



Public Arts Commission

February 5, 2025

6:00 PM

Fridley Civic Campus, 7071 University Ave N.E.

Minutes

Call to Order

6:00 PM

Present

Josh Collins
Ryan Fugleberg
Kara Ruwart
Frank Sedzielarz
Maija Sedzielarz
Gary Swanson
Gary Osterbauer

Council Member Liaison: Ann Bolkom

Staff Liaison: Scott Hickok

Absent

Mayor, Scott Lund

Approve of Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2025

Minutes approved with the following modifications identified by Frank Sedzielarz. Name Maija was misspelled as *Maiya* in one location. Gary Swanson identified that Kara Ruwart's name has a "T" at the end in one location (*Karat*). With those modifications Frank Sedzielarz made a motion to approve, seconded by Kara Ruwart, to approve the minutes with amendments suggested. The motion passed 5-0.

New Business

Updates from Commissioners Sedzielarz and Collins on Research of Kinetic Art

Chair Collins apologized as he had not had an opportunity yet to complete his homework on this item.

Kara Ruwart indicated that some of what she has learned is that some Kinetic Art stops moving after a couple years. Collins agreed that there are aspects of Kinetic that required ongoing attention.

Maija Sedzielarz indicated that she had had good discussions with Eileen Cohen, the Exhibitions Coordinator at Silverwood Park, and Wendy DePaolis, M.A., Curator Art and Sculpture, MN Landscape Arboretum, and Jim Clark, Visual Arts Manager Visual Arts Programs, including gallery exhibitions, ArtStreet public art program, artist engagement and development. She also has a special interest in Hutchinson as that is where she is from originally and she provided information on the Hutchinson Art Stroll in the materials provided to the Commission. A question was raised regarding the location of the art in Hutchinson, all in their downtown? Commissioner Sedzielarz indicated that it is in several areas in Hutchinson and there is a map in the materials provided.

Scott Hickok indicated that Hutchinson has a great urban campground along the river and one of the artistic things they did beyond sculpture in the campground for all to enjoy, they have a grove of trees with a trail through it. In the grove, each tree was donated by a family that sponsored a foreign exchange student. By the tree was a bronze plaque with the sponsor families name, exchange students name and their Country of origin, along with their year of visit.

A general discussion ensued regarding art generally, what type of art, permanent, temporary, stipends to artists, amount of money or price for typical stipends for a city. A question of is the art for sale, is there a price posted on the art itself if someone is interested in purchasing? In many cases of cities studied that is the case.

Isaac Kidder Proposal Discussion

Commissioner Sedzielarz indicated that in her research and discussion with Silverwood Park staff, Eileen introduced her to the topic of a sculptor who had contacted them about a proposal he is preparing to submit. Sedzielarz has not met Mr. Kidder.

Silverwood is not able to commit to being a site for his project, but thought Fridley might be interested. He sent me the proposal, timeline, and comments which I sent to Scott and now have been distributed.

Scott Hickok admitted to being a bit confused at first as to whether Mr. Kidder might be thinking of Commons Park for his piece. Both Commissioner's Sedzielarz and Fugleberg indicated no, but it could be an appropriate piece for the Civic Campus.

A general discussion ensued regarding permanent vs. temporary, anchoring, location potential, etc.

Commissioner Miaja S. indicated that both she and the City had sent letters of support after informal independent polling of commissioners' interest and that we will know more about next steps if he gets one or both grants he is applying for. The second grant award will be in July 2025.

Commissioner Osterbauer indicated it would be difficult not to accept a piece of art where the artist is seeking the funding through grants, and he simply needs a host City to place the sculpture.

Scott Hickok indicated that there was some reference in the artists proposal to future negotiations between himself and the City on some costs associated with placement, etc. The Commission concluded that we would learn more as we discover what funding was granted.

Rice Creek Watershed District, Kendra Sommerfeld Offer to Fund Additional Art

Scott Hickok indicated that On January 28, 2025, Kendra Sommerfeld of the Rice Creek Watershed District contacted the City indicating that the District wanted to reach out with another art opportunity. They noticed Commons Park in Fridley is beginning the new renovations and just got an additional permit approval from the District. They would be open to discussing another art project at that park if you and the art committee are interested. There are some stormwater features there and native plantings, so there could be a fun way of bringing those aspects together.

Scott Hickok indicated that he had a discussion with Mike Maher, Director of Parks and Recreation regarding the potential for another piece of art in Commons Park. Hickok indicated he was appreciative of the offer and said there could be additional opportunity. It was left in that discussion that we could discuss as a Commission and come back to a Commons Park discussion if the Commission elected to do so.

The Commission discussed and reviewed the proposal. The Commission suggested that their preference would be to let Ms. Sommerfeld and the District know we appreciate the offer though one sculpture will be present funded by the Fridley Creative Arts Foundation a second piece of art is certainly a possibility. The Commission expressed that they would love to have a Watershed District funded piece in Locke Park somewhere near the creek to emphasize the creek and its importance to the City and the region.

SPECIAL GUEST - Makilyn Koep, Rum River Art Center

Makilyn Koep, Executive Director of the Rum River Art Center and Emily Robinson who will be the Creative Arts Director for the Fridley Rumriver Art Center location were guests to discuss plans for the Fridley location at 110 77th Way NE. Makilyn indicated that the Center is thrilled to have the opportunity to part of the Fridley art scene. She introduced herself. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Iowa State University and a Master of Art Education from the University of Minnesota.

Emily Robinson introduced herself as well and indicated that she has a love of art and a background in both teaching and Human Resources, which was her College Degree and her focus for many years. She is now coming back to her first love which is art. She is a potter and loves clay as a medium but loves all other art mediums as well.

Their excitement about the Fridley building is that it expands their opportunity to bring art to the community. Not only can they expand their audience, but they can provide classes for individuals with special needs. Their facility in Anoka is not as conducive for accessibility needs as it is an older building with many floors and levels.

After Board members introduced themselves, to Emily and Makilyn, Scott Hickok shared the Architectural drawings of what is proposed for floor plan and accessibility improvements. A general discussion ensued once Makilyn defined their move in time as June 1, 2025.

Types of classes, fund raising, and a Gala on March 7, 2025, were topics of the general discussion. The parking east of the Art Center was also discussed as possibility for overflow at the Center for events. Scott Hickok committed to providing the contact information for Makilyn to make contact for the answer on overflow parking.

Council member Bolkcom invited Makilyn and Emily to the February 10 Council Meeting to advertise their Gala on March 7th and their coming to Fridley in June.

Scott Hickok also mentioned that the at-grade crossing for crossing the rail will likely close in the future in exchange for permission to put a bridge over the railroad tracks from East River Road to The Fridley Market.

Old Business

Discussion of Resolution 2025-11,

City Council's accepting and approving the Public Art Commission's top three priority art locations for public art and authorizing the Commission to advance in its efforts to find, select, and recommend their selection for the artist and art for the area selected in Commons Park.

Other Items

The Commission was updated on the fact that the *Friends of Shifty* group is still very interested in placement of an item in the Park to memorialize their friend. Scott Hickok indicated he will bring a draft proposal for a policy document for their review.

Adjournment

Motion by Frank Sedzielarz, seconded by Ryan Fugleberg to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 8:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Hickok
Recording Secretary