be difficult to push through with community responses, and suggested that the Commission review further options. It was agreed that Chair Engelund would continue discussions with the Historic Commission.
- Haines & Friends Grant – Neighborhood Project: Peter Finkle
 - This has been moved to the July 15th meeting.
- Ashland High School Art Class Mural Proposal Presentation: Max Malcomb, AHS. Nixon Albertelli student
 - Max Malcomb introduced himself as an art teacher from Ashland High School, and Nixon Albertelli, a recent graduate of Ashland High School. Mr. Malcomb proposed that a mural be done on a wall at the Elizabethan Theater by Mr. Albertelli.
 - Mr. Albertelli detailed the project, which would be based on the play *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare. It would cost approximately \$3,000, and would be completed over the course of two months.
 - Chair Engelund expressed support for the project and inquired if the applicants had secured an endorsement from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Mr. Albertelli responded that they had not yet acquired the endorsement.
 - Commissioner Frank asked if the concept art had been done by Mr. Albertelli, who responded in the affirmative.
 - Peter Finkle commented that the project would also need to be approved by the Historic Commission, and Chair Engelund added that it would likely need to go before the Ashland Parks and Recreation department as well.
 - Commissioner Bloom expressed support for the project, but commented that it would be premature to move forward on this project yet.
 - There was support for the project, but decided that the Commission would need a concrete proposal before deciding on a course of action.

VII. PAC WORKPLAN

- First Friday Art Talks – Volunteers and Publication
 - Chair Engelund will be volunteering to give a talk on First Friday, and asked that any other Commissioners wishing to volunteer let him know.

CITY OF ASHLAND

- Golden Connections by Jennifer Corrio and David Frei
 - Update
 - a. Commissioner Frank gave a brief update on the plaque, saying that the Commission had two options for the material used. One would be a laminated, printed sign, and would be durable. It would cost approximately \$300. The second would be a silkscreen on steel or stainless steel, and would be a more than double the price of the first option.
 - b. There was general agreement that a metal option would be better, albeit on a slightly smaller scale.

Commissioners Frank/Bloom m/s to approve the metal version with a slightly smaller plaque size. ALL AYES. Motion passed 5-0.

- Clean-up
 - a. Chair Engelund informed the Commission that clean-up had not yet been completed on the Golden Connections art piece.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT - 10:19 AM
Next Meeting: June 17, 2022

IX. ATTACHMENTS
May 20, 2022 Minutes