

City of Lawrence  
Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission (LCAC)  
Monthly Meeting, April 15, 2015  
City Commission Room, City Hall, 6 E. 6th Street

Members present: Chair: Katherine Simmons, Kate Dinneen, John Hachmeister, Patrick Kelly, Michel Loomis, Kathy Porsch, Sean Reardon, Richard Renner

Members absent: Christie Dobson, Jerry Johnson, Mike Maude,

Also present: Porter Arneill, Arts and Culture Director; Diane Stoddard, Interim City Manager; Thom Weik, member of the public

## **MINUTES**

Chair Katherine Simmons called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. in the Lawrence City Council Chambers at Lawrence City Hall, 6 E. 6th Street.

### **Action Items:**

- The April 15, 2015 minutes were accepted as presented.
- Kathy Porsch made the following motion, which was seconded by Sean Reardon and approved unanimously by the LCAC members present:

The Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission asks the Lawrence City Commission to approve the LCAC's budget request for 2016, which includes a continuation of its core programming with additional funds allocated to the Community Arts Grants program and arts and culture-related festivals and other events as well as for public art related to the Two Percent for Art program that is attached to the City's capital improvement projects, as detailed in the memo attached to the formal budget request.

### ***New Business:***

1. Citizen Concepts out of the Mayor's Listening Sessions: Katherine shared ideas she gleaned from her participation in the Mayor's Listening Session of May 5th, which included:

- designate geographic gateways to the City with artwork and signage, perhaps with themes related to core community values;
- update land use policy for culturally sensitive districts, such as cemeteries, downtown Lawrence, or city gateways, and require that public improvements at these sites be assessed a percentage to pay for plaques describing the site's cultural significance;
- support artistic therapy methods and artistic approaches to mental health solutions;
- seek contributions for art or cultural improvement for City structures that did not receive artwork through Percent for Art, such as Sports Pavilion Lawrence, from associated private entities, such as these which provided funding for the Rock Chalk Park part of that project;
- ask the City Manager to direct the Parks and Recreation Department to use some of the funds from advertisers with sponsorships at city-owned facilities to pay for on-site art and its upkeep, especially in cases like Sports Pavilion Lawrence, where Percent for Art was not allocated;
- ask that, in the future, the City allocate some percentage of the funding devoted to each Percent for Art project to future repair or restoration of City-owned artworks; and
- ask the City Manager to request that the Parks and Recreation Department submit a line item list of City-owned public artworks with cost estimates for refurbishing or restoration.

Diane said that Parks and Recreation has been fairly good at noticing and recommending repair or restoration of artworks and there is no specific percentage allocation for any particular maintenance of specific artworks, items are repaired as necessary.

***Old Business:***

1. Update: Culture Plan. Website: <http://www.lawrenceks.org/cmo/cultural-plan>.

Porter set up a video conference with Christine Harris, half of the culture plan consultant duo, for a progress update. She summarized the consultants' activities to date, through their visit of May 5-9. She said they received a lot of input from individuals across a spectrum of Lawrence residents from different neighborhoods, artists and people engaged with arts and culture-related organizations. She said they were impressed by how holistically most of the people they encountered think of Lawrence as a community and this is a context they do not see everywhere that portends well for the future. They were struck by the large number of working artists who range from those just starting to establish reputations to those who are well known regionally, nationally and internationally, some of whom are not actually that well known within the community itself. Christine said they were, however, struck by the homogeneity of the people they encountered in their first visit and so tried to engage specifically with more people of color during their second visit, and will continue to work towards greater diversity of input.

Having established a series of themes that aim to capture the community's strengths, including the pride of community, ownership, and commitment, they will now post a survey through the City's website as well as in paper copy at various locations throughout the city for three to four weeks with the aim of generating information from a broader and larger sample of Lawrence residents than is possible during in-person meetings. They will analyze the results and the information gathered and write a draft plan to send to the Steering Committee and then hold a retreat with the steering committee in which they will consider the rough draft plan and begin to refine the ideas it contains.

Kathy asked if the meeting would be open. Christine said that was up to the City and Katherine suggested the retreat be open and held as a roundtable discussion of the steering committee members so they can stay on task in their deliberations, and then accept both verbal commentary and written comments from the members of the public in attendance who are not part of the steering committee. It was a consensus of the LCAC members present that this would accomplish both the goal of making progress in a very tight timeline and keeping the discussion open to the public and to public input.

2. Update: 2016 Budget Request. Diane presented the LCAC with a budget primer. She said the LCAC budget comes out of the City's Special Recreation Fund, which comes from the Kansas liquor excise tax that is collected by the state and redistributed to the City. A third goes into the City's general fund for basic services, a third goes to alcohol and drug abuse prevention programs within the City, and a third goes into the Special Recreation Fund, which is where the funding for the Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission comes from. Budget requests for use of these funds go to the City Commission, as do all budget requests. The other source of LCAC funding is Percent for Art related to capital expenditures. By August, the City's budget is determined for the next calendar year. The Percent for Art resolution requires City staff to report what specific capital expenditure projects qualify for Percent for Art to LCAC on Sept. 1. Staff will not know before then what the budget decisions are for the next calendar year.

