

Public Art Advisory Committee Meeting

September 8, 2020

12:00 p.m.

Zoom

Contact skerr@bentonville.com to request participation via Zoom.



AGENDA

Members

Aaron Kohn
Dylan Turk
Jerris Palmer
Johnetta Dexter
Lauren Haynes
Steven Baker
Tom Hoehn

Ex Officio

Tim Robinson
(City Council)
Kalene Griffith
(Visit Bentonville)

Staff

Shellie Kerr
David Wright
Danielle Semsrott

1. Call Meeting to Order *Tom Hoehn*
2. Minutes from August meeting * *Tom Hoehn*
3. Welcome new member Aaron Kohn *Shellie Kerr*

PROPOSALS

4. None received.

OLD BUSINESS

5. Guide, These, My Hands * *Danielle Hatch
& Tracie Rae Manos*
6. Open Heart Landscape Plans *Danielle Semsrott*

NEW BUSINESS

7. No new business

PROJECT UPDATES

8. Almost Forgotten Osage Prairie *Danielle Semsrott*
9. 28th Street Park *David Wright*

OTHER

10. Consider adding Ex-officio positions *Shellie Kerr*
11. Open Heart Video *Shellie Kerr*
12. Adjournment *Tom Hoehn*

* Attachment

Public Art Advisory Committee Meeting

August 11, 2020

12:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting



MINUTES

Attendance

Voting Members		Ex Officio	Staff
✓ Brittany Braithwaite	✓ Johnetta Dexter	✓ Tim Robinson (city council)	✓ Shelli Kerr
✓ Dylan Turk	✓ Lauren Haynes	Kalene Griffith (VB)	✓ David Wright
✓ Jerris Palmer	✓ Steven Baker		✓ Danielle Semsrott
✓ Tom Hoehn			

Chairperson Tom Hoehn called the meeting to order.

1. Minutes from July 14 meeting. Tom asked for approval of the minutes.

Steven made a motion to approve the July 14, 2020 minutes. Brittany seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passed 7-0.

PROPOSALS

2. None received.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Call for NWA Artists: Follow-up

A Tribute to the Almost Forgotten Osage Prairie.

Danielle Semsrott is serving as the project manager and reported that she and three members from the Parks Department met with the artist at the display site. She shared a map showing the proposed location for placement, where there is a convergence of trails and will integrate well with the existing landscaping. David clarified the exact location. They will be confirming with Dennis Birge that the artwork will not interfere with the runway protection zone. This proposal will go to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board on Sept. 14 and then to City Council on Sept. 22. The goal is for the artists to start fabrication in early October.

Dylan asked how everyone who met at the site felt about the proposal. Danielle indicated that the artist is excited about the location selected.

Tom asked about funding and budgeting. Shelli reported that the artist proposed a budget of \$5,050. David is concerned that the \$500 budgeted for landscaping will not be adequate. The city's horticulturist will be looking into it and will recommend a budget they support. Lauren asked if the committee is responsible for paying for anything other than the artwork. Shelli indicated that the landscaping is part of the installation and was included in the proposed budget. Lauren feels that using these funds for landscaping limits what will be available for other artworks. Moving forward she suggest limiting the funds strictly to artwork and indicating that on any request for proposals. Tom asked David if Parks would typically pay for landscaping around artwork. David said they have in the past, but that this year the funding is not available. But, that there may be some other avenues to explore landscape funding and installation.

Tom asked if the timing to get the proposal approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the City Council fits with park development plans. David said there was no issue with timing.

Tom asked for any other questions. Shelli indicated the motion last month was to explore the proposal further and suggested the committee would need a motion to recommend it for City Council for approval.

Dylan made a motion to recommend Almost Forgotten Osage Prairie to City Council for approval. Johnetta seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed 7-0.

Guide These My Hands.

This proposal was originally designed for the County Courthouse. Shelli reached out to the artists to let them know and asked them if they would be open to a city building. They supported either City Hall, which was their first choice, or the Community Development Building. She shared that the offices currently at City Hall would be moving out by the end of the year. She asked the committee to consider a few items: the artwork would need to be attached to a city building and there are concerns about causing damage to the building; how the fabric will hold up outdoors; and that the poem itself doesn't create controversy since it would be displayed on a public building.

