

City of North Saint Paul
Arts & Culture Commission Meeting Minutes

August 2, 2023

6:30 PM

I. Call to Order

Chair Sonnek called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

II. Roll Call

Tom Sonnek, Chair

Carey Nadeau, Vice Chair

Stacy Maher, Commissioner

Lisa Ritchie, Commissioner

Emily Haeg Nguyen, Commissioner

See Yang, Commissioner

Amanda Black, Commissioner

Cecelia Goracki, Student Commissioner (non-voting)

Lisa Wong, Council Member (non-voting)

Staff

Sara Lang, Commission Secretary

III. Adopt Agenda

On motion by Commissioner Nadeau, seconded by Commissioner Ritchie, with all present voting aye (7-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as presented.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of the 07/12/23 Meeting Minutes

On motion by Commissioner Ritchie, seconded by Commissioner Haeg Nguyen, with all present voting aye (7-0), motion carried to approve the minutes as presented.

V. Meeting Open to the Public

There was no public input.

VI. Public Hearings

There were no public hearings

VII. Commission Business, Action Items & Recommendations

A. Updates from Sub-committees

A - 1 Project Snowy

Commissioner Yang said the City was divided into three sections and the Commission was divided into three groups to visit businesses in the City. Each group reported it was nearly finished contacting the businesses assigned. Commissioners said one of the benefits of this approach was making more connections with businesses and spreading awareness of the Commission. A couple of businesses have contacted the City about the project and there is a need to do some additional follow-up including phone calls. The subcommittee will work next on artist outreach.

A - 2 Mural Project

Chair Sonnek reported they had met with the artist that was selected for the mural. The mural process will begin Aug. 14, weather permitting. The public will be invited to stop by while he is working Aug. 17 and 21 from 8 a.m. to between 3 and 4 pm to meet the artist and see the work in progress. Public Works has cut back the shrubs and will power wash and prime before painting begins. Press releases on the event are planned with the City Communications Coordinator. The original plan was to engage the community with a birdhouse painting event during the Autumn Arts Festival but many of the unpainted wooden houses found so far are prohibitively expensive. Commissioners agreed to check into other sources for birdhouses. Chair Sonnek indicated one source that the group considered reasonable. They noted it would be important to make it clear that participants would receive instruction from the mural artist and the completed birdhouses will be placed in City parks rather than taken home. Secretary Lang will confirm with Public Works that hanging them in the parks will be acceptable. There are paints and brushes available in the art cart. The artist would like to use colors that compliment the mural.

A - 3 Utility Box Project

Commissioner Yang reported there is still about \$1,500 left in the budget for this year. Wrapping two more boxes would cost about \$1,200 and the hope is that they will be completed by early October. The vendor will need the art by the end of August so the subcommittee is looking at possible art right now. There are two boxes near 2nd Street and 7th Avenue that could be next. The next step would be to plan phase II. One idea is using QR codes to give more information about the art selected and the cultures involved if applicable. The subcommittee is exploring the option of grants for future projects and using original artists and paintings. Another thought is having artists paint directly on the utility boxes rather than the vinyl wrap.

A - 4 Art Cart

Commissioner Ritchie reported the last Art Cart event was on July 20. There was one volunteer. The activity was supposed to be rock painting but since the rocks did not come in time the group did community art on canvasses. She recommended the canvasses be displayed for a few weeks soon at City Hall during regular business hours. Secretary Lang will ask for permission to display. There were about 50 participants. The next Art Carts will be set for Aug 17 at Music in the Park and at the Arts Festival Sept 16. The Festival activity will be Snowy coloring sheets. The Commission decided to print 100 sheets.

A - 4 Paint and Sip

Commissioner Ritchie said the next Paint and Sip has been scheduled for Aug 22 and it is being promoted on the website, on social media and in the newsletter.

A - 5 Autumn Arts Festival

Commissioner Black reported there are 26 vendors signed up for 24 booths. Live performers are falling into place. There will be a band again this year, which is MT Pockets. The Commissioners decided to have birdhouse painting from 11 to 1 before the first live performance begins, if that works for the mural artist. There will also be food trucks. The event is shifting more to the other side of the park and playground. The parking lot will be available for parking. There will be a fire truck on display. It is being promoted on the City website and emails, as well as Instagram and Facebook. There will be yard signs the week of the event and a large banner for the park itself.

B. Culture in ACC Projects

Commissioners discussed earmarking funds from the community engagement portion of the budget to get some guidance from outside consultants to determine what to do to bring in a culture lens or to work with the commission and the community. The subcommittee of Commissioners Yang, Haeg Nguyen and Nadeau formed at the last meeting was asked to study that idea.

C. Finalize ACC Budget

The Commission reviewed the proposed budget in the packet going line by line. It was decided to raise the request for the Utility Box Wrap project from \$5,000 to \$7,000. The request for Project Snowy auxiliary costs was raised from \$2,500 to \$3,000. The request for Art Cart supplies was doubled from \$1,000 to \$2,000. The Communications and Promotions budget was requested to be raised from \$1,000 to \$2,000 for needs such as hiring photographers for events and signage and other promotions. The Mural Project request is at \$10,000. A proposal was made to earmark funds in the \$2,500 community engagement line item to engage consultants help develop relationships and incorporate ideas from North St. Paul's diverse communities. The Events budget includes the Art Festival at \$6,000 and Paint and Sip at \$2,000, possibly raising the request to \$2,500. The total budget request will be \$28,500.

VIII. Old Business

The Commission discussed participation in the community parade on Sept 14. It was agreed to come to the September meeting with ideas. Secretary Lang will work on ordering swag for the event, with money up to \$235 approved.

IX. Reports from Staff

Commission Secretary Sara Lang reported on a joint meeting with the Arts and Culture and Park and Recreation Commission planned for Aug. 23 from 6 to 6:30 pm.

X. Reports from Commissioners

Commissioner Nadeau mentioned she saw on Facebook a little girl from North St. Paul that started a rock snake where people could add painted rocks to grow the snake. The Commission will reach out to the family to have them come to the next ACC meeting and present rocks and a certificate. She suggested recognizing her at an ACC meeting. Also, a neighbor mentioned the South St. Paul Arts committee was having an art lending library.

Commissioner Maher commended Commissioner Nadeau for the work she does advancing projects and writing grants.

Chair Sonnek said Council works sessions are moving back to the Sandberg Room and he hopes the ACC can do the same.

Commissioner Yang suggested having a place on the City website where the commission could post its "wins". She would also like a follow-up promoting Project Snowy. Commissioner Black asked if it could be in the next newsletter.

XI. Reports from Council Liaison

Councilmember Wong reported on National Night Out gatherings she attended the night before and a couple of development proposals for 17th Ave. and Delaware for six single family homes on the 2.5 acres. She said firearm locks are available at City Hall and there will be a shredding event Aug 10 at Casey Lake. The City Council is currently in budget discussions and will certify the maximum levy in September. The proposed levy would be a 5.6 percent increase. A raise for volunteer fire fighters and a second code enforcement position is proposed as well as a police K-9 and assistance for the Capital Improvement Plan.

XII. Adjournment

On motion by Commissioner Maher, seconded by Commissioner Black, with all present voting aye (7-0), motion carried to adjourn.

Chair Sonnek adjourned the Arts & Culture meeting at 8:10 PM

The next regularly scheduled Arts & Culture Commission meeting is Sept. 6, 2023