

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING**

**URBANA PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION**

**APPROVED**

**DATE:** February 10, 2009

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** City Council Chambers, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Geoffrey Bant, Katherine Lamb, Robert Lewis, Michele Plante, Sarah Ross, Patricia Sammann

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Robin Hall, Barbara Hedlund

**STAFF PRESENT:** Anna Hochhalter, Public Arts Coordinator; Tom Carrino, Economic Development Manager; Connie Eldridge, Recording Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Betsem (“Benjamin”) Atiback, Mark McKnight, Frédéric Beaugeard, Nicole Pion, Chris Hampson, Chris Evans

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**1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

The Urbana Public Arts Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Patricia Sammann. Anna Hochhalter took roll and a quorum was declared.

**2. CHANGES TO AGENDA**

There were none.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the January 13, 2009 meeting were reviewed by the Commission. With no changes proposed, Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Ross seconded the motion. All Commission members present were in favor of approval and the minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

**4. PUBLIC INPUT**

Benjamin Atiback, a visual artist and anthropologist from Cameroon, addressed the Commission. Mr. Atiback presented an outline of his professional background and noted that he had brought with him to the meeting his portfolio and CDs. He suggested that the Commission develop a program whereby artists are supplied with materials and spaces in

which to show his artwork. Ms. Sammann responded that the Commission would be discussing arts-related and arts grant-related programs.

## 5. COMMUNICATIONS

- **Guest Presentation: Nicole Pion, Outreach & Development Advisor, Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center**

Nicole Pion, Outreach & Development Advisor for the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center (IMC) addressed the Commission. Ms. Pion was accompanied by Chris Hampson and Chris Evans, artists and volunteers of the Independent Media Center. Mr. Hampson first addressed the Commission, relating his experiences with the IMC to the Commission. He stated what a good community resource the IMC is and that not many communities have such a resource. Ms. Pion then proceeded with a PowerPoint presentation regarding the IMC. She presented an overview of programs and services offered by the IMC. Questions from the Commission were addressed at the end of Ms. Pion's presentation.

- **Presentation by Staff: Monthly Progress Report**

Ms. Hochhalter presented City staff's monthly progress report to the Commission, outlining ongoing projects in process, requests and recommendations from the public, staff activities, as well as an upcoming event. For ongoing projects in process, she reported the following in regards to Art in Infrastructure projects: an update regarding the Iron Post Sculpture Project, the Philo Road Beautification Project, the Cunningham Avenue Beautification Study, the Boneyard Creek Master Plan, and the Downtown Newspaper Rack Design Project.

In regards to projects with partners, Ms. Hochhalter reported on the following: progress with the Krannert Center District, the 2009 Boneyard Arts Festival, and the Joseph W. Royer Arts and Architecture District; she also reported on the Gallery District Incentive program.

In regards to projects in development, Ms. Hochhalter reported the following: that the Art in Public Places Kickoff Project was still pending NEA grant approval; that City Staff had met with the City Public Facilities Manager and is developing guidelines for the City Hall Art Exhibition Space Program; that the Urbana Public Arts Grant Program proposal was still in process (Commissioners were directed to the Grant Program Memo); that bi-monthly programming on UPTV featuring local artists was in development; an update on the *Arts at the Market* program; an update on the Spring Lecture Series.

For requests and recommendations from the public, Ms. Hochhalter reported on the following: that City staff had received an inquiry related to the participation of the Commission in the Blues, Brews, and Barbeque Festival, specifically with regards to coordinating an Arts Boulevard component of the Festival; that City staff had also received an inquiry regarding Commission sponsorship of the Boneyard Arts Festival.

For staff activities, Ms. Hochhalter reported that staff had been working on the Public Arts Commission program research and preparation, a revision to and development of the program proposal for the Commission's Grants Program Subcommittee, facilitation and coordination of the Boneyard Arts Festival Urbana Committee, and further development of the City Hall Exhibition Space program. She also reported on the meetings she had attended since the last Commission meeting.

## 6. OLD BUSINESS

- **Discussion of Arts Grant Program Draft Proposal**

Ms. Ross began this discussion. There was a general discussion of the proposal as well as budgetary concerns among members of the Commission. Commission questions were addressed during the course of the discussion. Following the discussion, Mr. Bant made a motion to approve the grant program as presented in skeletal form, pending legal review. Ms. Plante seconded the motion. After brief further discussion, a voice vote was taken and with all members of the Commission in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

- **Discussion of Vacant Spaces for Temporary Exhibitions**

Ms. Lamb began this discussion. There was a general discussion of the possibilities and logistics related to exhibiting art in storefronts and other such public spaces. Commission questions were addressed during the course of the discussion. At the end of the discussion, the concept of having information regarding this program on the City website would be helpful. Questions were raised as to who would administer this and how it would be done. It was decided that this specific topic should be discussed at a separate meeting.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

- **Discussion of Program Plan for FY 09-10**

Ms. Hochhalter presented the staff report to the Commission in regards to this item. She reported that potential programs for fiscal year 2009-2010 begin July 1, 2009 and end June 30, 2010. She stated that it was essential to create a Public Arts Program plan and that the end of March is the best time to have a proposal prepared for review and approval. It was staff's recommendation that the Commission consider the programs discussed previously and focus on potential programs. It was noted that there would likely not be a budget increase for fiscal year 2009-10 and that timeliness in presentation of priorities from the Commission was key. A general discussion of this matter among members of the Commission ensued. The Commission expressed an interest in further enhancing and strengthening the current programs of this fiscal year 2008-2009 as the main component in the plan for fiscal year 2009-2010.

- **Corridor Beautification Projects**

Mr. Bant led this discussion. He presented a working document to the Commission regarding corridor beautification projects. He noted that community input on said projects is needed and that ways to get people involved in the arts need to be found and encouragement given to the people in a given corridor region to help select artwork and themes. He discussed the Philo Road Corridor and reported that input was being gathered from people/business owners in the area. A general discussion on the topic among members of the Commission ensued.

**8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Bant made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Plante. With no further discussion and with all Commission members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Submitted,

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Anna Hochhalter, Public Arts Coordinator