



CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION
SPECIAL CALLED WORKSHOP
OFFICIAL MINUTES

MAY 23, 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBERS CONFERENCE ROOM 121
2 PARK PLAZA
6:00 PM

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I. CALL TO ORDER

❖ Chairwoman Cookson called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

• Cultural Arts Commission Members - Present

- Melody Cookson (Chair)
- Michael Barsky (Vice Chair)
- Sabine Genet
- Shital Foster
- Gene Andrews
- Sumita Patel
- Alicia Burr (Alternate)
- Francesca Connolly (Alternate)

• Cultural Arts Commission Members - Absent

- Dianna Smeal

• Staff

- Kim Manning – Cultural Services Manager, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
- Daniel Dominique – Cultural Services Supervisor (Operations), Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
- Amber O'Dwyer – Administrative Office Coordinator, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services

III. WORKSHOP ITEMS

a. Cultural Services Division Update – May 2023

- Kim Manning, Cultural Services Manager for the Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services Department presented the item.

Highlights

- New Cultural Services Operations Supervisor - Daniel Dominique
 - Position oriented around Public Art in GIS System and will focus on organizing history, art, and the City Hall museum, as well as assisting with special projects.
 - Daniel has been in new role a little over a month and is originally from New Orleans. He moved to South Florida and moved into a role in Sunrise, Florida for Cultural Services for five years. During the pandemic, he moved to Georgia, and has been here for two years, working for the Adult Recreation Center for Roswell. In total, he has been working in City Government for seven years and before that spent eleven years in education. Fun fact, he was in the marching band and chorus back in the day!
- NEW – Summer 2023 Alpharetta Arts & Culture Guide
 - Three guides offered each year as instructors cannot commit for a full year in advance.
 - The best place to look up events is on the Cultural Arts Services page of the City of Alpharetta website.
 - New events such as Capoeira with Brazilian Arts, an improv class, and a tapestry class are being offered!

Summer Camps

- Camps are 90% full and staff is still working to fill Country Living Arts & Crafts Camp

Music Match

- Music Match has 24 new bookings!
 - Chairman Cookson, as a member of the ABA, mentioned a resident downtown was concerned about the decibel level and that the performers are to be background/ambient music.
 - Kim Manning mentioned the restaurants are required to monitor the decibel level. Staff was informed that two competing performers (one Music Match and one not) were creating conflicting sounds and asked that commissioners please make staff aware of such incidents.

Events

- *Let Us Die* - Documentary Release presented by the German Cultural Center / Wed, April 26 at 6:30-7:45pm followed by a Q&A from 7:45-8:15pm / Alpharetta Arts Center Black Box

- Commissioner Genet gave the backstory to the short film documentary. Unfortunately, it was a stormy evening so less attendance than hoped for, but the Arts Center staff and facility was great for the showing.
- In the last week AHS had a film crew at the Arts Center to use the space as a possible space for future use.
- *The Truck Concert* presented by Alpharetta Symphony Orchestra & Symphony Woodwind Quintet and Emily Bridges from Alpharetta High School / May 10 at 6pm / North Point Mall – Parking Lot between Dillard's & Von Maur
 - Very successful event and North Point Mall plans to have them return.

Initiatives

- Play Me Again a new baby grand piano will be placed at the Arts Center.
 - Piano that belonged to Jean Williams who passed away.
 - Piano was donated and repurposed as the new baby grand piano for the Arts Center terrace.
 - The previous piano was repurposed into a new art sculpture showcased inside the Arts Center.
- Pool Crosswalk Mural and Upcoming Sculpture – “Here Comes the Sun”
 - New crosswalk at Wills Park Pool has been completed.
 - Commissioners commented on how the mural makes the space fun and staff agreed the space needed it.
 - Sculpture of copper from the old piano will be crafted into a wave to accompany the mural at the pool.
- Community Theater Space at North Point Mall – “The Spotlight”
- The annual Community Supported Art Program was released last week.
 - Funds are in operating budget.
 - The program was piloted last year.
 - The application is simple and due soon and staff mentioned that commissioners can pass along the application and program details to any organization that comes to mind.
 - Often, the groups will “give back” to the community. For example, Arts Alpharetta helped pay the artist who painted the mural at Wills Park Pool.

Events

- Arts & Culture Online Calendar
<https://www.alpharetta.ga.us/government/departments/recreation-parks/cultural-services>
- Alpharetta Music City – Live Music
 Calendar <https://www.awesomealpharetta.com/calendar/category/alpharetta-music-city-live-music/>

- *Paint the Town 2023 – Plein Air Painting Event* by Arts Alpharetta / May 9 – 13 / Times Vary Each Day for a Full Schedule visit: www.artsalpharetta.org -Gallery Exhibit – May 13 – June 10 / Alpharetta Arts Center Gallery
 - Commissioner Foster mentioned the event was very well planned and that Nancy Murphy was amazing.
 - There were several artists (over 40) participated, several paintings sold, and still a few remaining for purchase!
- *Twilight in Paris Concert* presented by Alpharetta Symphony Orchestra / May 29 at 7:30pm / Brooke Street Park
- *Play Me Again – New Baby Grand Unveiling* / June 9 at 6:30pm / Alpharetta Arts Center Terrace
- *Eclectic Lawn Concert Series – Jazz* featuring KT Collaborative / June 9 at 7pm / Alpharetta Arts Center Lawn
- *Celebrations Exhibit* / Alpharetta Arts Center Gallery / June 14 – Aug 5 / Opening Reception-TBD

