

MINUTES

Public Art Committee Meeting
September 17, 2015

Present: Debbie Williamson-Smith, Robin Selover, Jennifer Knapp, Joe Moore, Mike Penwell, Betsy Wolfston, Courtney Stubbart, Committee Members; Isaac Marquez, Cultural Services staff.

Absent: Justin Lamphear, Committee Member; Tomi Douglas-Anderson, Cultural Services Director

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from June, July and August were approved with corrections.

Public Art Update

Mike provided an update on the City Hall project and the status of the Jan Zach art that will be re-installed at the new building.

Isaac that the flying people, currently located at the Eugene Airport, will be moving to the David Joyce gallery at Lane Community College (LCC). He said that Airport staff will be attending a future Public Art Committee meeting to discuss the move becoming permanent. Isaac reported that bids to move the art came in high so Airport staff will be doing the move.

Isaac reported that Betsy has been working in Kesey square to do some repairs and maintenance on the sculptures located there.

Isaac said the idea of murals keeps coming up; the Eugene Weekly contacted him about a project for their paper boxes a couple of months ago.

Isaac reported that he recently met with LRCS Executive Manager, Renee Grube and Police Chief, Pete Kerns to talk about commissioning murals instead of graffiti abatement. The Chief informed Isaac that it would not save any money because EPD currently has volunteers doing abatement. Later in the conversation Chief Kerns said murals would create a better aesthetic environment. Isaac will be going on tour with the Huckleberry Patrol (the volunteer group that performs graffiti abatement). Isaac said he believes it is time to develop a broader mural plan that will create excellence and efficiency. He said the timing is right because there is a lot of energy around creating a better aesthetic for large-scale track and field events coming to the area in the years to come.

Public Art Committee Temporary Art Project Discussion

Isaac gave a history of temporary art in Eugene and how it got started. Members of the subcommittee working on temporary art reported on their recent discussion that focused on ideas as well as the role of the committee. Isaac handed out notes that were taken at the meeting. Joe expressed a need for clarification about the process and how to use the available funds to create other opportunities for temporary art. Isaac responded by telling committee members that Cultural Services has a new team so there are more staff resources available than in the past. Typically Isaac creates the call to artists but he'd like it to come from the committee this time. Isaac will navigate the permitting, site, financing, budget, contracting, insurance requirements, etc.

Courtney noted that committee members are in the position of having a 10,000 foot view and able to instigate; when people see things happening they want to create more things – using Portland as an example. Courtney said he envisions making a place that has a lot of traffic. He acknowledged that space is hard to find in Eugene and the community lacks a contemporary scene; he has observed that artists are spread out doing their own thing. Courtney feels we are on the edge of an artistic/creative explosion. He said it could be temporary or pop up, turn into an event or multiple events. Courtney suggested creating a chain of activity and things to market, talk about, or post on Instagram and make it so people are able to come and see not only the work but also how it gets made. Courtney believes that whatever it is, it should be agile, create a chain that links things together, draw people and cause them to walk together to locations, have condensed energy that is prolonged and lasts more than one day.

Committee members discussed possible ideas for a temporary art project. Suggestions included using either the City Hall or EWEB riverfront sites as installation locations. The former LCC (downtown) building was mentioned as a potential location for an incubator site. The possibility of a mural in a public space that includes street kids/travelers was mentioned. Committee members liked the idea of a concentration of making in order to draw people into the daily work of creating art.

Isaac shared that he believes artists get priced out of being able to live and work in places like San Francisco and Portland. He pointed out that this project could potentially lead to creation of affordable studio space or places for artists to do their work.

Isaac asked if the committee wants to move forward with something along this line (a studio space for artists to create temporary art), clarifying that the budget is still \$5K.

Courtney asked the quickest way to find empty space right now. Isaac responded the vacant space below the City-owned Arcade is the best option. Debbie said she would hate to see the entire amount go towards rent. Isaac said he would be happy to explore the options for either reduced or free rent if that's what the committee wants to do.

Isaac asked Mike about the possibility of using the City Hall site as an installation location. Mike said he would like to see some activity on the site but it would need to be on the eastern half block. He also stated that insurance liability would need to be worked out between the City and contractor.

There was general agreement that the Arcade would be a good location for artists to create work that could possibly be installed at the new City Hall site or at several small sites around town. Isaac will take the proposal to the appropriate city staff.