

AMAC meeting minutes for June 9, 2021, 5:30-7:00 p.m. via Zoom

In Attendance: Carol Patterson, Scott Winland, Jeff Risner, Chelsa Morahan, Josh Birnbaum, Holly Ittel, Kelly Lawrence, Kelee Riesbeck

Guests: Nate Thomson of the Athens Photographic Project

I. Call to Order and legislative updates: Jeff Risner

City council has approved \$100,000 for emergency repairs on ARTS/West. They suspended the usual bidding process so a local contractor can get on the job immediately so that the building can be safe (it is in danger of collapse).

II. Minutes from May 12, 2021 for approval: Josh Birnbaum

MOTION TO ACCEPT MINUTES: **PASSED**

III. Arts West / Arts of APRD Update

*-The Circle Circle Show will be on display through July 4<sup>th</sup> at The Athens Community Center Gallery.*

*-The Wonderland Gardens gallery show will be displayed at Arts West Gallery through July 4<sup>th</sup>.*

*-Crafternoon Classes will be offered Mondays and Wednesdays at The Community Center through August.*

*-Afternoon Arts classes will be offered at Arts West for students k-5<sup>th</sup> grade Monday – Fridays and will feature movement, music, visual arts, ceramics, and puppet theater instruction.*

*-Arts West intern Alexis Parsons is working with Program Specialist Emily Beveridge to develop an Art Start program for movement, music, visual arts, and puppet theater instruction for students aged 3-5.*

*-Arts West intern Paula Atfield is working with Program Specialist Emily Beveridge to develop a “Handmade Housewarming” event for Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at Armory Park. (Move in Weekend) The event will feature art vendors, Passionworks Studio puppet sale, and a community banner making project to install at Armory Park.*

*-The Athens City School District will be donating a kiln previously used at the Morrison Gordon Elementary to Arts West. The kiln will be used to support classes and events.*

IV. Ongoing Public Projects:

a. Community Center Mural: Beth Braun

Teachers have adhered the mural cloth to the panels and it is stored. They are working to schedule the installation. WOUB interviewed some teachers and Beth recently. The piece will air on NewsWatch tonight and WOUB's YouTube channel.

b. Key to the City: Kelly Lawrence

No updates. Kelly is still waiting to hear back from Mayor as to whether or not they approve the price list of supplies and materials needed for Brian Alloway.

c. Art Outside the Box: Chelsa Morahan

The last call for proposals ended in January 2020, so we have a little bit of time until AMAC puts out another one. A community member had the idea to include a civics lesson on the wraps, like the Bill of Rights, Constitution, National Anthem, Statue of Liberty, or local history or community elements. Should we add this educational component to the RFP for the next round of traffic box wraps? They are intended to showcase Athens artists, so it might be nice to showcase Athens-centric content and consult the Southeast Ohio History Center. Kelee will reach out to the history center and Tom O'Grady to see what he thinks. Athens was a transportation hub, and this could be featured, or other unique and historically important elements of this region, like Mt. Zion. What about stories that have not been known or well-told? It could feature well-known Athens artists of the past.

Are we seeking someone to create these, or are we still putting at RFP out with encouraging local themes like history or founding of Athens? It could also have information that people could read up close. We need to make sure people can park and walk up to the box (some are inaccessible from pedestrian traffic, for example).

Encourage people of color to take part in one so they have representation. We can also ask them if they'd like to serve on the committee.

- d. Athens Photo Project (APP) Youth Exhibit: Josh Birnbaum & Nate Thomson of the Athens Photo Project (30 minutes)

Josh will be teaching youth photo classes this summer: a community class taking referrals from Hopewell, some classes at Bassett House, and one class with Sojourners. APP would like to do a joint exhibition featuring youth voices and experiences through photography in mid-August!

APP is proposing to do an exhibition printed on 4' x 6' vinyl banners and installed on some kind of fence or structure, possibly along the bike path. They would like to discuss the potential to install this kind of exhibit along the section of bike path between Hopewell / ABH and the Habitat for Humanity house. They could be freestanding units, perhaps made of metal or wood or PVC.

Here are some examples of vinyl banner photo exhibits that have been done by Photoville in NYC which we could utilize for inspiration:

<https://photoville.com/works/> and  
<https://fence.photoville.com>

Do they all have to be in one place? Could also be included on banners on Court Street? Or the singular large banner over Court Street at Washington Street? The city installs it. The banner is reserved by week. APP will need to check that week in August. Kelee will check for us. Can apply for either the big banner or the light post banners along the street.

West Side ballpark area might be appropriate, especially where Athens' water well field begins. The city has big blue pump towers that could be posted on, and they are along the bike path, and there's a field near community garden area. Installation of a fence is expensive.

APP is planning a short-term exhibit, about a month or two, so it would need to be cheap, or utilizing donated materials.

Alleys uptown, going from Court Street to Congress Street, have space to hang across the alleyway, if the city would allow. They could close off one end (not both). The alley that is near the former Mountain Laurel store is free of garages and things so might be more flexible for an exhibit.

It is recommended to ask certain businesses who utilize the alleyways, because there might be trucks moving through and there could be a height issue. The banner across Court Street could advertise.

There is fencing that goes around the Wastewater Treatment Plant or Athens Library. PVC standalone units sporadically placed along bike path at various

places could be good. This infrastructure could be used for exhibits every year. More people in the community could see it. Could be used regularly for youth project, or other organizations who have exhibits. Could the images be tethered to something already on the bike path?