Dylan asked if the committee ever prepares a recommendation statement to send to City Council. Shelli prepares a staff report with every item that goes to council to explain the proposal, including points from the committee discussion, and why the committee supports the proposal.

Jerris asked exactly how the artwork is attached. Shelli read from the proposal that it would be steel cables. Lauren suggested having someone from Public Works recommend the best attachment method for the city structure. Shelli suggests that the Community Development Building might be the best location since it is taller than the other city-owned facilities downtown, which is where the artists prefer the piece be installed.

Tom asked about how the poem will be displayed. Shelli did not discuss those details with the artists, but will follow up. Dylan suggests an on-site meeting with the artists and Public Works staff to go over the proposal. The committee is concerned that the budget may not accommodate the installation cost and adding the poem display.

Tom suggested a motion to look deeper at how the artwork could be displayed at the Community Development building, get approval from Public Works on the attachment method, and determine how the poem will be displayed.

Johnetta made the motion as Tom described. Dylan seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed 7-0.

Tom asked a question about the budget. Shelli indicated \$25,000 in the committee's original budget and that after installation of Universal Inseparability and Open Heart, \$15,000 remains. The budget runs by the fiscal year.

Jerris asked about landscaping at Open Heart. Shelli indicated the issue is lack of irrigation and need for a low-maintenance landscape design. Danielle said the Tree & Landscape Committee has been working with the city horticulturalist who has suggested plants that symbolize love and are low-maintenance. The T & L committee meets next week to review initial plans.

NEW BUSINESS

4. No new business.

PROJECT UPDATES

- 5. Flight.** Shelli reported that the curator has the agreement. Once that's signed, the curator will work with the Parks Department on location and timing of installation.

- 6. Art Feeds.** Shelli reported that the agreement has been signed with anticipated installation this fall. David understand that it will be October. Tom asked if this proposal still needs to go through the Parks Board or City Council. Shelli said that it had already been through all approvals.

OTHER

- 7. Begin discussing 2021 project ideas.** Shelli reported that she received an inquiry from artist Shelby Nichols about installing artwork on the trail tunnels, possibly diverse portraits. She explained to the artist the proposal process, but that her idea is still open-ended. She wants to discuss with the committee and Shelli would like guidance or whether to engage with artists without formal proposals. David says he would benefit from hearing from her...that there are tunnels available and may be opportunities on private buildings along the greenway. He is meeting with a representative from OzArt before they submit a proposal. He's happy to meet with her and show her possible locations.

Tom asked if David knows of specific locations. David suggests that the 28th Street Park, where future Bright Rd. will extend to 28th Street, will be a good location for public art. The park creates a space that opens avenues for people with different cultures and background with a cricket field. He will present the plans at the September meeting.

- 8. Confederate Statue.** Tom asked if the city knows when it will be removed and what will go in its place. Shelli reported that this committee is not involved at this time, but there may be an opportunity in the future. David thinks it will be removed in October because there are some other approvals needed. Short term replacement will be landscaping. Tim indicated that Judge Moehring would be working with Mayor Orman as well as those in the art industry to discuss the long-term plans. Lauren understands that it will not be an immediate plan and that several discussions must first take place.
- 9. Recognize Brittany for service.** Shelli thanked Brittany for her time and contribution to the committee. She's been on the board since November of 2018. Artworks approved during her term are Rainbow Springs, Memorial Park Basketball Court Murals, Sassy relocation, Universal Inseparability and Open Heart. Shelli has a commemorative piece that she will present to Brittany.

Shelli reported that interviews are being conducted to fill the vacancy. Lauren asked about the selection process. Shelli said that they reviewed applications submitted during the last vacancy announcement, which was within the last six months. A selection committee (Shelli, Danielle, Parks representative, and a Citizen's Council representative) will narrow down those that seem to be a good fit, conduct interviews, and make a recommendation to the Mayor. She takes her final recommendation to City Council for final approval.

Lauren made a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 12:51 p.m.

