



100 Parkers Mill • Oswego, IL. 60543 • (630) 554-3618 •
Website: <http://www.oswegoil.org>

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2019
MEETING OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION
VILLAGE OF OSWEGO
MEETING MINUTES

Roll Call

Attended: Jennifer Putzier, Tony Pastore, Karen Kulzer, Tamzin Ritchie, Jenette Sturges

Absent: Rachelle Stoller, Shannon Greene Robb, Kristie

The meeting was called to order at 6:17 PM.

Public Forum:

Opened and closed at 6:18pm

MEETING MINUTES:

Jenette presented written copies of the June 12, 2019 minutes for approval.

Tamzin motioned to approve the June meeting minutes; Tony seconded it. The minutes were approved, with an edit. Kristie was absent and Tamzin was in attendance at the June 12 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Public Art Manhole Cover Project Update

- a. Jenette said the downtown developments are still moving forward but have been delayed. Jenette said she would keep the Commissioners apprised of when a groundbreaking might happen. The new manhole covers will not be physically at the groundbreaking but staff will work the new manhole cover design into any groundbreaking event.
- b. Once we physically have manhole covers and its physically safe to be in the construction area, we will be able to plan an unveiling specific to the manhole covers. Staff is also in conversation with the artist to keep her apprised.
- c. A Day Without Water is Oct. 22. The manhole cover design will go onto coasters for the bars in downtown.
- d. The Library has offered space for a construction display in their downtown entryway.
- e. Tamzin pitched to the group a concept for an ongoing public art project that is organic and grows and feeds off each other, for example, starting with the Lit Fest, where authors offer prompts that evolve into an essay contest, that inspire public art pieces that wind through a public space like a park, driven by the community. Jenette said that is a project that could be developed though the Public Art Plan. Several pieces of that project would help guide pieces of the plan like community engagement, an annual schedule, identifying places, and so on.

2. Lit Fest update

- a. Jenette presented a draft of the Lit Fest press release, sans the prominent author list.



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- b. The library did end up stepping up and offering some volunteer hours and managing the author list.
- c. Sourcebooks will sponsor and will bring a couple Chicago-area authors for short talks. Staff is still reaching out to Anderson's Bookstore.
- d. Jenette sent an email earlier in the day soliciting volunteers. Karen said she will be here all day and either her or Ron would be working as stage manager and running sound. He can make announcements.
- e. Staff is working on securing the Tap House for the post-event reception, because it's Oktoberfest for the Oswego Brewing Company.
- f. Tamzin asked to ensure that there will be more coffee this year, as it ran out last year.

3. New Board Orientation

- a. Jenette presented an outline of what a presentation should include based on past meeting feedback. A presentation to the board is tabled until the Commission is further along in the Public Art Plan. Otherwise, everyone is encouraged to add their thoughts as they come up.
- b. Karen was adding and has additional notes on past projects and will email those notes to Jenette.
- c. Tony asked if the public art plan and a vision could be more up to the front.
- d. Tony asked when the presentation would be, and Jenette said it depends on how long the Public Art Plan takes to begin to develop.
- e. Jen suggested having Village President Parlier come to the Commission meetings so that he can offer more feedback earlier on in the Public Art Plan process.
- f. Tony emphasized that a Public Art Plan needs to be aligned with the board's vision or it won't go anywhere. Jenette said we could certainly invite him to specific meetings and that staff is also getting a better idea of the board's direction. In particular, involving the community and fundraising will be important.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Public Art Plan

- a. Jen suggested having Village President Parlier come to the Commission meetings so that he can offer more feedback earlier on in the Public Art Plan process.
- b. Tony emphasized that a Public Art Plan needs to be aligned with the board's vision or it won't go anywhere. Jenette said we could certainly invite him to specific meetings and that staff is also getting a better idea of the board's direction. In particular, involving the community and fundraising will be important.
- c. One thing to look at is small, money-generating projects, a Cows on Parade-style project, that will generate interest in art in the community and also generate funds that will then support the kind of art designed to make people think.
- d. Karen said she would send information about a project she was involved in in Yorkville that painted rain barrels as a fundraiser. It was multifaceted because it involved artists with businesses, got people excited about art and raised scholarship money.
- e. Tamzin suggested murals that go on the fence around the Shodeen development. Karen said the problem with banners is how long they last.



