CRYSTAL LAKE PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025
HELD AT THE CRYSTAL LAKE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Patti Noble at 8:04 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Patti Noble, Kathy Hajdrowski, David Bradburn, Nancy Merkling, Brynn Jeffries, and Joy Neal were present. Commissioner Michael Littrell was absent.

Kathryn Cowlin, Director of Community Development, and Nick Hammonds, Deputy City Manager, were present.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 8, 2025 PUBIC ARTS COMMISSION MEETING

Mr. Bradburn made a motion to approve the January 8, 2025 Public Arts Commission meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Hajdrowski seconded the motion. On roll call, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION

None.

BENCH PROJECT – DISCUSSION ITEM

Jeff Brown, co-owner of Fire and Feast Outdoor Products, visited the Commission to discuss his bench proposal. He stated that he uses recycled plastic products, aluminum, and steel to create durable outdoor benches. Mr. Brown provided a packet of his recent work.

Ms. Noble and Mr. Bradburn discussed the bench project concept. Mr. Bradburn stated that the project may start with placing benches downtown and then distributing them around town. He stated that the benches can have a custom design component as well as artwork on the bench.

Ms. Cowlin inquired if a bench can be wrapped with a vinyl or other material with art on it. Mr. Brown stated that benches can be wrapped, depending on the material of the bench. He stated that certain plastics and woods are less conducive to long-term viability of an art wrap. Ms. Jeffries stated that the City seal can be posted on the benches.

Mr. Brown stated that there are ways to be subtle with branding on the benches. Ms. Neal stated that the Commission should develop a standard concept for branding to maintain consistency.

Ms. Cowlin asked for the cost of a typical bench. Mr. Brown stated that a two-seat bench is approximately $500. Mr. Brown stated that he has low overhead and is just trying to get his name out there. Ms. Neal asked if there is a minimum quantity of benches per order. Mr. Brown stated that he will process orders for a single bench if that is the request.

Ms. Hajdrowski inquired about the length of time to build one bench. Mr. Brown stated that it could take about 90 days, which includes the time for materials to be ordered and delivered.

Ms. Merkling discussed design options for the bench. She suggested the top of the bench to look like a wave. Mr. Brown stated that the top part of the bench is the most flexible in terms of artistic options.

Ms. Cowlin reviewed the next steps for the bench program. She stated that the Commission will work to write up a work plan. Ms. Merkling stated that she will provide some concepts. Ms. Cowlin stated that it is important for the Commission to be strategic with the placement of the benches. She stated that they should be able to identify five locations.

Ms. Neal stated that they should be able to find sponsors for the benches without issue. The Commission discussed the fundraising potential from branding on the benches. Ms. Cowlin stated that further details will be provided regarding fundraising and purchasing requirements for the bench program.

Ms. Brown thanked the Commission for their time and exited the meeting.

CONGRESS PARKWAY/EXCHANGE DRIVE ROUNDABOUT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) UPDATE – DISCUSSION ITEM

The Commission reviewed three proposals received for the roundabout sculpture project. Ms. Neal began the discussion by inquiring about the desired outcomes for the project, including the scope, scale, and safety features.

Ms. Cowlin asked for the Commission to review each proposal and provide a ranking of each sculpture to make a final decision at the March meeting.

TAP INTO CREATIVITY – INSPIRING PUBLIC ART IN OUR COMMUNITY PUBLIC EVENT THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025 – DISCUSSION ITEM

Ms. Neal stated she invited numerous people to the event. She estimated five to 50 people could be in attendance. Ms. Noble discussed the invite that will be sent out. Ms. Cowlin stated that the flyer will be sent again.

Ms. Noble inquired about the Commission's goals for the event. Ms. Neal stated that she envisions the event being casual and open-ended, but with enough structure to make sure the Commission is leaving with actionable items to pursue. The Commission agreed to have poster boards for attendees to provide answers to prompts. The prompts will include questions asking people for art concepts they have seen in other communities, what would they want to see in Crystal Lake, and how to promote art. Ms. Neal stated that the goal is to walk away with the idea that certain concepts with really land with the community.

Ms. Hajdrowski asked if there will be a sign-up to gather contact information for attendees. Ms. Noble stated that the cards with a QR code linking to the City web page will be available. The attendees will be asked to enter their information in the sign-up form on the website.

ANNUAL CALENDAR – DISCUSSION ITEM

The Commission agreed to postpone the discussion regarding this item to the March 2025 meeting.

OPEN DISCUSSION

The Commission agreed to arrive at the Crystal Lake Brewery at 4:30 p.m. to setup for the Tap Into Creativity event. Ms. Merkling stated that she is hoping there are a lot of attendees.

Ms. Jeffries stated that she is a featured guest at the Raue Theater on March 7th for a comedy show.

Ms. Jeffries inquired about the Depot Park construction. Ms. Cowlin stated that there will be historical components with the park upgrades, including spaces reserved for future art installations.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hajdrowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Jeffries seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members voted aye. The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 a.m.