Description of Artwork

Project Overview

“Guide, these, my hands” is a temporary fabric and text-based sculpture. This artwork is a collaboration between sculptor, Danielle Hatch, and poet, Traci Rae Manos—both residents of Benton County. The medium for this work is waterproof fabric with hand-embroidered text and is intended for temporary outdoor display. The recommended display site is the South facing façade of the Benton County Circuit Court, located at 102 NE A St. The recommended display period is one year, with a suggested installation date of October 9, 2020.

The sculpture will consist of 120 yards of waterproof nylon sewn into a continuous ruffle and hand embroidered with the text of the poem, “Foothills Healer” (see full text below). The fabric color will be a deep violet, evoking the flower of the wild burdock plant, known for its medicinal properties. The fabric will be temporarily attached to the base of the building and organically wind its way up and envelope the facade of the structure in a joyful burst of color and movement. The fabric will temporarily attach to the architectural structure using a combination of steel cables suspended from the roof and elastic cords sewn into the fabric.

Project Narrative

“Guide, these, my hands” will build on the art and cultural experience in NWA by softening the edges of our public space and providing a counterpoint to the rigidity of the structures that currently make up our collective unconscious. The piece’s fabric construction, organic shape, and movement make it unique from public artwork currently on display in Bentonville. Because this tactile sculpture is composed of durable but lightweight fabric, it will move in response to wind, weather, and visitor interaction. As visitors draw near to this vibrant sculpture, touch the fabric, read and run their fingers over the hand-embroidered text, the “Guide, these, my hands” sculpture, will—in a sense—guide visitors’ hands to experience one of Bentonville’s public spaces in a newly personal, tactile, and sensorial way.

The proposed artwork reflects Bentonville history in that it celebrates the Ozark Mountains and traditional folk medicine practiced here. In contrast to the hard and cold facts often associated with history, this work tells the emotional history of the strength and resourcefulness of everyday Arkansas women—the mothers, daughters, sisters, grandmothers—who rarely appear in our history books. Many of these women relied on oral histories of native plant remedies passed down over generations to care for the health and well-being of their families and communities, especially in the days before physicians were readily available in the area. The compassion and resilience of these Arkansas women is evoked by the sculpture’s colorful, waterproof fabric that moves and bends in response to the elements but does not break.

The sculpture expresses Bentonville’s growing diversity by creating space for women’s voices. By amplifying and celebrating the voice of one unsung woman, a “healer” of the Ozark foothills, the piece speaks to the strength and compassion of all Arkansas women as they heal and tend to the needs of our diverse NWA community. The work also promotes community harmony by bringing the personal, the nurturing, and the compassionate into the public sphere. For a time,

this temporary installation will become part of a public building—the rigid and immobile, the organic and resilient—connecting and engaging in dialogue.

Foothills Healer

Make me of a quiet mind and steadfast heart.
Wake me before the sap rises in the pulp

and the buds spring forth, that I might sense
the first stem's quiver in my marrow. Then will

I rise early and take to the woods. I will lift mine
eyes to these hills from whence comes my help.

Guide these, my hands, to the sassafras and burdock,
to the blue burvene, dogwood and wild cherry,

so too, to the roots of sarsaparilla and mayapple.
For the physicians here are few and far-between.

The roads, likewise, slow-going. And it falls
on us women-folk to see to it that our neighbors

and loved ones are looked after in times of need—
whether they be young or old, sick or dying,

or with child. We are the night watchmen.
It is we who keep the kerosene lamps.

Traci Rae Manos



***Guide, these, my hands*, Danielle Hatch & Traci Rae Manos, 2020, proposal for temporary installation.**



Detail - *Guide, these, my hands*, Danielle Hatch & Traci Rae Manos, 2020, proposal for temporary installation.

Guide, these, my hands - Budget

Annual lease amount:

Fabrication Materials -

\$1200 Waterproof Nylon Fabric

\$200 Steel cable

\$200 Marine grade elastic cord

\$100 Embroidery thread

\$2000 Artist Fees

Annual Insurance Cost-

\$600

Installation-

\$200 Scissor lift rental

Deinstallation-

\$200 Scissor lift rental

Total

\$4,700