

Minutes: Public Art Committee



MEETING DATE: October 9, 2014
MEETING TIME: 10:00 a.m.
LOCATION: Town Hall, Committee Room
PREPARED BY: Karen Hilgendorf,
Executive Assistant

A. Call to Order

Chair Barb Hector called the meeting to order with all members in attendance.

▪ **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by: Peter Tollefsen Seconded by: Adriene Venninger

THAT the Agenda of October 9, 2014 be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda. Carried.

▪ **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

▪ **Previous Minutes**

Moved by: Peter Tollefsen Seconded by: Adriene Venninger

THAT the Public Art Committee minutes of September 4, 2014 be adopted as circulated, including any revisions to be made. Carried

B. Correspondence

B.1 Grey County Healthy Communities Conference – Art Loan Offer

Discussed communication Troy Speck redirected to the committee from Grey County following a Healthy Communities Conference held in May of 2014. During the conference Owen Sound Artist Kyle Haight created a “Conduit piece”; to represent the energy he filtered from the room during the conference. On behalf of the Grey Bruce Health Unit, Grey County agreed to coordinate sharing the artwork with its municipalities that participated in the conference. The Town of The Blue Mountains was to determine interest in displaying the piece at Town Hall.

After much discussion regarding the intent of the Public Art Committee Policy, the Municipal Art Program, the predetermined space in Town Hall for art, keeping the foyer clear to allow visitors to focus on the architectural beauty of the building, risk of confusion or misrepresenting the artists who have been chosen to participate in MAP and whom have loaned their work for a year, the committee felt it best to decline the offer.

Further, the committee felt it was important to recognize they applauded the work of art and the artist and, in an effort to convey support in another way, it was agreed that Barbara would follow up to suggest the opportunity to bring his work to the attention of the Arts Advisory Committee. She noted they are looking for demonstration artists for a show in December of 2015 at The Blue Mountains Public Library. It was also suggested to note that the artist could be advised of the Municipal Art Program and that the piece could be entered for consideration in the 2015 MAP. If selected, the art would be on loan for one year, providing additional exposure for the artist through Town Hall traffic, website and MAP brochure exposure.

C. New and Unfinished Business

C.1 Oates Collection – De-accessioning Project

Peter provided an update noting he has six letters ready for release; this constitutes the first batch of letters to be sent to municipalities to determine interest in taking ownership of our de-accessioned paintings that depict bridges in their respective municipalities.

The committee discussed the attachment to the letters, a black and white photocopy of the David J. Oates' book featuring Wooden Road Bridges of Ontario. Peter noted he cross-referenced the paintings to be de-accessioned with the book to confirm the municipalities in which the bridges can be found. He noted, for archival purposes, providing a photocopy of the book would be a beneficial way to put the work in context for the recipient municipalities and to help them better understand the historical relevance of each painting and the legacy from which they come. He felt the photocopy of the book would also add value to each painting. Peter noted he expects 30-35 copies are needed (in some cases there is more than one piece per municipality), with the letters being released to respective municipalities in batches. As the book notes permission is required for any form of reproduction, it was agreed that contact will be made with the Oates family to secure such permission, before the release of any letters.

C.2 Municipal Art Program (MAP) 2015

Deferred to November meeting

C.3 Metal Fish Sculpture Project - for consideration

A copy of a 2012 newspaper article was provided by Director of Community Services, Shawn Everitt, with a tourism-related outside art idea for the committee's consideration. The article features unique, painted metal fish sculptures along the main street of Walkerton as part of a Spruce the Bruce initiative that began ten years prior to the article. The Walkerton Image Committee had organized the project with support from the Municipality of Brocton. The article went on to say there were two fish sculptures in Walkerton and the rest were spread throughout the Saugeen watershed and that they were giving new life to the project by bringing back some of the fish to Walkerton and by creating several new fish. The fish were painted by local artists and reflected the artists' own style; both the front and back of every sculpture was painted with

a unique image. The project was developed to highlight the importance of the local watershed and to generate tourist interest.

Shawn provided the idea of a fish sculpture project suggesting the committee consider a similar project for our municipality. The development of new ideas to bring increased tourism attention and exposure to the Thornbury fish ladder had been recently endorsed in meetings with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the DIA.

The committee was intrigued with the idea and the opportunity to bring public art forward. The committee enthusiastically embraced taking public art outside noting a discussion on this topic initiated by the committee a few years ago. It was felt to be timely as the next step to provide further public exposure of art and culture, as embraced in the Town's Official Plan.

The committee suggested extending an invitation to Shawn to attend the next meeting. A number of ideas and questions that surrounded the discussion included:

- Budget
- Business sponsorship, Ownership by the Town
- Call for artists - commissioned work, artists fees, honorarium
- Metal fabrication of sculpture – fish sculpture supplier, local supplier
- Unique design for Thornbury, perhaps not a fish
- Paint and finish for weather and durability
- Installation and logistics – entrances to Thornbury, fish ladder, other locations if unique design to Thornbury and broader reach
- Call for artists, brochure, website exposure
- Separate from MAP – keeping the distinction between inside and outside art

C.4 Web Site Ideas

The committee recommended deferring this topic to the November meeting and extending an invitation to Elizabeth Cornish, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator.

C.5 Sculptures – De-accessioning Project

The commercial grade, mass-produced sculptures from China that were acquired by the Town have been sitting in storage waiting disposition. A number of ways to facilitate the de-accessioning were discussed

The committee recommended deferring this topic to the November meeting and suggested that while Shawn Everitt is in attendance re the outside art project; have him participate in a think tank session as the committee has identified a need for direction and clarity around their level of authorization to make decisions relative to the de-accession. The committee felt it important to be sure the steps they take concerning the disposition of the sculptures are acceptable and appropriate.

