

ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting of Tuesday, 09 October 2007
Mansfield Community Center (MCC) Conference Room

MINUTES

1. The meeting was **called to order** at 7:07p, Blanche Serban acting as Chair when she arrived somewhat later. Members present: Jay Ames, Anita Bacon, Leon Bailey, Scott Lehmann, Joan Prugh, Blanche Serban. Members absent: Kim Bova. Others present: Jay O'Keefe (staff).
2. **New member** Anita Bacon was welcomed, and Scott briefly reviewed the history of the Committee for her.
3. There are as yet no **minutes of the 11 September 07 meeting**. Scott will ask Kim if she has notes that can be converted into minutes.
4. **School art at the MCC.**
 - a. Kim's son has reported to her that there is interest among his friends at E. O. Smith High School in staging a "Battle of the Bands" at the MCC later in the school year. The Teen Center and Arts and Crafts room could be used for this event; the gymnasium is also a possibility, if more space were needed.
 - b. Jay A. will approach the art faculty at Smith about organizing an exhibit of student art at the MCC, particularly ceramics and jewelry for the display cases.
5. **Poetry readings.** No report on the 29 September poetry reading at the MCC was available. Joan will call Joan Sidney to ask how it went; she will also contact Curbstone Press, which publishes work by local poets, to see if any of them might be interested in reading from their poetry at the MCC.
6. **Art Display policy.** A re-write of the AAC's draft art display policy (revised 6/04/07) titled "Art Display Policy: Draft (as of 9/11/07)" was circulated by e-mail with the agenda for this meeting. It is not clear who authored it; Jay O'K thought the Town Attorney may have had some role in drafting it. In any case, the Committee found it unsatisfactory and agreed to return to its own draft and to consider whether any material from the re-write should be incorporated into it.
 - a. Anita thought that the second sentence of item b under Comments invited trouble by encouraging people to agitate for changes in display policy. After some discussion it was agreed to replace the second and third sentences of item b by "The AAC shall then consider the issue and report the result of its deliberations in writing to the author(s)."
 - b. The 9/11 re-write involves the MCC staff (and, in some cases, the Town Manager) along with the AAC in the process for approving displays, though it does not explain how this would work. Scott thought the AAC was the appropriate body to vet displays, but that if the Committee believes the MCC staff should be involved, it could do so either by giving Jay O'K a vote in decisions on MCC displays or by allowing the MCC's Director to veto AAC approvals. Jay O'K indicated that the MCC was happy with the present system, under which

he can voice concerns about display applications on behalf of the MCC, and that he did not see a reason to get voting power as long as any such concerns were recorded in the minutes. Accordingly, the Committee decided not to revise the approval process.

c. The 9/11 re-write opens with a paragraph about the MCC's mission that the AAC agreed did not belong in a statement of display policy. However, Blanche thought it would be useful to add to the draft a brief statement of purpose for art displays, and there was general agreement that the first sentence should begin "To give exposure to local artists and provide enrichment for the community, the AAC invites ..." or words to that effect.

d. The Committee agreed that a-c under "Guidelines", which attempt to give content to the notions of "originality, artistic quality, and suitability for a family setting" should not begin with questions.

e. Since the second bulleted item in Guideline c speaks of "works that appear intended to ridicule deeply held beliefs or to disparage others for their race, gender or sexual identity, ethnicity, nationality, etc.", Leon suggested asking applicants for a statement of intent. After some discussion, it was agreed that the application form should be amended to encourage but not require submission of an artist's statement to be posted with the exhibit.

Scott will revise the 6/04 draft accordingly and circulate it by e-mail. The Committee will aim for final approval of the MCC display policy at its November meeting. The AAC is charged with proposing a policy for art displays at Town buildings, and Scott will try to draft a generalization of the MCC policy for this meeting.

7. MCC art displays.

- a. **Laurie Smolin** would like some help installing her watercolors in the hallway and lower sitting room display area at 1:00p on Monday, 15 Oct; Scott agreed to do this.
- b. **Sarah Winter** would like to exhibit 16 mixed-media pieces in the sitting room and hallways. The four photos she submitted suggest that her application raises no policy concerns, but the Committee needs to see photos of all the works before approving the exhibit (or some portion of it), possibly for the winter quarter (15 Jan – 15 Apr).
- c. **Judith Meyers** would like to show 5 pastel-like oil paintings of local scenes. The Committee viewed photos of them and approved her application; Blanche will call and suggest the spring quarter (15 Apr – 15 Jul); the lower sitting room or long hallway would probably be best for these small to medium-sized works.
- d. **Patty Vinsonhaler** has applied to show sculptural ceramic work, of which she supplied photos and an example. The Committee approved her application. Blanche will call and ask whether she can install her work in the display cases for the fall period (15 Oct – 15 Jan).
- e. **Irmgaard Rees** has proposed an exhibit of art created from waste materials, with contributions by a number of artists. The Committee liked the idea, but will need to see photos and to negotiate the period and extent of the exhibit; some sculpture may be too large for the display cases.

Exhibit Period	Entry cases		Sitting room		Hallway	
	Double-sided	Shelves	Upper	Lower	Long (5)	Short (2)
Fall 15 Oct – 15 Jan	Patty Vinsonhaler? (ceramics)			<i>Laurie Smolin</i> (watercolors)		
Winter 15 Jan – 15 Apr			<i>Sarah Winter?</i> (mixed media)			
Spring 15 Apr – 15 Jul				Judith Meyers? (oils)		

8. Adjourned at 9:07p. Next meeting: Tuesday, 06 November, 7:00p.

Scott Lehmann, Acting Secretary, 11 October 07

Approved 06 November 07