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Salem Public Art Commission 98 Washington Street

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# Public Art Commission

# March 19, 2024

# 6:30pm

Meeting held remotely via zoom

# MEETING MINUTES

**Note:** All proposals, presentations, and/or documentation to be reviewed and discussed at this meeting can be viewed online at the following link: <https://bit.ly/SalemPACProposals>

## Meeting called to order at 6:43 pm.

* **Roll Call PAC:** John Andrews, Hannah Gathman, Gwen Rosemond, Becky Fisher, & James Bostick. Absent: Norene Gachignard & Carly Dwyer-Naik. Also present: Julie Barry.

## Meeting Minute Approvals

o Stephen Young Maco or Micro Clarification

Julie states that a point of clarification was raised by Becky, regarding how the PAC intends to proceed with the Stephen Young proposal that was passed at the February 2024 meeting, did the PAC intend for him to return with a new or specific location or if she should work with staff to find an appropriate location. Julie suggests that since only 3 people are present tonight that were present at the February meeting, the topic should be tabled for now and she will ask Professor Young to return to finalize his plans. The PAC discussed whether both options should occur and agreed to invite Stephen to the April meeting to clarify the remaining details; configurations possibilities, wind load, scrimm, wind slits, etc. and whether the panels could be attached to the scaffolding at Old Town Hall. Jim states that setting the display against the building is a departure from the proposed cubes. John suggests placing them along Hawthorne Boulevard to eliminate all potential obstacles at Derby Square and to utilize other spaces in Salem. Julies notes that Parks & Rec would need to review and approve that location.

o January and February 2024 Meeting Minutes

John entertained a motion to approve xxx Motion to approve the January 2024 meeting minutes. Moved by John, seconded by Jim. All in favor.

* February 2024 meeting minutes – continued to the April 2024 meeting due to a lack of quorum.

## Beautification Committee Artbox Proposal

Kim Parkinson (Beautification Committee Secretary) and Brian Donnelly (artist) were present to discuss the project.

Julie states that the PAC received a proposal from artist Brian Donnelly, to paint an artbox in a grassy patch next to the YMCA. The YMCA has sponsored the painting of the electrical box, no funds are being requested, only to vet the art and welcome it into the collection.

Kim states that Beautification Committee’s primary goal is to beautify the City of Salem and many art projects have focused on traffic islands, sponsorship projects, and using volunteers to tend gardens and clean-up trash. Their Ladies of Salem project installs busts of maritime women to light poles in the summer months. Kim adds that their volunteers noticed this graffiti covered electrical box and suggested that Brain paint it. They believe his proposed design encompasses everything their committee stands for.

Brian states that the front face to have the original Lady of Salem, Jenny Lind, a globally famous operatic singer at the time, and her cat along with some facts about who she is. The back side would represent both the Beautification Committee and Garden Club with images of local plantings on an arched trellis. One side would have monarch butterflies flying towards the front to Jenny Lind front. The last side would have the positive message “Create Beautification” with a small space to place the names of those involved in the project. Julie notes that no meters or windows can be painted, and air vents can be painted but not covered.

John entertained a motion to approve xxx Motion to approve the artbox proposal moved by John, seconded by Gwen. All in favor.

Brain suggested painting the box in the spring within a 2-week timeframe. John notes that the PAC has no timeframe to follow. Julie to provide a list of products to use and names of past artbox painters. Kim thanks the PAC for their review and approval.

## Mural Slam Recommendations Review and Approval

Julie states that 30 applications were received for the 12 slots, which is less than last year, indicating that they could have done more outreach. John notes that the initial review resulted in 12 or 13 strong yeses, a few maybes, and one no because they would have needed to travel quite far. Since full sketches are no longer required, some applicants provided examples of past work or digital representations/images.

