

Watertown Public Arts and Culture Committee (PACC)

Virtual Board Meeting, August 22, 2022, 6:00 pm

In Attendance (via Zoom): Roberta Miller, Chair; Archy LaSalle, Vice Chair; Dawn Evans Scaltreto, Secretary; Liz Helfer, PACC Planner; Leah Craig, Carole Katz, Erin Webb, Sally Young, Board Members. Michael Martinez, MAPC. Not present May Cort and Kara O'Neill

1. Call to Order and Welcome, Roberta Miller, 6:06
 - a. Opening by Archy LaSalle. Archy quoted Red Crow, aka Floyd Westerman, Lakota First Nation. "I would like to quote a very prejudicial doctrine handed down by the Supreme Court in 1823. It said that the Indian Nations do not have title to their lands because they weren't Christians. The first Christian Nations to discover an area of heathen lands has absolute title. This doctrine should be withdrawn and renounced to establish a new basis for relationship between indigenous peoples and other peoples of the world." This ruling was the first of the three court cases known as the "Marshall Trilogy" put forth by SC Justice John Marshall and others. We need to reflect on and understand the pain this still causes. We must make certain that we recognize that this is part of our history across the nation. A recently installed bronze permanent public art piece in Sheffield, Massachusetts, honors Mum Bett, the first Massachusetts slave to sue for her freedom in 1781. Mum Bette, who could not read or write, listened as the Sheffield Declaration was being read (a precursor to the US Constitution, declaring United States emancipation from Great Britain), and she heard, "All men are created equal." She got an attorney, who explained that women had no rights. Nevertheless, she persisted, and won a landmark ruling that set her free. By 1783, the Massachusetts Supreme Court agreed with this landmark decision, abolishing slavery across the state. Massachusetts continued to bear culpability, with Fall River, Marblehead and other ship building centers supplying boats for the slave trade. Resistance and persistence brings about the power to change and is the foundation of all freedom. Archy closed with, "It would be great if we could include an indigenous artist's work on the sculpture walk."
2. Approval of June Minutes – Motion by Carole, second by Archy. All were in favor.
3. Report on the Watertown Arts Market
 - a. PACC Table – Archy and Erin Lots of people stopped by. There is much confusion about the roles of the various Watertown arts organizations – Watertown Cultural Council, Watertown Art Association, YardArt, Watertown Arts Market – many blurred lines. Working artists mostly did not stop by, perhaps busy with their own tables. Few people scanned the QR Code. Kids loved the scavenger hunt activity, adults were more hesitant. A brochure would have been helpful as a give-away. It would include "Who are we?" Links to website, evergreen so we would not have to reprint. Two full pages (44 people) signed up to be on the list. The music was nice, and overall it was a fun day, even setting up and breaking down. Archy mentioned that the Bookmobile was really great, very nostalgic.

- b. Dawn, on the Watertown Art Association and her own table – It was a great recruiting event for Watertown Art Association, we got about 25 new members, and several new people who want to be on our board. Our Chalk Art event was also very successful, mostly children participating, but others stopped by to fill in a square. Dawn's Yard-Art display on the baseball field was a huge hit with small children, who filled the colorful birdhouses with stones. Children loved the fantasy of the "story" behind the houses, even some swearing that they saw the magical Meep inhabitants also enjoying WAM. Dawn says, "Personally, I sold about \$200 in art, not great, but not bad either. It was awesome seeing all of my artsy friends, and I would love to see a gathering event/party associated with this event for the artists and guests."
 - c. Carole – Mentioned that her granddaughter loved the little PACC give away bag. She sold about \$600, a great day! Young people new to Watertown came by and they were very excited to be there. It was very hot that day, and last year's layout on the outside was a better layout, the lawn locations hotter and not as successful. The music was lovely all day. WAM partnered with the Planning Board, and Kristen Kenney selected the musicians. Carole set out paints for herself, but quickly surrendered to young artists who were eager to paint (the same thing happened at Dawn's table).
 - d. Sally – Many thanks are due to Liz for all her hard work for PACC, WAM and the Planning Board. (Applause!)
 - e. Liz on behalf of the WAM Team – Super successful, estimates are that 1500 people came through. The feedback survey is mostly positive so far. Most criticisms were on lack of sales and not loving the layout. Still seeking feedback. There was very positive feedback about the scavenger hunt and the little sparkly wand making.
 - f. Leah, as a visitor – Her 3 ½ year old loved it, little Yard Art houses and other installations, wand making, music and atmosphere. Children and families were intrigued about the wand making, we should maybe expand on that next year. It would give us an opportunity to educate about PACC while children were engaged.
4. Subcommittee and Project Team Reports
- a. Outreach – Erin got us back on track to do more mission-based activities. She suggested that we have a "tree" at events that people can add colorful leaves to with suggestions about arts and cultural activities they want to see and experience. She is starting work on a newsletter that may be sent out via Mail Chimp or similar platform acceptable to PACC rules. Liz mentions that two-factor authentication is necessary for Mail Chimp and will have the newsletter ready to send out by the next meeting. Carole would like to make our table more visible in an affordable way.
 - b. Artist's Workplace Survey – Liz The survey ends in September, summary work has begun, along with discussions with potential partners who may be able to make more studio space available. On Thursday, October 13, the second Cultural Leaders Meeting will take place from 10 am – noon at the Armenian Museum where the *On The Edge: Los Angeles Art from the 1970's to the 1990's* will be on display.
 - c. Governance and Funding – The "PACC MEMBER HANDBOOK." Is finishing up and will be ready soon. Liz is preparing a funding and budget for 2023 – 2024. MAPC has completed

