

**MINUTES
CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION
May 19, 2021**

The Cultural Arts Commission meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Rotunda, 39 N. Hickory Avenue, Bel Air, MD

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kristien Foss, Chair
Sandy Schlehr, Vice Chair
Carole Milan
Jeanne Close
Natalie Weeks
Brigitte Grubb
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 – April 21, 2021

Ms. Milan moved and Ms. Schlehr seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2021 meeting.

The motion carried.

FY21 Budget Review

Ms. Robertson reported that the balance in the public art account is \$0.00, and the balance in the marketing account is \$957.50, which should be spent before June 30, 2021.

Ms. Robertson reported that CAC was flat funded for FY22 in the total amount of \$8,350.00.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Plein Air Festival

Ms. Robertson reported that she had a meeting with Bob Willenbrink, the new executive director of the Maryland Center for the Arts. She confirmed that the Quick Draw event will be held in Havre de Grace this year. Ms. Robertson also advised that participants may paint in Harford County between July 1-September 6 and the Festival will be held September 17-18 with an exhibit at the Bel Air Armory.

Ms. Robertson reported that the Plein Air Festival will include a Nocturne event on the evening of September 16 in Bel Air. The event will include a dinner for the artists, and the artists will paint between 7:00-9:00 p.m. There will be a separate panel to display these paintings at the Armory during the Plein Air exhibit on September 17-18. The first prize for this event will be \$250.00. Ms. Robertson inquired if CAC would like to sponsor the first prize for this event.

Ms. Milan moved and Ms. Weeks seconded the motion to sponsor the \$250.00 first prize for the Nocturne event to be held on September 16 during the 2021 Plein Air Festival.

The motion carried.

Chalk Art Event – Nicki Jergensen

Ms. Jergensen reported that she spoke with Michael Kirby, who advised that CAC should first determine their goal in holding a chalk art event in Bel Air. Is the goal to have a large number of visitors in Bel Air, to have students work with Mr. Kirby or to raise funds?

Ms. Jergensen reported that Mr. Kirby does not believe a one-day event or an event with Mr. Kirby on his own will generate a large crowd. The event created by Mr. Kirby in Baltimore is a multi-day event with artists from all over the world, and it attracts 20,000-30,000 visitors to area restaurants and establishments.

Ms. Jergensen reported that a 10' x 10' graphic logo artwork would cost \$2,000.00 and take eight (8) hours to complete. A photo realistic artwork would take three (3) days to complete and cost an additional \$1,000.00 per day. Mr. Kirby also can create an artwork in paint or paint on canvas to blend into the street. The artwork on canvas can be rolled up and reused elsewhere.

Ms. Jergensen reported that Mr. Kirby is the director of the Madonnari Arts Festival, and his nonprofit could help raise funds.

Ms. Jergensen reported that Mr. Kirby feels it is best to have students involved in the event with local artists, residents and artists from around the world. He advised that a fall event would work best. Mr. Kirby also offers a free workshop to students to create their own work during the event.

Ms. Jergensen advised that Bel Air High School art students may or may not be able to participate as rules would need to be followed and permissions obtained. She advised that the event could be open to other students in Bel Air and to children throughout the community.

Ms. Foss suggested that CAC partner with the Bel Air Downtown Alliance for this event, and Ms. Weeks advised that the A&E District should be involved as well.

Ms. Weeks advised that CAC's goal for the chalk art event would be to offer the chance for an artist to demonstrate his artwork with the opportunity for art students to participate.

Ms. Kahoe suggested that a painted canvas by Mr. Kirby could be displayed at the back of the bandshell in Shamrock Park.

The members present discussed holding the chalk art event on Lee Street or Burns Alley during the BBQ Bash or the Festival for the Arts.

Ms. Robertson advised that CAC would be spending \$3,000.00 for a two-day event which would not include any marketing expenses. She advised that there may be an opportunity for a public art grant for the event from the Maryland State Arts Council.

Ms. Grubb inquired how the event could be structured as a fundraiser. Ms. Jergensen advised that she believes the Little Italy restaurants paid for the event in Baltimore through sponsorships.

Ms. Heidenreich advised that this would be a good project to partner with Visit Harford to obtain funding.

Ms. Milan inquired if CAC would be allowed to video Mr. Kirby as he worked in Bel Air. Ms. Jergensen advised that she will inquire about this with Mr. Kirby.

Ms. Robertson advised that the turnaround time is too soon to hold this event in fall 2021.

Ms. Milan advised that she feels CAC needs to do more homework before committing to a chalk art event in fall 2022.

American Legion Mural Update

Ms. Robertson reported that the American Legion mural has been delayed due to the relocation of the A/C compressor and BGE electrical and Verizon telephone lines. Jack Pabis has received his first installment payment and will begin the mural when these relocations are complete.

Queen Anne's Lace Maintenance Update

Ms. Robertson reported that Matt Harris will be in Bel Air to complete maintenance on the Queen Anne's Lace sculpture Friday, May 21.

NEW BUSINESS:

A&E Strategic Plan Presentation

Ms. Robertson offered a presentation of the A&E Strategic Plan with a two-page summary. The full plan is available by request from Mrs. Robertson.