Hannah asks who reviewed the proposals. Julie replies that usually PAC members and previous artists are invited to join the review group, but there was a tight turnaround to prepare for tonight’s meeting. Becky, Gwen, and Anna Dugan (a previous artist) were invited but could not participate, and Hannah had just participated in the previous review. To move the process forward she, John, and Kylie (Main Streets) did an in-depth review of whether the artists were based in Salem or not, were they past participants, did they have similar work, could they execute their mural in the time allowed, would the new muralists help build their creative community, the medium they use, etc. and the following are their recommendations, along with a few runners up. Becky asked if the images provided are snapshots of past work or mock-ups of what they are proposing for Artists’ Row. Julies replies that most are mock-up sketches, one would be painted distorted images, and one would be illustrative realism. John adds that most provide a rough approximation and after review of their other work they have a rough sense that the artist can create the mural, a process that has worked well for them. He notes that one artist, Gabriela, who is on their maybe list, provided three portfolio images and stated that their mural would “be like this but related to Salem.” Hannah is compelled to agree with the recommendations but adds that Gabriela’s description is more compelling to her than others on the yes list. Jim agrees with Hannah. Julie states her desire for Gabriela to create an artbox if she is not asked to participate in the mural slam, and notes that an artbox would remain in Salem longer than a mural.

Jim asks how many of the muralists have previously created a mural and how many are from Salem. John replies that three are from Salem, several are somewhat local, and one is in Westborough. He added that originally there were nine Salem applications, two were repeats, and they used three out of seven, and at least one student. Julie notes that a few are students, one is a return slam muralist, and another was willing to travel halfway across the country.

John entertained a motion to approve the slam mural recommendations of: Matt Gotowala, L. Panameno, Alyssa Schadhauser, Priyanka Manicka Vasagam, Emilie Rodgers, Alexandra Haigh, Mariana Martins, Melissa Stratton-Pandina, Tara Bilotta, Keara McHaffie, Tessa Duzz, and Oliver Fisher. Jim motion to approve, seconded by Hannah. All in favor.

## PAC Art Box Possibilities

Julies states that for the last few years they have taken surplus mural slam applications and offered the muralists an opportunity to paint an artbox instead, of which there are five, and the compensation is the same.

* Pink Flower (by Hailey Bonia)
* Deteriorated wall with images of Salem beyond (by Gabriella Sepulveda)
* Campfire (by Nolton Macedo)
* Blubber Hollow whale (by Kellie Fitzgerald)
* Birch Trees (by Scott Froeschl)
* Two cats playing at the Ropes Mansion Garden (by Jessica Murdock)

Julies notes that the artbox near Bambolina would be across from Charolette Forten Park is badly faded and covered with stickers, so she suggested something eye-catching be placed in that location. She could invite the artists to participate and provide a more fleshed out design before providing them with a location, for consideration in April. The PAC discussed whether the artists can be informed of the location in advance. Julie notes that knowing the location would require the artists to submit a detailed proposal and this way the artists can be selected based on their work and refine the design based on the location being an artbox rather than a mural. Julie notes that they have the funding allotted for 5 new artboxes at $500 each. The PAC agreed to eliminate either the birch trees or the dahlia, to focus on a mix of other styles. John notes that knowing both artists, either the birch trees or the dahlia would be very nicely executed.

Julie requests a preferred artist for across from Charolette Forten Park. John suggested the pink flower, to go along with the colors that may be on the jersey barriers in front of Bambolina. Julie agreed. The PAC agrees that the birch trees could be a back-up.

John entertained a motion to approve the slates of 5 artists for artboxes: Hailey Bonia, Gabriella Sepulveda, Nolton Macedo, Kellie Fitzgerald, and Jessica Murdock, with Scott Froeschl as a back-up. Hannah motion to approve, seconded by Gwen. All in favor.

## PAC Mini Grant Proposal Review and Selection

Julies stated that five mini grant proposals to review. The PAC can vote to defer the review to a review group of public and PAC members or a review group that provides a recommendation to a PAC. John was in favor of using a sub-committee. Hannah suggests prioritizing having 2 PAC members and a past recipient join the sub-committee. Julie notes that neither Becky or Jim have served on this type of group. The PAC discussed that some of these events occur at the same time as the Arts Festival. John adds that its good to have the supplementary financing since the festivals can’t afford to cover all the costs.