their contract with us and has provided us with a multi-strategy approach that can remain flexible when talking to the Town going forward. Liz, and the PACC Committee, deeply thank Michael and the MAPC for being there and for all their support.

- d. Sculpture Walk – Erin The document for artist evaluation has been created and follows the Edible Watertown template. The theme for this year is “The River,” fairly broad. All of the dates have been finalized, the call will go out in September with an Info Session, a site visit in October, close the call in January, install April 24 – May 5, Opening Reception on May 15. Artists may submit 3 images of up to 3 sculptures, which must be complete or nearly complete and available for installation April 15. There followed a discussion of the point award process of the Call to Art and particularly how 1 or 2 points can make a difference, whether a great deal of weight should be given to the artist’s location and whether that limits what may be submitted/chosen, that the goal is to support “regional” artists and whether we have defined what that means. It was suggested that we have a binary system, awarding just 1 point for Watertown artists that will not deeply skew the results. NESAs will put out the call, which insures that most applications will come from New England. The straw poll of board members favored eliminating the points for location or going with 1 point for Watertown-based sculptors. Then that created a concern that the remaining 15 points in 3 categories may bring a lot of artists to the top. The discussion turned to adding an additional category that indicated the interest and engagement of a piece, “Engaging and Compelling.” It is important that we have the opportunity to evaluate and curate into the overall exhibit. Archy expressed concern over the weight given to the artist’s statement, that a very good sculptor may be a poor writer of artist statements. Weighing this question less may resolve the issue, 0 – 3 scale as to how the statement relates to the work, clarifying that it relates specifically to the artwork submitted. Sally moved that we accept the document with suggested edits to move forward, second by Carole, unanimous vote.
- e. Edible Watertown – Sally The EW project has some upcoming meetings with Prosecco and Armenian food. The two big jobs will be to reach out and cultivate relationships with partners and learn what is going on with the project. We will defer work until September. Erin is working on communicating with a representative from an organization that may help connect with indigenous cultures, specifically with interest in historic native plant foraging. Erin and Archy were featured on the Watertown News talking about this and other projects of PACC. Sally talked to Judy Fallowes with Watertown Community Gardens. She is now at all 5 Watertown Public Schools developing curriculum and will be our point person for this project. Sally mentioned meeting the child artist who applied for the exhibit at the WAM event, and she was disappointed. In discussion about recognizing her, Liz pointed out that publicly we can’t do anything, but perhaps we could engage her in participating in a related art project. The first public showing of the art will be at Faire on the Square, then October 3 the art will go to TILL/Wave for 6 weeks, then something at Mosesian Center for the Arts, then to the Watertown Free Public Library. Watertown Art Association has scheduled several demonstrations with selected artists. Sally talked to some of the artists at WAM. The Bookmobile people were interested in doing a children’s activity in connection with Edible Watertown. Liz announced that the redbud artwork was in and ready for display!

5. Other Arts Updates

- a. Holiday Bazaar at the Commander's Mansion applications are on the website. Only 8 spots available, but may be expanded.
 - b. Faire on the Square is happening – PACC has two spaces, and Mosesian has their own spot this time around. The space will include PACC, YardArt, WAA, WAM and WCC
 - c. MCC Relief Grants – Dawn Attended Zoom info sessions for both the grants for organizations due September 28, \$5000 - \$75,000, and for individual artists due November 1, \$5000. All organizations and individual artists in all disciplines, visual art, music, dance, theater are strongly encouraged to apply.
6. Vote to eliminate the December 26 meeting – Dawn makes motion, Carole seconds, all in favor.
7. Visitor Comments – Michael from MAPC took notes for his team and they wish to stay engaged and informed.
8. Carole makes a motion to adjourn at 7:50 pm, Archy seconds, all are in favor. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 26, 6 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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September 7, 2022