

MINUTES
CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION
February 17, 2021

The Cultural Arts Commission meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. virtually via GoToMeeting (485020157).

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kristien Foss, Chair
Sandy Schlehr, Vice Chair
Jeanne Close
Carole Milan
Pat Fielder
Natalie Weeks
Jessica Valis
Nicki Jergensen

IN ATTENDANCE: Angela Robertson, Economic Development Coordinator
Trish Heidenreich, Director of Economic Development
Donna Kahoe, Town Commissioner
Catherine Butrim, Recording Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

Approval of Minutes – January 20, 2021

Ms. Close moved and Ms. Fielder seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021 meeting.

The motion carried.

FY21 Budget Review

Ms. Robertson stated that \$0.00 is projected to remain in the Public Art account with the cost of the sponsorship for the Alfred B. Hilton mural project. The Marketing account balance is \$3,607.50 with the \$600.00 expenditure for Ballet Chesapeake’s Armory rental fee and a \$10.00 expenditure for Ms. Weeks to attend Maryland Arts Day virtually. Ms. Robertson reported that a bill was recently received and paid for the barn quilt at The Mill of Bel Air in the amount of \$210.00.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Alfred Hilton Mural Project Update

Ms. Foss reported that she offered an extra credit assignment to her students for watching and reporting about a movie about Alfred B. Hilton narrated by Barry Glassman. She advised that she will send the link to the movie to the members.

Ms. Robertson reported that Jack Pabis signed the contract to complete the mural, and the American Legion did receive and continues to receive donations for the mural from their members.

Ms. Robertson reported that Mr. Pabis' fee for the mural is \$12,000.00, and the previous figure of \$8,000.00 was sent to her in error.

Ms. Robertson reported that Mr. Pabis will begin the mural in the spring as the weather allows.

Ms. Fielder inquired if the American Legion was involved with the Alfred B. Hilton Park, which received quite a bit of press coverage. She also inquired if Harford County was aware that the Town of Bel Air and the Legion were working on the mural project. Ms. Robertson advised that the American Legion was involved with the park and that the County is aware of the project planned for Bond Street.

Ms. Fielder inquired about any plans for promoting the mural project. Ms. Robertson advised that she will reach out to their commander and suggest that the Legion piggyback on the promotion of the Alfred B. Hilton Park. She advised that the Legion does plan to unveil the mural on Flag Day, but she will suggest the Legion promote the mural in advance of the unveiling.

Ms. Fielder noted that the celebration of Juneteenth marks the day when federal troops arrived in Texas to ensure enslaved people were freed after the Emancipation Proclamation. She inquired if a press release for the mural could be coordinated with that date. Ms. Robertson advised that the Legion plans to unveil the mural on Flag Day because Alfred Hilton was carrying the American Flag when he was killed and therefore Flag Day is significant to the subject matter of the mural.

Maintenance on Queen Anne's Lace Sculpture

Ms. Robertson advised that Matt Harris, the artist who created the Queen Anne's Lace sculpture, has a new email address, which is why he had not seen her previous communications about maintaining the sculpture.

Ms. Robertson advised that Mr. Harris stated that warm weather would be best for on-site finishing. Mr. Harris will clean the rusted portions and apply finishing as needed. He will refinish the entire circular plate at the top of the base and clean and refinish any other affected areas of the flower portion. Mr. Harris will clean the sculpture by power brushing the affected

areas, and cold galvanizing will be brushed on. Mr. Harris reported that there will be no cost at this time as the finish should have lasted much longer.

Ms. Robertson advised that the sculpture was purchased as a cash and carry item, and no contract was ever made with Mr. Harris.

Ms. Milan suggested that the Town create a maintenance contract with Mr. Harris and address if Mr. Harris will maintain the sculpture at his cost and how often the sculpture will need to be maintained.

Harford's Heart Advertisement

Ms. Robertson inquired if the members would like to purchase an advertisement and/or article in *Harford's Heart* about CAC's mission and work since there are funds available in the Marketing account. She advised that a full-page ad would cost 1,325.00 and a half-page ad would cost \$855.00.

Ms. Robertson advised that the members will need to think about projects on which to expend the remaining funds in the budget. She advised that the Downtown Alliance will be requesting funding from CAC in March for a musician to play at the Belle Aire Market in May and June.

Ms. Fielder inquired if articles are free in *Harford's Heart*. Ms. Robertson advised article space must be purchased in *Harford's Heart*.

Ms. Weeks advised that an article including an overview of the A&E District featuring all the participating partners, including CAC, would be a broader and more interesting article than an article only about CAC's mission.

Ms. Fielder advised that CAC could still place an ad in *Harford's Heart* to emphasize the work and mission of CAC.

NEW BUSINESS:

A&E District Strategic Plan Discussion

Ms. Robertson reported that she is working on a Strategic Plan for the Arts & Entertainment District with a consultant. She advised that the first draft of the plan will be created by the first week of March. Ms. Robertson advised that she sent the discussion questions to the members in advance via email.

