



Evanston Arts Council Meeting

Tuesday, July 9, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Room 2402

Members Present: B. Adler, T. Sachs, J. Deeb, J. Cohen, G. Riseborough, J. Ahmad, I. Johnson, A. Williams

Members Absent: S. Davis Friedman, L. Corrin, H. Washinushi, W. Jones

Staff Present: P. Martínez, S. Levine

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Declaration of a Quorum

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes from June 11, 2019

Minutes unanimously approved as amended.

4. Consideration

A. Community Support Fund Requests

1. Art Encounter

Lea Pinsky introduced the project led by Art Encounter. She requested \$1,000 from the community support fund. Most of the project's funding is coming from the Evanston Community Foundation, from who she requested \$20,000 and received \$15,000. The project is at the Family Focus building. Organizations housed in the building approached Art Encounter to create a project that brings all youth together. Juan Carlos Perez will be the teaching artist for the project. Blick Art Materials has also donated materials for the project.

Ms. Adler asked to elaborate a little more on the project. Ms. Pinsky said the artist will be present every day after school from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. to work with the students, 3rd to 8th grade students. There will be two groups throughout the week that the artists will be working with. The estimate is that artist will work with approximately 90 students. The artist will provide assignments and exercises to brainstorm ideas and create a design.

40 Ms. Adler asked if the final product will be attached to the fence. Ms. Pinsky said yes, in
41 4'x8' plywood panels. The intention is to be public, but it will be removable.

42
43 Ms. Adler asked about the sale situation of the building, Ms. Pinsky said that because
44 the future of the building is uncertain, the art piece is meant to be semi-permanent.

45
46 Ms. Adler asked what is the life expectancy for the panels. Ms Pinsky replied that it is
47 better than having it straight on the wall.

48
49 Mr. Sachs commented he wanted to support this project, because it involves the
50 community.

51
52 **Ms. Riseborough moved to approve. Ms. Adler seconded the motion. Motion**
53 **carried unanimously.**

54
55 2. FEDEJAL

56
57 Hector García, briefly introduced the project, and explained this is a tour of professional
58 Mexican folk dancers who are traveling throughout the USA and Canada. This is the 8th
59 year in Evanston, one of the original cities. The purpose of the event is to promote
60 Mexican culture. He is requesting \$1,000 to cover the audio technician's salaries. Mr
61 García shared a video with the Arts Council.

62
63 Mr. García mentioned the performance is free, all covered by sponsorships.

64
65 Ms. Riseborough asked about the location of the event; Mr. García said the Levy
66 Center.

67
68 Ms. Johnson asked Mr. García: how can you appeal to a diverse audience besides the
69 mexican community? Mr. García said the audience is diverse; they have a large
70 distribution list. They have multilingual flyers, and partner with local businesses to
71 promote. The City helps promote the event as well.

72
73 Ms. Cohen asked if the ensemble was formed by professional dancers. Mr. García said
74 "yes."

75
76 Ms. Adler asked Mr. García if he was from Evanston. Mr. García explained he has lived
77 in Evanston for over 20, and the sponsoring group is a NFP.

78
79 **Ms. Williams moved to approve. Mr. Deeb seconded the motion. Motion carried**
80 **unanimously.**

81
82 B. Funding Request for Repair of *Conversations: Here and Now*
83 Ms. Martínez introduced the item, and explained that because the funds allocated for
84 the Paul Barker mural were no longer going to be used for the mural, that there is
85 enough money in the budget to pay for the repair (\$9,130).

86
87 Ms. Riseborough asked what is the plan to make sure this is a long-lasting repair. Ms.
88 Johnson, original author of the work explained that the vendor will be removing the chair
89 to make sure it is well attached, but further conversations need to take place with the
90 vendor.

91
92 Ms. Adler mentioned that the Paul Barker mural was supposed to be paid through the
93 parking fund. Ms. Martínez clarified that that originally, the Arts Council had budgeted
94 for to pay for the Paul Barker mural; even though the funds were later designated to
95 come from the parking fund, the money originally allocated was still in control of the Arts
96 Council.

97
98 **Ms. Adler moved to approve funding for the repair of *Conversations: Here and***
99 ***Now*. Mr. Sachs seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0-1. Ms. Johnson**
100 **abstained.**

101
102

103 5. Discussion

104 A. Chicago Sculpture International Proposal

105 Ms. Janet Austin, President of the Chicago Sculpture International (CSI) briefly
106 presented her proposal and stated that the Evanston Arts Council would be able to
107 choose the sculptures. CSI would provide installers, but cranes would have to be
108 provided by the City.