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- f. One solution could be making it a graphic art design. A well fleshed-out public art program could include permanent, semi-permanent and temporary art. Graphic design banners could fit in the temporary category.
- g. Tony suggested that we need to look at the differences between privately funded and publicly funded project in the public space, and how that funding affects the process and guidelines for what gets installed. Jenette said several of the example plans presented deal with that question in different ways, and one thing to look at as we build ours out is how we want to manage those different programs to achieve the collection we are seeking. We can choose to create spaces for privately funded art.
- h. We need to include a maintenance plan in the Public Art Plan.
- i. Funding mechanism, ownership, different programs like an annual sculpture program, and the aesthetic conversation.
- j. Karen suggested that one problem when you have privately funded pieces, you will likely get art that does not give the Commission latitude to prevent boring or art. If people donate money, people will have a specific idea of what they want and it may not fit the aesthetic. It's community art and sometimes with community art, a person in the community may have a different vision.
- k. Jenette said this is one of the advantages of a Public Art Plan – it will give us tools for encouraging the kinds of art we want in public spaces even if it is privately funded. A plan allows us to anticipate these issues and encourages the things we want, and at least does not encourage the things we don't want.
- l. One piece of the plan will be "How will we tackle private donor, private owner art?"
- m. Tony suggest that there's less you can do to limit what people put on their own buildings. Jenette suggested that one way we can provide guidance is through the code. One piece of the plan could involve a mural art code. Many communities have code that indicates what counts as a mural and what can't be there. Additionally, other guidelines may be important to restrict things not considered in good taste by the community as a whole because different communities may have different standards for what is generally considered acceptable. Communities may limit everything from nudity to hate speech.
- n. We can build guiding principles of what constitutes art into the plan, indicating, for example, nipple bans versus defining Michelangelo's David as fine art.
- o. Tony asked whether all the Commission should take a couple pieces of the public art plan, because tackling a handful of the sections at the same time, rather than every person tackling one or two, would take longer but be a more collaborative approach with more voices.
- p. Jenette suggested tackling three in a meeting, and that going through it, we could identify additional headings throughout the process.
- q. Jen suggested beginning with some of the more foundational ideas because otherwise we could, for example, generate lots of ideas for low-hanging fruit community art projects but they would be useless if they ultimately don't fit in the vision of the plan.
- r. Jenette suggested the process could involve a lot of idea generation, then looking for emerging themes leading to a big coalescing idea.



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- s. Tamzin requested flip charts and markers for thematic analysis at the next meeting for each heading.
- t. Jen suggested focusing on the headings that touch on all the many pieces of the project first, such as the objective and vision statement that can then generate ideas.
- u. The group agreed on a mind-mapping exercise on the first four identified parts of public art plan (Objective, Vision, Goals, Philosophy) for the September meeting.
- v. Tamzin asked about research in between. Jenette said that if nobody reads anything between now and the September meeting, we will have lost a whole month, so she will send more public art plans, and everyone is encouraged to do their own research and pull from many different sources. Communities of similar size may be most helpful for identifying the scope that is achievable in Oswego. She will start a Google Drive folder for the group, and send plans out throughout the month.
- w. Jen asked if anyone is working on an inventory of current projects. Jenette said no and asked the group for suggested on how to do that. Jen emphasized the importance of identifying everything regardless of size or significance.
- x. Karen suggested contacted the park district and school district for their holdings.
- y. Jen suggested using Ingress, Google's game for mapping things without addresses. She said she would research how best to use that for a public art hunt.

STAFF REPORTS:

1. We have a vacancy on the committee. Shannon has stepped down. Appointments are the purview of the Village President. Current commissioners have given names over the past year, and staff can offer those as suggestions, but the Village President can appoint whomever is appropriate. The chair can reach out to members who have not been in attendance often. Jenette said she would look into the code to see what attendance requirements are.
2. The Village has gone out for RFP on a new website. One thing we'll be looking at is how best to present the public art program/Cultural Art Commission as a part of that new website.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

1. Tamzin suggested that because of the nature of the commission, an Instagram account would be more appropriate than Facebook. Staff said we could add an Instagram account as a project for the future.

NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 11, 2019

ADJOURNMENT 7:27 p.m.