Ms. Robertson inquired *what the members feel the biggest challenges are for CAC.*

- Ms. Robertson advised that Brigitte Grubb replied via email that the budget is limited with much work to do.
- Ms. Valis replied that lack of awareness in the community is a big challenge.
- Ms. Foss replied that people do not know about the Armory rental sponsorship and that she needs to know more about how the A&E District works and what its purposes and mission are.
- Ms. Fielder replied that people in Bel Air need to know the importance of art to the community.
- Ms. Milan replied that, in CAC's mission statement, the purpose of CAC is to serve as an advisory board to the Town commissioners and its efforts pertain to the celebration of cultural arts and promotions in the Town of Bel Air. She advised that she was having a difficult time expanding on that and determining how that statement makes CAC fit within the A&E District.
- Ms. Close replied that she would like to know what the mission of the A&E District is and how it meshes with CAC's mission.

Ms. Robertson inquired *what success looks like for CAC*.

- Ms. Fielder replied that this ties back with her previous statement that people in Bel Air should understand why the arts are important.
- Ms. Schlehr replied that CAC should know more about the mission of other groups and work more in collaboration with those groups.
- Ms. Fielder replied that there should be synergy among the various groups in the County to bring the arts to the public.

Ms. Robertson inquired *if there is anything the A&E District can do to overcome the challenges facing CAC*.

- Ms. Fielder replied that there should be awareness about why the different arts bodies exist.
- Ms. Close replied that there should be an awareness that CAC is a separate body from the Harford County Cultural Arts Board.
- Ms. Milan replied that CAC needs assistance from the A&E District with writing grants and finding resources for grant opportunities.

- Ms. Heidenreich advised that the A&E District is a designated area of land, not an independent organization. The Advisory Board of the A&E District will meet four (4) times per year and is not a body that creates activities. The management of the District is overseen by the Town's Economic Development Department. Ms. Heidenreich advised that the Town does have a new grants coordinator, who will be able to assist with grant writing and opportunities.

Ms. Robertson inquired about the *strengths of the A&E District*.

- Ms. Fielder replied that the strength of the A&E District is that it exists.
- Ms. Foss replied that there are tax incentives available to artists in the A&E District and businesses do showcase the work of local artists.

Ms. Robertson inquired about *areas of improvement*.

- Ms. Fielder replied that CAC as an entity needs to be sold to the Downtown Alliance and Winter Wonderland because it seems those groups do not understand what CAC's mission is and they need to understand why CAC is important.
- Ms. Close replied that there should be more dialog between CAC and local arts groups.

Ms. Robertson inquired *what information CAC would like to have about the A&E District*.

- Ms. Close replied that there should be printed information seasonally regarding the events and initiatives of all the arts groups in the local area.
- Ms. Robertson advised that the Town creates a printed calendar of events and last year a single-page rack card of events was produced. She advised that the Town will continue to provide that information.
- Ms. Fielder replied that a member of the Downtown Alliance and HCCAB should be invited to CAC meetings to encourage ongoing communication and create reciprocity among these organizations.

Ms. Robertson inquired *how CAC would like to receive information and how they would like citizens to receive information*.

- Ms. Close replied that she would like to see the printed information in the local businesses and at Town Hall.
- Ms. Fielder replied that the information could be disseminated through Constant Contact.

- Ms. Valis replied that she receives most information from social media and that she immediately deletes any newsletters she receives through email because she receives too much information via email already.
- Ms. Jergensen replied that the information could be printed and attached in some way to the Free Little Library, and printed material could be shared with neighborhood and community organizations.
- Ms. Valis advised that attaching pamphlets to the Free Little Library might encourage many others to attach information and overwhelm the Free Little Library with pamphlets and business cards.

Maryland Arts Day Recap

Ms. Robertson stated Maryland Arts Day was held virtually on February 11, and she offered a slide show created by Jessica Cleaver of HCCAB that was shared on Maryland Arts Day.

The delegation at Maryland arts day requested the support of the General Assembly in funding the Maryland State Arts Council budget at its fully mandated level of \$27.3 million and to reject a proposed change to the funding formula that determines the percentage of funding received by the Maryland State Arts Council. This change to the funding formula would reduce the amount received by the Maryland State Arts Council and create a negative effect compounded over the years. The delegation is in support of two (2) bills: the first bill is to expand the definition for the A&E Districts and the other for the Arts Capital Grants Program.

Ms. Robertson reported that there were 24 members of the Harford County delegation and over 500 participants in total from all over Maryland.

OTHER:

A&E District Update

Ms. Robertson stated that she is continuing to work on the redesignation of the A&E District and the Strategic Plan. She advised that Ms. Weeks was in attendance for the first meeting of the A&E Advisory Board last Friday.

Ms. Robertson reported that funding to the A&E District from the Maryland State Arts Council is providing for performers at three (3) family events at the Armory on February 22, March 6 and March 20.

Ms. Robertson stated that the Downtown Alliance's Chocolate, Brew and Wine Tour will take place March 6-13. Tickets are \$55/each.

Ms. Robertson stated that the Downtown Alliance's Sip and Shop will be held on February 18.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:21 p.m.