109
110 CSI coordinates the installation dates, and they usually recommend summer dates.

111
112 The proposal states that each piece would have a two-year lease – \$2,000 the first year
113 and \$500 the second year. However, the stipend would be deducted if the City decides
114 to buy the Sculpture.

115
116 Ms. Austin explained that the artists are responsible for the damage to the sculpture, but
117 the City must carry insurance for liability on City property, i.e. if the sculpture fell on
118 someone, the City would be liable.

119
120 Call for artists is managed through CaFÉ, an online platform. Proposals are received
121 from all over the country. If the proposal is accepted, the artists have to become
122 members of CSI. Membership is \$85 per year.

123
124 Ms. Riseborough said she thought this was a fabulous proposal.

125
126 Ms. Adler asked if plaques were included. Ms. Austin indicated that plaques were not
127 included, but her team can look into it. Another CSI member suggested looking into the
128 Otocast app.

129
130 Ms. Adler said the Arts Council will consider CSI's proposal in the next year's budget.

131

132 **B. Robert Crown Community Center Artist Blessing Hancock**
133 Ms. Adler introduced Ms. Blessing Hancock, and stated that Ms. Riseborough,
134 Ms. Johnson, and she had a chance to meet with Ms. Hancock prior to the Arts
135 Council meeting.

136
137 Ms. Hancock introduced herself and mentioned she has a background in
138 sculpture and landscape architecture. She has worked in public art in the last 12
139 years, mainly in the US and some international work. Ms. Hancock specializes in
140 inner activity: electronic touch sensitive, interactive, social engagement. She likes
141 pieces to be popular. She also specializes in community engagement:
142 workshops, teachings, hands-on, etc. Her work is physical, so even if the piece is
143 not intended to be physical, the design is conducive to be physical friendly.

144
145 Ms. Hancock showed her portfolio. She mentioned she uses a lot of text in her
146 work as a way to engage the community. Ms. Hancock works with a lot of young
147 poets, and she can also work with pictorial patterns instead of words.

148
149 Ms. Adler said Ms. Riseborough, Ms. Johnson and she met with Ms. Hancock,
150 and they will work with her throughout the project. The group did not come up
151 with anything conclusive, just words to guide her. They advised that “interactive”
152 was a key component of this project. The original ovals proposed did not spark
153 the imagination like her other work. Ms. Hancock agreed to come up with other
154 concepts, but stated she needed direction.

155
156 Ms. Cohen asked if she was just looking for just words. Ms. Cohen also
157 expressed that she would like to see something that flows.

158
159 Ms. Riseborough asked if the fish bellies were connected pieces. Ms. Hancock
160 replied “no.” The fish bellies are separate pieces about 30 feet apart.

161
162 Ms. Cohen asked what color do the fish bellies look during the day. Ms. Hancock
163 said white.

164
165 Ms. Adler asked if the piece will last 20 years and look as good as the first year.
166 Ms. Hancock said “yes, it will last 20 years, but it will need maintenance; surfaces
167 can generally be sanded for maintenance.

168
169 Mr. Deeb asked what is the scale of the proposal. Ms. Hancock advised
170 15’x12’.

171
172 Mr. Sachs stated he is looking to Blessing for her guidance in terms of scale, and
173 “what gets us the most for the buck.”

174
175 Ms. Williams asked if there a is design concept that would engage the building?
176 Mr. Deeb suggested that the piece doesn’t have to be attached to the building,

177 but just give the impression that it could be attached. Part of the impossible task
178 is to add the detail that the architectural design is missing from the building.

179
180 Ms. Adler said the piece will need a maintenance budget, but that low
181 maintenance is key as part of the design.

182
183 Ms. Adler asked the group if there are any other words they wanted to shares
184 with Ms. Hancock. Ms. Riseborough said “big.” Ms. Hancock asked if she meant
185 big as a single piece. Ms. Adler said “no,” but big impact; something that won’t be
186 dwarfed by the building.

187
188 Ms. Johnson suggested exploring the possibility to do something that is
189 reflective; that is interactive.

190
191 Ms. Cohen said she was less interested in text

192
193 Dr. Ahmad suggested that if there are three (3) pieces the concept of words,
194 sports, and another category could be incorporated into each piece.

195
196 Ms. Williams asked about the site placement. She wondered if maybe the trees
197 and other vegetation could be incorporated as part of the design.

198
199 Mr. Sachs indicated that the word that came to his mind was “inviting”

200
201 Dr. Ahmad suggested projecting the piece on the wall at night.