Ms. Robertson reported that the A&E Strategic Plan runs from July 2021-June 2026 and was completed in conjunction with the redesignation application for the A&E District. The Strategic Plan establishes priorities for the five-year period and guides engagement with key stakeholders.

Ms. Robertson reported that the A&E Strategic Plan **focuses** on the following:

- Creating and supporting more arts and entertainment programming within the A&E District, including public art installations.
- Improving communication and collaboration with key stakeholders to further build their understanding and development of, and engagement in, A&E District offerings.
- Making the Bel Air A&E District a vibrant and unique community for residents, visitors, businesses and creators.

Ms. Robertson reported that the A&E Strategic Plan was created with various tools including the following:

- Interviews with stakeholders
- Looking at past activities
- Looking at the budget which has included funding from the Maryland State Arts Council and the Town's Economic Development budget.
- SWOT analysis with stakeholders
- Other A&E District Strategic Plans

Ms. Robertson reported that **key stakeholders** in the A&E District include the following:

- Businesses
- Organizations and nonprofits, including CAC
- Artists and creators
- Community and visitors

Ms. Robertson presented the following **definitions** in the A&E Strategic Plan:

- Mission – defines the A&E Districts's purpose.
- Vision – defines where the A&E District aspires to be when it achieves its mission.
- Strategy – approach taken to achieve the A&E District's goals.
- Goals – broad-based efforts made over the five-year plan.

- Objectives – measurable steps to achieve as the A&E District works through the five-year plan.

The **mission of the A&E District** is to promote and enhance arts and entertainment offerings and opportunities to create a unique and vibrant community where people and businesses want to live, work and play.

The **vision of the A&E District** is a community where arts and entertainment offerings are available and accessible to community members, visitors, businesses and organizations and are central to the economic vitality of the District.

Ms. Robertson reported the following **strategies** of the A&E District:

- Deepen relationships with current key stakeholders and identify and engage with new key stakeholders to increase collaboration in developing and implementing events, exhibits and programs.
- Improve and expand communications, promotions and marketing efforts to reach a wider, more diverse audience and improve understanding of the existence, purpose and benefits of the A&E District.
- Create more opportunities for collaboration between stakeholders to enable the creation and expansion of arts and entertainment events and programs.
- Provide support for and publicity for existing and new arts and entertainment offerings, including events, programs and public art installations in order to draw a wider, more diverse audience to the A&E District.

Ms. Robertson reported the following **goals** of the A&E District:

- Residents of, businesses within and visitors to the A&E District have greater awareness of events, exhibits, programs and incentives within the A&E District and know where to look to get this information.
- A greater number of arts and entertainment events, programs, performances and exhibits are provided within the A&E District, which appeal to and draw increased engagement from community members, visitors, creators, organizations and businesses in the A&E District.
- Additional public art installations are provided within the A&E District, and the community has more opportunity and incentive to engage in public art.

Ms. Robertson reported the following **next steps**:

- More presentations on the A&E District Strategic Plan to key stakeholders.
- The A&E District Advisory Board will utilize the goals to create an activity plan for FY22.

Ms. Close inquired if there is a master email list for all the various arts groups and if text messages could be sent from the Town to notify residents about arts events. Ms. Robertson advised that the A&E District Advisory Board will be discussing the creation of a master email list. Ms. Heidenreich advised that residents can sign up for text notifications from the Town, but she does not know if text notifications can be set up solely for arts events.

OTHER:

Ms. Weeks inquired if there will be a Film Festival this fall. Ms. Heidenreich advised that there will not be a Film Festival in 2021, but the Town is talking to the Downtown Alliance about screening films in each quarter.

Ms. Foss advised that she attended the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders Meeting for Historical Preservation and Community Facilities. She advised that the top recommendation the group would make to the Town Commissioners is to use the arts as a core community unifier.

Ms. Close advised that improvements to the grounds around Bynum Run pond would be a great asset to the community. Ms. Heidenreich advised that she agrees; however, this area is Harford County property.

Ms. Foss reported that Harford Artists is seeking a member to build a bike rack similar to the rack Ms. Robertson shared at last month's meeting, and they will seek an artist to paint the bike rack. Harford Artists would like to know if CAC will sponsor this bike rack.

Ms. Foss inquired if CAC would like to see the wall printer artwork on the back of Armory Marketplace. Ms. Weeks advised that CAC should see samples of the wall printer artwork.

Ms. Foss reported that students from Future Link School, located in the Armory, are working on a geocaching project and would like to highlight the Free Little Library by placing a container inside it with trinkets for geocachers to swap. Ms. Weeks advised that CAC needs to know the timeframe for this project.

Ms. Foss reported that the bench at Vagabond was purchased on Amazon. Ben will be painting the bench in a few months after the wood has cured.

Ms. Foss reported that the GIS for the public art walk is well underway.

Ms. Foss reported that banners promoting the A&E District are in the windows of 23 South Main and 4 N. Main Street.

Ms. Foss reported that Ms. Robertson anticipates receiving two (2) new requests for CAC to sponsor murals in FY22.

Ms. Foss reported that the June CAC meeting will take place at the home of Pat Fielder, Ms. Schlehr or at her home.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m.