

Maryland Public Art Commission Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2021

By Conference Call 9:00-10:30 AM

Attendees:

Ken Skrzysz, Liesel Fenner, Rand Griffin, Elizabeth Hughes, Molline Jackson, Leslie Kahn, Judy Kwon, Kathy O'Dell, Rodney Tissue, Rosa Chang

The meeting was held virtually through Google Meetings and phone. Members introduced themselves as they joined.

Chair, Rand Griffin called the meeting to order at 9:02.

The March 4, 2020, meeting minutes were approved.

MSAC Updates:

Executive Director Ken Skrzysz gave updates on returning to the office. As of July 1, the start of fiscal year 2022, staff will be returning every other Wednesday for staff and team meetings. Sometime in the coming year the staff will move out of the W. Ostend St. office and move into the Baltimore World Trade Center with the Dept. of Commerce. Staff will be provided three choices: a touch down space for those who primarily telework, a shared office space, or a dedicated office. Not all of the details are in place yet. Kathy asked if the art exhibitions will continue and Ken noted that Rosa Chang is now organizing virtual exhibitions.

The Independent Artist Network (IAN) has been developed as a result of the impact of the pandemic. Public Art Across Maryland, Creativity Grant, Touring, and Art in Education programs will be part of the IAN. The program is on pause while the Council reviews the program and we plan to undergo a proposed public editing process.

FY20-22 Budget Comparison: for FY22 we will be receiving an additional \$800,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts American Rescue Plan funds. The Public Art Across Maryland Grant program will grow from \$200,000 in FY21, to \$625,000 in FY22. Liesel noted that in FY21 the PAAM New Artworks program had \$375,000 in requests and only had \$100,000 available to award. This coming fiscal year, we will be able to award more grant applications that in turn, build artist portfolios increasing their experience to successfully compete for capital project public art commissions. Kathy noted that the increase in funds and grant awards puts an extra burden on overworked staff that are working beyond capacity and proposed that these funds leverage additional staffing. Ken encouraged the Commission to petition the Secretary.

MPAC Commissioner Vacancy

Candidate Jerome C. Gray, architect representing Baltimore City was approved by the Commission. Mr. Gray will be forwarded for approval by the Secretary then forwarded to the Governor's Office of Appointments. Kathy O'Dell was approved by the Commission for term renewal.

Proposed Policy

The Commission reviewed the following policy that would apply to all new project solicitations (Requests for Qualifications) moving forward:

Artists who are currently under contract for a State Building Artwork Commissions project, are not eligible to apply for another project through the MSAC Artwork Commissions program. An Artist may apply again, either as an individual or a part of a team, after a two year period following the transfer of artwork title project completion date.

The Commission requested the policy be revised in the first sentence to address artist teams as well.

MD 9-11 Ceremony

Kathy gave an overview of the Ceremony program that will commemorate the 20th anniversary of the events and the 10th anniversary of the Memorial dedication. Liesel noted in the program the proposed reading of the Land Acknowledgement will be delivered by the highest ranking official attending. Commissioners complemented the Committee members on the revised format with less focus on the military. Rand noted that everyone is invited and welcome to attend.

Project Updates:

Liesel presented updates as Ryan was at a critical site visit meeting at UMES project with selected artist, Ebon Heath.

The contracts for UMES finalist artists, Ebon Heath and Ayokunle Odeleye, and Coppin State finalist Nnamdi Okonkwo were successfully approved at the May 5, Board of Public Works meeting. MSAC staff met with the Comptroller's staff in advance to discuss the procurement/selection process. Rand noted that he hopes that this pre-meeting will not be necessary as the public art funds are allocated by legislation. Elizabeth noted that MHT projects also go before BPW and it is an opportunity to build support for the programs. The projects get in front of the leaders who will ensure the funding continues.

The Catonsville Courthouse and Salisbury Animal Health Lab artist selection processes are in process. Additional University System projects at Bowie, Frostburg, Towson, and St. Mary's are in the pipeline with initial planning meetings and RFQ's in draft development.

Liesel noted the public art staff are also revising the New Artworks and Conservation Grant guidelines and applications for FY22 that will launch July 1.

Public Art Equity & Justice Update

At Montgomery County Planning, Molly is working with Briggs-Chaney Planning Committee. She is also working to get increased funding for public art overall, including inventory mapping software. They are exploring a Cultural Plan as a result of the Thriving Montgomery plan.

Kathy gave an update on the Covid-19 Memorial project at Lake Roland. The Baltimore County Arts Guild is helping the County administer the project. She cited that community meetings will be facilitated by artist Ada Pinkston. Kathy noted that she is reading 'Outdoor Sculpture in Baltimore' and queried if there

are other publications, articles or research that we could track the history of public art in MD and create a research folder for the Commission.

Elizabeth provided an update that MHT is in the discovery phase of litigation by the Sons of Confederate Veterans to reinstate the Confederate monuments in their previous locations in Baltimore City or to a location that is publicly accessible. They are primarily working with the City of Baltimore who are taking the lead on the public access issue. Molly noted we should ensure that there is access to the full story on the who and why of commemorative monuments to understand how history may or may not be repeated.

Rodney updated the Commission that the second phase of the Hagerstown Cultural Trail is underway and several calls for public art have been released. There is current planning for a Minor League Stadium that will be built downtown next to the Trail that will offer visibility for the public art.

The meeting adjourned at 10:33.

The next meeting is September 16, 2021. *The meeting was subsequently rescheduled to September 23, 2021.*