

DRAFT April 18, 2012

PORTLAND PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 18, 2012

Attendance: Peggy Golden, Alison Hildreth, Pandora LaCasse, Lin Lisberger, Pat Murtagh, Alice Spencer
(staff: Jennifer Hutchins)

Guests: June Lacombe, Craig Lyons (Portland Daily Sun)

Welcome and Minutes Review

March minutes reviewed and approved, with changes, unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

June LaCombe presents proposal (hand-out) to the Committee to accept a gift from the William Hamill of Jesse Salisbury's sculpture. She states that, in addition to a public process led by the Committee, an excellent way to accept public art is from a collector with a piece of work that has a specific place in mind.

Ms. LaCombe says: "This is one of Jesse's most successful pieces." The proposed location is to the left of the satellite parking lot at the Portland Jetport. "Why this sculpture? The material is made of granite, which is from Maine (the granite industry). The artist is an international artist located here in Maine, a Bates graduate. I know a great piece of art when I see it, and this is one."

Mr. Salisbury would oversee the installation. Paul Bradbury, director of the Jetport, has said that airport team would do site preparation. All costs would be gifted by the Hamills. Granite requires the least amount of maintenance, needing only to check for lichen every five years. The airport has offered to do the maintenance. The Committee would be responsible for the plaque in keeping with the City's collection.

Ms. LaCombe highlights Mr. Bradbury's letter of support stating "that he is overwhelmed by Mr. Hamill's generosity."

Ms. LaCombe shows a photo of the proposed site suggesting that a sign be moved, and that needs to be addressed with Mr. Bradbury's staff.

Ms. Lisberger expresses concern about pollution from airplanes. Ms. LaCombe says that granite is much harder than marble or brownstone, so it's as strong as can be, but a good question to ask and emphasize with Jetport, who have offered to maintain it.

Ms. Golden asked about daylight. Ms. LaCombe said that it would be in full sun most of the day. Ms. Golden asked what the sculpture would set upon. Ms. LaCombe says that it will sit on gravel with grass going up toward the edge and people will be able to walk around it.

Ms. Spencer says that the Committee always invites the City's conservator to view a piece to make recommendations about conservation: Anything that's decided should be signed-off by him.

Ms. Spencer says that Ms. LaCombe should be provided with a copy of the revised Committee gift guidelines.

Ms. LaCombe says that the donor and artist are hoping to install before June. She says that Mr. Jaegerman (absent) is hoping that this proposal could go to the Council on May 7.

The Committee reviews gift guidelines. Ms. LaCasse and Ms. Hildreth, who are the members of this gift's subcommittee, are identified as the Committee members who should work with Ms. LaCombe on conservator requirements and public announcements.

Ms. Spencer "marvels at Mr. Hamill's generosity and Ms. LaCombe's contribution on the City's behalf." Ms. LaCasse thanks Ms. LaCombe for bringing this opportunity to the City. Ms. Murtagh says that this is an incredible place as people are coming in to the city and state and welcome statement about the city.

Ms. LaCombe: "He's giving you what he loves." Ms. Murtagh: "We are all impressed by this generosity. What has inspired this generosity?" And, she expresses her appreciation for all of the work Ms. LaCombe she has done.

Ms. Lisberger moves to accept the gift. Ms. Hildreth seconds. Motion approved unanimously.

Ms. Hildreth is appointed to be the direct contact with Ms. LaCombe to oversee the next steps. Ms. Spencer agrees to represent the communications subcommittee on this project.

Ms. Murtagh asked about timing. Ms. LaCombe said that it needs to happen in May and she is meeting with Mr. Bradbury and Mr. Salisbury tomorrow so that everything is poised to happen once the City Council's decision is made. Ms. Spencer will put Mr. Taggart in touch with Ms. LaCombe.

Ms. Spencer will make the presentation about the proposal to the Council. Ms. LaCombe is not able to attend. Ms. Spencer said that someone needs to create a single page information sheet for the Council. Ms. LaCombe offers to do this, including a photo of the site.

Ms. Golden said that the Committee can talk about this with Nicole Clegg, the City's communications director, in order to prepare for the Council meeting.

Ms. Spencer asks about interest in a public opening. Ms. LaCombe says that we should wait once the plaque is in place and when Jesse can be here. Ms. Murtagh says that we will put this type of reception on our agenda for the fall.

Ms. Murtagh said the plaque wording should be in keeping with the Committee and City guidelines and regulations, and that the Committee should review gift guidelines to insure they are clear.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Golden says that she met with Councilor Leeman and had a positive conversation, but that the councilor was not initially favorable about the bench project. She says Councilor Leeman expressed two concerns: cost and artist selection vis-à-vis featuring Maine artists. The Councilor suggested that the Committee invite more public process for gathering input. Ms. Golden says that, as a result of their conversation, Councilor Leeman does have a better idea of the Committee's process and work.

Ms. LaCasse is still trying to connect with Councilor Coyne. Ms. Lisberger will connect with absent Committee members to urge them to connect with Councilors prior to May 7.

Ms. Hildreth met with Councilor Anton, who recommended that the Committee come to the Council regularly. Ms. Spencer recommends that the Committee keep these as one-on-one meetings in the communications subcommittee guidelines. Ms. LaCasse recommends that the conversations happen in conjunction with the annual plan that's required by the Committee's statute.

Ms. Murtagh met with Mark Rees, the city manager. He said that he's hearing that people are asking "why benches and why now," but is positive about the Committee and the public art program. He said he would be happy to reinforce the message of the Committee with the mayor.

Ms. Spencer suggests that the Committee write notes to Councilors a few days before the upcoming vote.

Ms. Lisberger says that the communications subcommittee will be meeting with Ms. Clegg. The purpose of the meeting is to update her on the work of the Committee and seek her assistance with promoting the Committee's work. Ms. Lisberger needs a "black folder" to share with Ms. Clegg.

Ms. Hutchins will supply media contact list before April 24 meeting with Ms. Clegg.

GOVERNANCE/BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Murtagh recommends that the Committee be proactive in the application process for new appointees to the Committee and to formalize the Committee's process, so it doesn't happen at the last minute. Ms. Murtagh asks that prospective member suggestions be sent to her.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Hildreth reminds Committee of the "Gateways to Portland" an "On the Waterfront" events sponsored by the Maine Historical Society and the Architalx series. Her subcommittee has not had a chance to meet in the last month.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Murtagh asked about the PACA representative. Ms. Hutchins explained that PACA would be discussing this in the weeks ahead.

Ms. Murtagh adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m. Notes prepared by Jennifer Hutchins.