

Maryland Public Art Commission Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2021

By Conference Call 9:00-10:30 AM

Attendees:

Tom Riford, Steven Skerritt-Davis, Liesel Fenner, Ryan Patterson, Rosa Chang, Elaine Bachmann, Rand Griffin, Elizabeth Hughes, Leslie Kahn, Judy Kwon, Catherine Leggett, Kathy O'Dell.

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 9:05.

The June 17, 2021, meeting minutes were approved.

MSAC Updates:

Interim Executive Director Steven Skerritt-Davis gave updates regarding the resignation of Ken Skrzysz in June 2021. The departure was a surprise for all staff. Elizabeth felt there was a lack of public communication that left questions. Steven noted that Secretary Schulz wrote a letter announcing Ken's departure that was included in the July newsletter.

Steven segued to discussing staff capacity in planning and organizing the 9-11 event while managing the current project load. See Project Staging Chart that was presented (attached). The amount of staff time managing each project is also compounded by the time required overseeing the public art New Artworks and Conservation grants program. The grants program has required increased staff time due to an uptick in applications with our increased funding from the NEA. Steven noted that he is working with the public art staff and Tom and we will pull in others to find a solution. Rand agreed, especially given that MPAC revised the legislation to include joint venture projects that will increase our work load. Elaine offered to assist in making the case for additional staff pins (permanent positions) as she has experience in this process with her agency.

MPAC Commissioner Update

Liesel gave an update on MPAC Commissioners. Candidate Jerome C. Gray is awaiting approval from the Commerce Secretary, and the Governor's Office of Appointments. The Commission also approved the second-term renewal for Commissioner Leslie Kahn.

Artwork Commissions Revised Policy

The Commission reviewed the revised wording and approved the policy below that will be included in all Request for Qualification (RFQ) solicitations:

Artists who are currently under contract for a State Building Artwork Commission as an individual or as part of a team are not eligible to apply for another project through the MSAC Artwork Commissions program. An artist may apply again as an individual or as part of a team two years following the project completion date.

Project Updates:

Ryan referred to the project staging list (attached).

We have over \$2M active projects and over \$1m upcoming. Because the selected artists are contracted with the state agency constructing a new capital building these projects and total dollar amounts do not show up in the MSAC budget and therefore staff project management is not reflected in MSAC's oversight of this state mandated program.

Ryan showed the UMES School of Pharmacy & Health Professions proposals by selected artist Ebon Heath for an interior lobby suspended artwork, as well as artist Ayokunle Odeleye for an exterior sculpture. For Coppin State University, selected artist Nnamdi Okonkwo will create an exterior sculpture for the new College of Business building on North Avenue.

The Catonsville Courthouse and Salisbury Animal Health Lab artist selection processes are in process. Upcoming projects are slated for St. Mary's College of Maryland, Frostburg State and Bowie State. The RFQ's are in development and Artist Selection Committees are informing project themes and goals. Liesel noted that both projects have semi-finalists that were previously awarded a PAAM New Artworks grant. These rising artists serve as models for ongoing fulfillment of our program goals advancing Maryland artists. Liesel also appreciated Ryan for his individualized technical assistance to the semi-finalist artists and upholding public art best practices, i.e. submitting professional artwork proposal documents. The artists gain the professional development to successfully compete for other projects.

In referencing the project list, Rand noted that in relation to capacity, all projects require extensive time especially when it involves traveling to the project site, which can require a whole day.

Public Art Equity & Justice Update

Catherine participated in the launch of Maryland Underground Railroad Month (September) at the Josiah Henson Museum in Montgomery County. The event highlighted the State's prominence in the Underground Railroad. She noted that Molline Jackson was also involved.

The meeting adjourned at 10:27 am.

The next meeting is December 9, 2021.