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION Q&A:

Re: Cultural Arts

- Q Are media friendly photos available that commissioners could share electronically? (Cookson)
- Q Is there more information or easier access to info on the Alpharetta Arts Streetfest (as what is available on the phone differs from desktop)? (Genet)
- Q Who should we provide suggestions to (for example the Indian Community would appreciate an Indian music night) for Eclectic Lawn?
- A The goal is to keep the music eclectic and have one once a month next summer so to keep the suggestions coming!
- C Commissioner Foster commented on master class addition to the Paint the Town Event and that if more commissioners could participate, we could keep offering them and avoid cancellation.

b. Community Theater Update

- Kim Manning, Cultural Services Manager for the Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services Department presented the item.
- There is a potential partnership between the City and North Point Mall for a community theater.
- Staff is progressing forward with the project and met with North Point Mall's team to discuss the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding.

- Staff is shooting for June 26 for City Council approval but must have both legal teams review and approve the MOU prior to presenting the item.
- Community theater summary:
 - The location is where the Foot Locker tenant used to hold space in the mall.
 - The idea was introduced in Texas and proved successful.
 - While not the first choice, the space is proving favorable for what the city staff is calling "The Spotlight Theater".
 - The Arts Guild has opened up a gallery in the mall that helped initiate conversation about a community theater space.
 - The City's investment is all transportable.
 - The City's only cost is waste removal and utilities. No rent.
 - Concessions may be brought in by the organization that showcases the shows. Would have to get a food/drink permit.
 - Purchasing in place for chairs, curtains, etc. so as to not waste time in getting into the space while awaiting the MOU.
 - Planning on 150 seats for space.

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION Q&A:

RE: Community Theater

Q What will happen when the mall closes at 9pm? (Barsky)

A The mall will be closed but security is 24/7 and traffic will be directed to the theater space for showings.

Q Will commissioners have a chance to offer suggestions for the theater's title (mentioning the "Alpha Light Theater")? (Foster)

A That is a possibility.

Q How will traffic be driven? (Burr)

A The Mall is working hard to promote the space.

Q Will the theater be revenue generating? (Genet)

A It is more to promote culture and arts in the community not so much to generate revenue for the City. Charges to an organization wishing to use the space would be to offset costs of staff, etc.

Q What type of target is in mind to fill seats? (Genet)

A Smaller productions, children's theater, music, magic shows, poetry readings, comedy.

Q Are there acoustical adjustments that need to be made? (Cookson)

A Ceilings are low, likely no need for microphones to amplify sound, acoustics no likely to be an issue. IF anything, might seem too loud for anyone in the food court. There is

discussion of blocking sound from the food court (which could also block sound out) through mobile walls.

Q Is there a hierarchy of selection for use of the space? (Cookson)

A Staff is working on application/selection process. Of course, art leader groups would take precedence to promote local culture initiative.

c. Cultural Arts Master Plan Outline & Discussion

- Kim Manning, Cultural Services Manager for the Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Services Department presented the item.
- Staff would love for commissioners to begin thinking about what they envision for the plan.
- Staff keeps revisiting the master plan for the City of Surprise and provided a questionnaire to the commissioners to get each commissioners' conceptual outline for the plan.
- Staff met with the consultant and showed the plan from the City of Surprise, and the consultant quoted \$70k. Staff counter-proposed the idea of a 50/50 plan some of which staff could draft and the consultant could draft (ordinances, etc.).
- The plan needs to incorporate:
 - Purpose.
 - Place-Based Strategies (i.e., Public Art: What kind of art? Not just limited to sculptures. Murals, gateways, etc. Become proactive not reactive.
 - Public Art Program & Policies
 - Cultural Facilities/Amenities (i.e., What types of spaces would be beneficial?)
 - Priority Action Plan (i.e., Short-term, medium-term, long-term goals)

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION Q&A:

RE: Cultural Arts Master Plan

Q Does staff wanted to make commissioners aware of what they should focus on that is related to the "staff's half"? (Cookson)

A The first questionnaire is not that detailed, but high level.

Q Can we have a copy of the Sunrise Blueprint plan? (Connolly)

A Yes.

C Chairwoman Cookson recommend commissioners establish a unified front that what is crafted is indeed followed and upheld.

Q Does the plan differentiate between the City, Art Leader Groups, and the Cultural Arts Commission? (Genet)

- A The focus is not on differentiation but on better defining the roles and can be in the plan.
- Q How can we tap into the tech companies to bridge STEM to STEAM? (Cookson)
- C Commissioner Patel mentioned rental facilities are need for all demographics in the community.
- Q What are next steps? (Cookson)
- A Commissioners should email any ideas to staff. Perhaps consider keeping ideas broad and not too specific so it can be pliable when formulating the plan.

IV. CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Commissioner Genet stated that her neighborhood has delegates that meet once a month and she became aware of how very few people know of the Arts Center. She thought she could present to the roundtable everything she knows of the Arts Center, and they could relay the info. She created a slideshow and will send it to the commissioners so they could also send it out to their communities.
- Chairwoman Cookson reminded that each commissioner is a “mini marketer” where the Arts Center can be promoted.

V. ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ Chairwoman Cookson called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- ❖ With there being no further business to consider or discuss, Chairwoman Cookson adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amber O'Dwyer
Administrative Office Coordinator
Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services