Diane said there has been a lot of discussion of changing how Percent for Art works so that art does not necessarily have to follow the capital improvements project that generated the funding for it. If the LCAC votes to suggest to the City Commission that a work of public art be placed in a park rather than at the location of a wastewater treatment plant, for example, it can make such a recommendation. she said. Sometimes projects occur out of budget cycle and then, when the budget is established for the project, Percent for Art is considered, she added. In the case of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, the funds that

will pay for the project are "enterprise funds" generated from utilities rates, which are technically rent money and thus a rate increase would be required in order to incorporate Percent for Art into the Wastewater Treatment Plant project. Percent for Art could have been included if it had been at the beginning of the five year cycle, Diane said, but a rate increase now would be unacceptable.

Patrick asked what other qualifiers invoke Percent for Art. Diane said capital improvement projects costing more than \$10,000 that are listed in the City's budget qualify; routine maintenance items are not eligible for Percent for Art, but major renovations are. The Percent for Art resolution says "up to" two percent for Art "may be" applied to capital improvement projects, she noted, but ultimately, everything is up to the discretion of the five elected officials. She used the Library project as an example and said a specific amount was designated for art and once the budget was set, there was a committee that was established by LCAC to launch the call for proposals to artists and then make the selection for recommendation to the City Commission for approval.

Kathy said Percent for Art needs to be included in the budget for capital improvement projects at the beginning of the discussion not tacked on at the end after a project is bid. Diane said the Wastewater Treatment Plant was a gray area, which is why Percent for Art was not considered at the beginning. Aside from the Percent for Art request in its annual budget, the LCAC can make whatever recommendations it wishes in regards to application of Percent for Art, she added.

Sean asked how Percent for Art gets worked in on huge projects that have budgets projected out long in advance. Diane said that is somewhat flexible. She said there will be changes to how the Capital Improvement Program works at the City level. There will be odd projects that just come out of left field, like the Sports Pavilion Lawrence/Rock Chalk Park project, but the new processes will make more detail available to the public earlier, she said. The anticipated projects can shift, as well, Diane added. For example, funding for two large projects was included in the capital improvement budget last year, and they were not carried out.

John asked what would happen if requested Percent for Art funds were not tied to the specific facility. Katherine said the LCAC has proposed to ask for Percent for Art funds not to be necessarily tied to specific projects, but rather placed into a pool and then the LCAC can determine whether to recommend that specific funds connect to the facility that generated them or to recommend using them for art maintenance, artworks at other locations, or other uses. Porter said bond funds cannot be pooled. Such funds cannot be accessed directly, any associated artwork in these cases has to have a tie-in to the bricks and mortar that generated the funds.

Patrick said although the LCAC has talked about using Percent for Art for activities other than Visual Art or space for performance art, the current resolution appears to limit the use to those two items. Diane said there is no reason the resolution cannot be rewritten to specifically allow other uses. Porter suggested that guidelines and a master plan be added to the ordinance, as well. It was a consensus of the LCAC members present that the City Director of Arts and Culture pursue this in collaboration with the LCAC Percent for Art committee.

Katherine called attention to the proposed LCAC budget memo draft and 2016 budget request. Michal said the Phoenix Award budget is sufficient. Richard indicated that the City Commission has already approved \$70,000 out-of-cycle for events and festivals and suggested that that line item be larger. Kathy agreed and suggested it be at least \$70,000, since that is the amount that has been already allocated out-of-cycle; preferably more as there almost certainly will be other such requests this year and again in 2016.

Patrick said one of the reasons we're proposing the new line item is because we're seeing these requests in the grants program. I think we're having a challenge in our arts community in how arts funding is handled

through the city. If we hold our operating budget solid then we're saying this is the money we need because we've identified another issue. Richard said taking that route worried him because the lump sum as a whole could be denied. Sean said he believes the grants do have to go up. Kate said the existing Community Arts Grants program is about community engagement and collaboration, while the arts and festival related budget line is more about bringing people into town and generating revenue and economic development, which is the point of the bed tax funds that are tapped to fund these types of requests. These requests are coming in already, she said, let's have a well publicized formal process so the entities putting them on aren't forced to make an out-of-budget-cycle request every year and the City Commissioners know up-front these funds will be targeted to arts and culture-related public events and festivals. Kathy added that, while the LCAC may run the grant process, review applications, and make recommendations, the City Commissioners ultimately make the decisions as to how the funding is distributed, and having a process in place does not prohibit them from deciding to fund a sudden, unanticipated need, such as was the case when the City Commission provided a portion of the emergency funding required to help Theatre Lawrence meet the challenge grant goal for its new facility under deadline.