Perhaps outdoor units could be constructed so the materials disappear. Like an image cube. For a more semi-permanent installation, we could ask Lowes, Bedrock Rentals, or the Mayor, for materials that could be repurposed or donated. Building costs have skyrocketed recently.

They are looking to fit within \$3,000-5,000 budget. But if this was more of a re-usable installation, APP could consider more of an investment.

Fence along the river where soccer fields are could be an interesting location. Who owns that fence? Wal-Mart?

Who is the audience, and how to reach them? What's the best location for that? This should reflect that it's a city-community collaborative project. It should be accessible. This can tie into the parking garage photo project, where five new artists will be featured in late September.

V. Ongoing Commission Business:

a. Mural Walk, the mAppAthens project: Josh Birnbaum

How can we customize the mural walk? Programming it? She says that we can group murals geographically and they would naturally group out by neighborhood that way they can be explored however people want to. The Parks and Green Spaces Tour is an example of that.

It is also possible to construct a tabbed tour, with specific tours and walking tour paths set out by neighborhood, etc. That one is a bit more prescriptive and takes more programming effort—also we would need to provide walking directions and distances between individual stops. An example of that is our Birders Trail link. One can click on the link

Nancy Stevens says that people seem to use both of those options in the same way, to be honest, so it all depends how much time AMAC wants to spend creating specific walking directions and calculating distances between the points.

The first option, the parks and green spaces tour, would show thumbnails and they can go to the mural directly. It's very user friendly and all in one place. The user can create their own tour. Every time you try it you might do a different path!

Ohio Today did a sculpture tour that we can take a look at. The Athens Convention and Visitor's Bureau did a great job branding the triple nickel that was very user friendly. Could we do that? Be sort of a tourist thing? Josh will reach out to Boone Troyer. Does he have any photo archives of some of these artworks? That could help us build our archive of information.

Maybe we have an outdoor event, with refreshments, and choose a neighborhood and do a gallery walk.

Would it make sense to tag onto the art stroll, rather than creating a separate art component? What are the resources needed to simply add a mural tab? Is that easier? Does a separate one take more time? It keeps people in the same place rather than going back and forth and having to navigate. Would it be too much content to navigate?

b. Ohio Arts Council Governor's Arts Awards: Josh Birnbaum

Kelee reviewed our application and the OAC's tips video. We need persuasive writing. Can we ask the OAC about inclusion of a YouTube video showcasing media attention to our projects? Can AMAC embed a link in our document?

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion should be more of a part of our narrative. What work have we done that exemplifies this?

- The Athens Community Arts and Music Festival (ACAMF) featured diverse bands and artists of diverse backgrounds and many organizations (2018 and 2019) and made it free and open outdoors. This opened it up to many people who otherwise would not be able to attend.
- Athens Art Guild has been promoting Appalachian artists, and many of those artists were exhibiting at the ACAMF. They are trying to help them find ways to sell their work, make money, and improve their lives in a region that is often ignored.
- APP parking garage wall installation: all these artists live with severe and persistent mental illness and have traditionally been marginalized, so those are voices that are being brought to the forefront of our community through that installation.
- Armory park was organized and created by different students and community members of varying nationalities
- Art Outside the Box (traffic box wraps) artists comes from all walks of life, all socioeconomic backgrounds.

It would be great to get quotes from students who are involved in the mural project at recreation center, from people who are feeling the impact of being

involved in this civic art project. Beth could get the teachers to get quotes from students. We could talk to music festival folks, or artists who have traffic box wraps.

We will ask for letters to be written or re-written after the narrative is complete so our letter writers understand how we are portraying AMAC's accomplishments and larger impact. And some of them can talk about their recent accomplishments, like Kari Gunter-Seymour, who is now Ohio Poet Laureate.

Kelee will write a new narrative, and meet with Josh, and they will bring it to AMAC when ready.

- c. Review Ordinance 0.46.02 (Code Number 3.07.50)

Skip for next time! Review for next time.

- d. AMAC Member to attend APRD Advisory Board Meetings

AMAC member will attend APRD board meetings 3 times per year, in March, July, and November; meeting is the third Thursday of every month from 5:30-7 p.m. Arts gets discussed at the beginning of the meeting for about 15 minutes.

#### VI. Commission Action Items:

- a. New Member Handbook Items

Chelsa compiled a preliminary set of documents to use to inform new commissioners. She would like new members to make a list of questions they have about AMAC.

#### VII. Announcements and other business:

Stuart's Opera House in Nelsonville, Ohio hosted a webinar on Anti-Racism in the Arts on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 6:30pm. This was a community conversation about holding white-led arts organizations accountable to anti-racist work in the arts in Athens County. This event featured keynotes from Ada-Woodson Adams and Charles Smith.

Here is the Keynote speaker link for the Anti-Racism in the Arts Webinar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdbRUYOG5tc>

And here is the link for the Arts Midwest webinar happening tomorrow: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_C-006Eu2R\\_qdsw8ioldB2g](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_C-006Eu2R_qdsw8ioldB2g)

VIII. Adjourn

Next Meeting: July 14, 2021, 5:30-7:00 p.m. ~~via Zoom~~

*NOTE: AMAC learned after this meeting that the that the July 14th meeting would be at City Council chambers instead of Zoom, due to the Governor's Order for public meetings being held electronically expiring.*