

Town Arts Committee
June 14, 2016
Hanna Cosman Room, Municipal Center
Minutes prepared by Angel Mackinnon

Meeting convened at 4:05 pm

Members Present: Adam Salviani (chair), Doug Cox (vice-chair), Angel Mackinnon (scribe), Dale Joy, Kate Anderson

Public Present: Tad Montgomery (Highway Art proposal), Karen Cribari (Youth Services)

Salviani makes a motion to approve the minutes from April's meeting
(motion passes 5-0-0)

Public Participation: None, since each member of the public who are present already have agenda items dedicated to them

Hanna Cosman Art Update:

Joy has been active in making contacts with local artists and arts organization to hang artwork in the Hanna Cosman room. Joy is booking the next year of exhibits (monthly rotations) within the next 2 months.

Salviani makes a motion to approve art submissions for exhibit, from July 15-Aug 15.
Three artists will be represented, including DeeDee Jones.
(motion passes 5-0-0)

Salviani makes a motion to approve Dawn Chapman's artwork for exhibit, from June 15-July 15.
(motion passes 4-0-1)

Highway Art Project Update:

Salviani and Montgomery met with State Representative, Mollie Burke, to discuss the project. A new version of the proposal has been sent out with a revised time-line. The new proposal suggests two committees be formed.

-One committee would deal with logistics, funding, vetting projects, investigating locations, grant-writing, materials, liability, publicity, developing time-line, maintain relationships with regulatory organizations, etc.

-The second committee would be an evaluation committee, maintaining kick-starter campaigns for each project, which would help to inform who wins the installation (in conjunction with how many votes each project receives from the town's people.)

-Montgomery intends to have an entry fee for each proposal, where the sum will be put toward creating a book which includes each submission, so that everyone involved can be honored.

-Some people in the town have expressed concerns with safety and billboard law.

-Montgomery checked with the State Trooper in the Williston barracks about accidents on Route 89 where the Whale Tails are, and no accidents which explicitly named the Whale Tales as a distraction could be found.

-Montgomery has Mollie Burke's support as long as the installation does not dispute the highway billboard statutes. (Please see e-mail correspondence at bottom of minutes.)

After a committee round-robin, many TAC members liked the idea, but share concerns about the complexity of the proposal, and the moving parts that could go wrong, namely funding, time, and volunteers.

Cox makes a motion that TAC encourages the Town to support the idea by appointing a committee to develop the next stage of the project and to refine the process.

(motion approved 5-0-0)

Harmony Lot Mural Restoration:

Karen Cribari from Youth Services is working with Scot Borofsky to restore the Harmony Lot book mural. They hoped to start this project last year, but construction on the upper wall curtailed the operation.

-Town will supply cement, paint, and parking spaces.

-Youth services applied for grants, and has received \$300 from one, \$500 from another, and the DBA is willing to contribute \$1,000 as well.

-The concept is similar to before, where individual artists will be able to adopt a book and paint it in their own style. Cribari wants it to be an intergenerational project, for all ages and levels.

-Cribari will resurface the call to artists that was put out last year. There was also a press release in the Reformer last year, and TAC can also work to get the word out to local artists who may want to adopt a book.

-People can get in touch with Youth Services at Info@youthservicesinc.org.

Cox makes a motion that TAC endorses this plan of restoration of the mural on town property.

(motion approved 5-0-0)

Transportation Center Art Mural:

A Woodstock, VT artist would like to donate her existing mural to Brattleboro to be exhibited permanently on the wall of the Transport Center on Flat Street. There is already a mural on the wall.

-Concern was raised about government choosing to install one person's art over another's unless it is temporary.

The topic was tabled until next month's meeting.

Some interest was expressed in extending the meeting period of future TAC meetings, as 1 1/2 hours does not seem sufficient. Salviani will look into this possibility.

Anderson's tenure with TAC has come to an end, and she bid us all farewell and shared her conclusions and findings based on her many years serving on the Town Arts Committee, speaking to the relationship between government and the arts.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm

Addendum:

Correspondence e-mail between Tad Montgomery and Rep. Mollie Burke, as well as Rep. Mollie Burke and John LeBarge of VTrans, in regard to Highway Art Project.

“Dear Tad, Here is the email from John LaBarge. However he references John Kessler as more experienced in this matter.

I will hope to hear back from John and will let you know when I do.

It sounds like things completely depend on the particular project, and its intent.

I am happy to lend my support to your plan as long as it doesn't challenge the billboard law,.

So let's keep looking for some answers. It may be that you will have to get approval for each piece, or perhaps they could issue some specific guidelines.

Here is a link to the sign law statute:

10 V.S.A. chapter 21: <http://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/fullchapter/10/021>

I believe this would need to be interpreted in the context of a particular project, and with the assistance of an expert in sign law.

It's very complicated.

After I hear back from John then perhaps you should work through Matt Mann, as recommended.

Best, Mollie”

“Hi Rep. Burke,

Not knowing what the art is it's hard to answer. If the art contains no words and is similar to the whale tails on I-89 then I believe it would be fine. The answer really lies with the definition of advertising. As an example, if McDonald's were to erect just the golden arches visible from the interstate would that be considered advertising even though no words are involved? Or Dunkin Doughnuts put up the double “D” symbol or Shell gas the yellow shell symbol does that fall under advertising etc.

If the art were to depict some symbol of a national brand than it may violate the billboard law.

I have copied John Kessler the chair of the Travel Recreation Council on this email. I think John may have some better insight or other comments for you. Let me know if you have further questions.

-John LaBarge”