John states that the PAC will defer the mini grant selection to a review group including Becky Fisher, Jim Bostick, and a past mini grant recipient or community member.

## Call for 2025/2026 Artists’ Row Tenants Review and Release Planning

Jim questions whether the agreement includes how long a tenant can repeat their tenancy. Julie replies that the agreement doesn’t control that, the Call for Artists’ RFP does. There is a 2-year participation license and agreement, and “…at the end of the contract term the tenant may reapply for consideration for one additional 2-year participation contract term. …Applicants that have already participated for two consecutive 2-year terms are not eligible to apply.” Hannah adds that if an applicant took a term off, they would still have to reapply.

John notes conversations he’s had with Claudia and the artists in residence, where artists realize that they need more money is a concern. Julie replies that it is the PAC’s responsibility to ensure that a fair program is being offered, however; when individuals apply, they know what was being offered to them and being requested of them, and the still chose to apply. John asked how specific the PAC’s budget request is. Julie replies that the artists don’t have to submit a budget because they don’t have to have income for the unit. She suggested that a budget be asked of them. Gwen asks if it is clear in the application that if accepted a specific amount of money will be provided. Julie replies yes. Gwen notes that the search for additional funds is on the artist. Hannah agreed but noted that they also provide expectations for this role and the PAC is seeing how difficult it can be to fill the required hours of the day and make close to a living wage. She suggested adjusting the number of hours the booth must be staffed, since it is beyond what the stipend pays. Julie was unsure of what else beyond booth hours to adjust since the artistic deliverable is at the artists discression. John notes the long list of annual events and other small businesses seeking funding that an artist is competing against. Julie suggests the PEM lending clout to the position with a letter of support, allowing the artist to have an easier time seeking funding. John notes that Claudia can leverage her existing relationships with the PEM. Hannah notes that bringing in artists from outside Salem invites risks to the reputation of the PAC and artists do communicate with one another. She suggests a reduction in booth hours, which doesn’t line up with the season long experience the PAC envisions, and a stall would be mostly closed. She would rather have less ambitious art vs. a closed stall. Julies agrees that rather than thinking an artist has too ambitious of a vision, the vision should be scaled down to something more manageable within their budget. The PAC agreed with the potential mismatch of the expectation vs. the reality of the budget, the need to request a project budget from artists, and alerting potential artists that grant support in the area is limited so they must bring their own funding support to eliminate any false expectations.

Hannah left the meeting.

Julie states that she would like to launch sooner than later, but it could be discussed in April with specific recommendations from the PAC. She would like to notify whoever will come into the space to give tall artist at least 6-months to prepare, with an announcement by July 4, 2024, or the end of July at the latest. The call for artists could be open between 6-8 weeks to allow artists time to put together their proposal. Julie notes that all three spaces are tuning over, and only one is eligible to reapply. She notes that the fees for the stalls were raised $50 each, and for the first time in 6-years, and they are still not winterized and have expensive electric fees, but the cost is still less than $1 p/SF. Jim suggests that a due date of May 27, 2024, which only allows 6 weeks to assemble a proposal to occupy the space for 2 years, is not enough time and more time will result in better proposals. Julie agrees to adjust the timeline, noting that tabling the matter to the April meeting is a factor, the review process will need to be very efficient, and she requires at least 3 to 5 days to process the applications prior to PAC review. The PAC agreed that project budgets will be required.

* + **Project Updates** (if time allows)

## Other Business-

## Sculpture by David Jarmillo

## Jim asked where the sculpture will be placed. Julie replies that the first location was the flower bed across from The Lobster Shanty on Artists’ Row, which the business uses as their performance area and the business owners were against. The second and third locations had electrical wiring below them, but according to the Dig Safe report they may be able to work around them at the last location, near the electrical boxes at Artists’ Row, near the brick wall by Shindig. John asks about the space at the far end of Artist’s Row. Julie replies that the artist did not want that space, but they are working with the artist to find another location on Artists’ Row.

* **Adjourn-** John entertained a motion to adjourn. Moved by Gwen, seconded by Jim. Meeting Adjourned at 8:30 pm.

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