Katherine said if the LCAC increases the Community Arts Grants line to \$25,000 total and the Arts and Festivals request to \$80,000, the City will be providing an opportunity for other such revenue-generating arts and culture public events beyond the two that have already been granted a total of \$70,000 in out-of-budget-cycle support. There was agreement around the table and Kathy made a motion, seconded by Sean, to recommend that the City Commission accept the 2016 budget as described in the accompanying memo detailing the breakdown and the logic for the request. The motion passed unanimously. Katherine said she would make the suggested revisions to the draft document and submit it to Diane for inclusion in the packet to the City Commission.

3. Update: Ninth St. Corridor Project. Website: <http://www.lawrenceks.org/9th-street-corridor-project>. Katherine said the next meeting of the Steering Committee is May 27 at the Public Library, 7-9 p.m., and will center on review of a draft work plan that will summarize what the consultant and committee have done to date, results from the different workshops, and talk forward to the next meetings. The committee will discuss some portions of the rough draft document, such as goals and values.

Patrick asked for impressions of how the process is going. Katherine said there have been differences of opinion that have been freely expressed. There seems to be lingering tension, for example there were signs along the right of way expressing discontent with the Ninth Street Corridor project and its impact on the neighborhood during the food truck festival, but at the workshops people talk, listen to each other, and engage, she said.

Kate said she has gone to the steering committee for the cultural plan group and is involved with U.S. Dept. of Arts and Culture for the East Lawrence discussions. Unfortunately, the Ninth St. process started out with a lot of distrust between two groups, she said. While there has been a lot of progress, the two groups started out so far apart that there are some who just are not willing to let go. Some of the same people who are among the biggest fighters against Ninth St., are engaged with the Culture Plan and the attitude is very different in those sessions, she said.

John Hachmeister said the thing is, when you do public art, once damage is done it is hard to undo. The question is, can it be undone or does it end up with the project being dragged down until everyone decides they're done with it. Kate said she doesn't think that will happen unless one of the major players who has caused a lot of frustration in East Lawrence does something silly. Patrick said the worst thing we can do as an arts community is to fractionalize ourselves. Kate said el dorado has taken some heat, but they are doing a wonderful job of trying to mitigate the early damage. In the end, it will come down to the people on both sides with folded arms and whether they can find ways to work together and compromise, she said.

4. Update: Van Go Mural Loan Request Status. Diane said she and Porter will view the artwork and talk with the Parks and Recreation staff about the possibilities for placement. Porter said the folks from Parks and Recreation have already reached out to him and he looks forward to working with them.

5. Update: Orientation Session with LCAC and the City Commissioners. Katherine said she has been in discussion with Mayor Jeremy Farmer and currently they are looking at a middle to late June time for the session. She said she tried for May to discuss the LCAC budget request with them directly, but right now their schedule is so packed that a meeting before mid June is not possible. Diane said June 23rd, when Cultural Plan draft is presented, may be a possibility. She suggested the LCAC ask to be placed on the City Commission's agenda as a regular agenda item for the June 23rd meeting. Katherine said the LCAC was thinking of something less formal than the regular City Commission meeting.

6. Update: Motions and Recommendations Requiring City Commission Approval. Katherine asked Diane if the Resolution for the Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission is still outstanding. Diane indicated that it was and Kathy suggested that since that is the case, perhaps Porter can review it to see if he has any suggestions to further improve it before it goes before the City Commission. Porter agreed to do so.

***Committee and Liaison Reports:***

Lawrence Community Arts Grants Committee: Chair Patrick Kelly. Katherine said she will present the award winners to the Mayor and the Lawrence City Commission at the May 19th City Commission meeting and the Mayor will present the winners with the checks.

City Owned Art Maintenance Committee: Chair Katherine Simmons. Diane Stoddard reported that the repairs on the city owned artwork at the East Lawrence Recreation Center have been approved by the City Commission and Parks and Recreation staff and are expected to be completed within the next month.

Outdoor Downtown Sculpture Exhibit Committee: Chair John Hachmeister reminded the Commissioners that the reception for the 2015 Outdoor Downtown Sculpture Exhibit is scheduled for 5 p.m. at the Lawrence Arts Center and will be followed by a guided tour of the sculptures.

Percent for Art Committee: Chair Patrick Kelly. The anticipated Percent for Art for 2016 is based on the City's qualifying capital improvement projects and is included in the LCAC's 2016 budget request.

Phoenix Awards Committee: Chair Michel Loomis circulated images of artworks by several Lawrence artists and asked the LCAC members for their recommendations for the artist to create the 2015 Phoenix awards. It was a consensus of the commissioners present to direct the Phoenix Awards Committee to approach the local artists in order of ranking, based on what types of artworks have been created for the award in the recent past, so as not to have the same type of artwork consecutively, and on the quality of their work and ability to create the smaller works required for the Phoenix Awards.

Lawrence Arts Roundtable Liaison: Kathy, Katherine, and Richard reported that they had attended the meeting at noon that day. Porter was asked to introduce himself and the 23 people present introduced themselves and their organizations to him.

The LCAC meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.