202
203 Ms. Adler said the concept of a lighthouse is a symbol in Evanston, not
204 suggesting to build a lighthouse, but to keep it in mind

205
206 Ms. Riseborough asked about the placement of the trees. Ms. Levine said she
207 could not remember off the top of her head.

208
209 Ms. Adler said that what they are looking for is “a welcoming beacon of light and
210 that is a bang for the buck.”

211
212 Ms. Cohen said she would like to see something more organic, because the
213 building is very geometrical. Ms. Hancock said her work is very organic, so she
214 feels comfortable with the feedback

215
216 Ms. Hancock agreed to present her concept at the September 10 Arts Council
217 meeting. The group will help assemble a group of students.

218
219 Ms. Williams asked the artists to look at warm colors to contrast the building. Ms.
220 Hancock said she will look into it, but her concern is that warm colors fade fast.

221
222

223 **C. Community Support Fund Guidelines**

224 Ms. Martínez briefly presented the draft guidelines for the Community Support Fund.
225 The group suggested adding that whoever receives funding acknowledges the arts
226 council support.

227
228 Mr. Deeb asked “what happens when you get it?” referring to the funding. He wanted to
229 know what the responsibilities are prior to receiving the funds. He suggested
230 incorporating that in the application itself.

231
232 Mr. Sachs referred to page 3 point 1a., and expressed it was the Arts Council’s
233 members job to define artistic merit. He suggested to get rid of that. Page 49 it states “4
234 consecutive years,” but it says 3 consecutive years in other parts of the document, so
235 keep it consistent.

236
237 Ms. Johnson said defining artistic merit is much more professional. Ms. Adler added that
238 it can mean that work needs to be done in a workmanlike (professional) manner.

239
240 Ms. Johnson said that the question: “has the applicant thoughtfully answered the
241 questions about inclusion and equity” doesn’t go far enough. The solution would be a
242 point system.

243
244 Mr. Sachs suggested rewording to “explain how this furthers the agenda of the City and
245 the Arts Council to promote diversity and inclusion?”

246
247 Ms. Adler said this grant should be easier, and more accessible. Ms. Johnson replied
248 that it is not about being more demanding, but raising awareness.

249
250 Mr. Martínez explained that the draft guidelines and the application were based off the
251 comments from the Arts Council members, and the need for a formal process that levels
252 the playing field for all applicants, and gives the application uniformity to give a fair shot
253 to everyone.

254
255 Mr. Deeb said the proposals that were presented at the meeting were all very solid
256 proposals, but very different.

257
258 Ms. Adler suggested adding what ward they (applicants) are in and what ward they
259 would be serving.

260
261 Ms. Cohen suggested hosting workshops to help applicants go through the application.
262

263 Mr. Sachs said he wanted the proposals to express how each project is important to the
264 Arts Council.

265
266 Ms. Williams said to not “dumb down” the application process. Maybe there is an
267 opportunity to create a tutorial video, or allow a draft submission.
268

269 Mr. Deeb suggested adding successful example online.

270

271 Ms. Cohen indicated that the group should be very clear about what they are looking for
272 as a group.

273

274 The Arts Council members will send Ms. Martínez their top three priorities.

275

276

277 **6. Communications**

278 **A. Chairs Report**

279 **B. Public Art Subcommittee Report**

280

281 Ms. Riseborough reported that the public art inventory is complete. Ms. Riseborough
282 would like to work with Mrs. Cohen to rewrite the text for the interactive map on the City
283 website and is eager to work with the IT staff on it. She added that Chicago Public Art
284 Group is working on the concept for the Noyes Street station project. Lastly, she said
285 she is still working with Robert Smart for a proposal to repair Fire Station #5.

286

287 **C. Working Groups Report**

288

289 Mr. Sachs reported that he has been working with the Evanston Community Foundation
290 (ECF). He has had discussions about working together on equity in the arts. Mr. Sachs
291 and Ms. Williams will meet with Ms. Martínez and Deputy City Manager, Kimberly
292 Richardson, and the ECF.

293

294 Art lunch

295

296 **D. Staff Report**

297

298 Mr. James Deeb is the new member of the Arts Council. He said he was a painter and
299 printmaker. Mr. Deeb has lived in Evanston for 13 years.

300

301 Ms. Martínez reported Ms. Susan Davis Friedman had decided to not renew her term to
302 the Arts Council.

303

304 **7. Announcements**

305

306 Ms. Johnson announced that she is curating a show called "Truth as a Contested
307 Subject."

308

309 **8. Adjournment**

310

311 Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

312