

City of North Saint Paul
Arts & Culture Commission Meeting Minutes

December 6, 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

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 Yang, seconded by Commissioner Ritchie, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as presented.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of the 11/01/23 Meeting Minutes

On motion by Commissioner Nadeau, seconded by Commissioner Black, with all present voting aye (6-0), 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. Commissioner Recognition
A – 1 Cecelia Goracki
A – 2 Stacy Maher

Outgoing commissioners Cecelia Goracki, student representative, and Stacy Maher were recognized. Goracki has been appointed as the student representative to the School Board for the remainder of her junior year and her senior year in high school. Maher was a founding member of the Arts and Culture Commission when it was founded in 2021. Both were given high praise from the Commission Chair, Tom Sonnek and thanked for their time on the Commission.

B. Updates from Subcommittees

B - 1 Project Snowy

There have been a couple of artist submissions that have been sent to the sub-committee. The vendor has asked to get started making the two Snowies that are sold so far as they get busy in the spring. The subcommittee has not met since the last meeting. The Commission discussed continuing to reach out to prospective purchasers. Money in the Project Snowy fund will be used towards a mailing for these businesses and the sub-committee will create the letter template.

On motion by Commissioner Yang, seconded by Commissioner Black, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to authorize the purchase of postage for the Project Snowy letters.

B – 2 Mural Project

No update

B - 3 Utility Box Project

There is \$168 left in the budget so additional work on this project will wait until next year. It was proposed the remaining budget be used for promotional items for the commission such as stickers. The sub-committee will research the stickers and get the information over to Commission Secretary Lang.

On motion by Commissioner Maher, seconded by Commissioner Black, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to authorize the Utility Box subcommittee to select and purchase stickers at a cost of \$168 before the end of the fiscal year.

B - 4 Art Cart

The Art Cart is put away for the winter. Supplies have been purchased and the Commission discussed recruiting volunteers for next summer.

B - 5 Paint Nights

There was no paint night conducted in December. Commissioners discussed the possibility of using the budget in 2024 to hire artists to lead the paint nights and whether

the cost to attend should be raised. On issue would be creating a financial barrier for the public. A suggestion was made that artists be paid a flat fee with the City controlling the purchase of supplies and the cost to participants. To this point the events have been led by volunteer members of the commission. Paint Night is a separate line item in the Arts and Culture Events budget. Commission Secretary Lang was asked to send January dates to Commissioners Ritchie and Nadeau for scheduling the next Paint Along event.

B - 6 Arts Festival

No further update.

B – 7 New Student Member

Outreach to high school students to recruit a new student member has been initiated. Commission Secretary Lang will send out a copy of the flyer to all Commission members and will make sure the flyer is posted in Instagram for reposting.

C. Culture in ACC Projects

No new updates from the subcommittee.

D. 2023 Budget Recap

Commissioners discussed whether there were any needs for purchases from the remaining 2023 budget. Ordering of supplies is caught up with the possible exception of ink pads to use with the stamps for the art cart as well as doubling our current inventory of tablecloths. There is \$1,000 left in the Project Snowy budget. The Commission also talked about whether the Snowy statutes should be professionally clear-coated or done in-house but those costs cannot be pre-paid from 2023 and transportation costs are still unknown. Commission Secretary Sara Lang said she would speak with the City finance director to see if there was a way to retain those funds for the 2024 budget.

On motion by Commissioner Yang, seconded by Commissioner Nadeau, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to approve, if possible, making purchased with the remaining Project Snowy budget and returning that money from the general fund to the 2024 Project Snowy Budget.

On motion by Commissioner Nadeau, seconded by Commissioner Black, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to set aside up to \$200 from the 2023 budget for tablecloths and ink pads for the Art Cart.

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. Reports from Staff

A. Research on City-funded Murals

Commission Secretary Lang reported on research on how other cities have funded private murals. She said the City's Community Development Director is on board with setting up a subcommittee to make a plan during 2024 for joint City and business involvement in pursuing additional murals in 2025. This would not preclude the commission with going ahead with the funds in the budget for 2024.

Ms. Lang also reported that looking at the calendar for 2024 the ACC meeting in July would fall on July 3. Commissioners directed her to schedule that meeting for July 10, 2024.

X. Reports from Commissioners

A. Walking With the Snowman – Carey Nadeau

Commissioner Nadeau had sent photos from a similar Snowman project to Project Snowy in London.

Commissioner Yang said she noticed on her recent trip to South Korea and Japan how other cities make efforts to beautify their public and downtown spaces and how those ideas could help improve the City of North St. Paul.

Chair Sonnek thanked everyone for the work put into the Commission. He said the Commission is doing good work and he looks forward to seeing what is accomplished in the future. He also thanked Lisa Wong and the City Council for their support and the Council's faith and support in authorizing a budget for the commission and Sara Lang, commission secretary, for her work.

XI. Reports from Council Liaison

Lisa Wong, City Council liaison, also thanked the Commission and said the efforts that have been put in the past two years are making an impact and being noticed. In regard to the 2024 budget, based on the City's Truth in Taxation meeting the previous evening, the City is considering an 8.5 percent levy increase which falls below the median in the area. The budget includes hiring an investigator and increasing the pay for on-call fire fighters to stay competitive in the area. Several RFPs have gone out for possible development projects in the community. The City Council also updated the park rental policy. The City is receiving some grants for additions to the sidewalk, trail and transportation systems. There will be a lot of street maintenance coming in 2024. She has brought up questions to the Council on traffic enforcement. Additional sites are being considered for student-built housing.

XII. Adjournment

On motion by Commissioner Maher, seconded by Commissioner Yang, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to adjourn.

Chair Sonnek adjourned the Arts & Culture meeting at 7:56 PM

The next regularly scheduled Arts & Culture Commission meeting is Jan. 3, 2024.