

Meeting of the President's Public Art Committee

Tuesday, April 28, 2015

Union 002

Committee Chair Chris Boswell called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. Committee members present were Mark Collins, Ricki Klages, and Susan Moldenhauer. John Stark was not present. Also present were Renee Piechocki, consultant for the Laramie Public Art Plan, and Meg Thompson, who was assisting Renee. Vice President for Student Affairs Sara Axelson and Aaron Courtney, Assistant Manager for Financial Services were also present. Anya Tracy, ASPIRE! Program student, and Lynda Coyle, Clinic Director/Supervisor of Communication Disorders were also present. C. Boswell asked for changes to the minutes. As none were given, the minutes were approved by acclamation.

New Business

Presentation on the Laramie Public Art Plan

Renee Piechocki, consultant for the Laramie Public Art Plan, presented to the committee on the proposed Laramie Public Art Plan, and noted that she would be sharing this same presentation with the Laramie City Council tonight. She commented that she wanted to brainstorm with the committee about how it could collaborate with the city. She shared the background on the Laramie public art project and noted that Laramie applied for a grant to develop a public art plan. R. Piechocki shared about her background in public art, her travels within Wyoming, and how she is fond of Laramie. She shared about her past visits to Laramie to develop this plan, which included deep listening sessions, stakeholder interviews, a public art survey, and community meetings. She commented that there was good attendance and broad representation at the meetings and through the survey. R. Piechocki noted that people want to see more public art in Laramie, as it is a way to create a vibrant community and support local artists. People wanted to see more public art in the downtown, at parks, at gateways to the community, and as a way to bring the community together. She noted that one interesting result of their studies is that people wanted to see a wide variety of types of art—more than just murals—such as sculpture integrated with landscaping and architecture. She also noted that respondents wanted modern contemporary art, not just western art.

R. Piechocki explained that the report before the committee is a distillation of the information they gathered. She shared the main reasons why Laramie wants to see more public art. She explained how art can impact the economic sector, and noted that she had shared with the community ways that art can be integrated into construction projects in both interior and exterior spaces. She shared several examples of how cities had taken the mundane and transformed it to into something appealing, such as painting electrical transfer boxes. She also shared several examples of where Laramie could create public art, such as the flagpole area on Grand or in Depot Park. She noted that people wanted gathering places where they did not have to buy tickets or dinner.

R. Piechocki stated that the public art plan is designed as a plan that can be used by anyone. It emphasizes that artists will be involved going forward, and it seeks opportunities for artists to be involved. The plan also supports the creation of a five year public art plan and a part time public art coordinator position. R. Piechocki acknowledged that this was a large goal to result from the plan, but if someone was not dedicated to this project, it is likely that nothing would occur. She noted that most sustainable public art plans are housed within a larger department and have a dedicated staff. R. Piechocki then discussed how UW and the city of Laramie could collaborate, such as by matching up visiting artists with local Laramie artists or using UW's facilities.

R. Klages expressed some concern with letting the public use UW's facilities, due to liability. She also mentioned that the equipment is very delicate and that students pay the fees to use the equipment, so it is really their equipment. She noted that she would entertain dialogue on this topic, but wanted to make her concerns clear.

C. Boswell inquired as to what R. Piechocki's challenge to the City Council will be when she presents to them. R. Piechocki responded that the next step is to decide how to integrate the public art plan and secure funding for a staff person. Funding could come from several different entities, with each contributing some funds. If an entity contributed funds, then they could have access to this person's expertise. C. Boswell thanked R. Piechocki for presenting to the committee.

Mural in Knight Hall

Aaron Courtney, Assistant Manager for Financial Services, brief the Board on an idea to put a mural in the in Knight Hall lobby, where financial aid and the registrar are located. He referenced the graphics that UniWyo Federal Credit Union used, and noted that something of this nature would brighten up the white walls. He noted that both students and families visit this area, and having a nicer space would improve their experience. A. Courtney explained that they do not have a design yet, and are attending today's meeting for advice and direction.

R. Klages noted that the art department often receives requests for students to create murals. She added that it would be important to consider compensation to make sure that students are appropriately paid for time and materials. She noted that students are busy during the academic year, so this project would work best in the summer. She offered that she could identify students if needed.

C. Boswell asked if this would be a temporary or permanent installation. R. Klages and S. Moldenhauer stated that it sounded permanent. There was discussion of if this would be a mural or graphics and how graphics related to the public art policy. There was also discussion on contracts for murals, and how that would work within a public building. S. Moldenhauer said she would share standard contract material if needed. S. Axelson and A. Courtney thanked the committee for their advice and noted they would be in contact.

Communication Disorders Stroke Support Group Artwork

Anya Tracy, an ASPIRE! Program student, explained the installation of stroke support group artwork in the Health Sciences building. She shared her background and information about the ASPIRE! Program. She noted that she is working with Lynda Coyle, Clinic Director/Supervisor of Communication Disorders, to create a long term installation of art created by stroke survivors. She shared some examples of the art, and mentioned that the art would go on the second floor of the Health Sciences building. L. Coyle noted that the art had such positive response when it was displayed last year that people recommended it become more long term. There was discussion on how to install this art to ensure it is displayed properly. There was also discussion on if this fell under the purview of the Public Art Committee. C. Boswell noted that it was his sense that this did not need formal approval. He noted that as long as Dean Steiner was approved of the installation, they could proceed. S. Moldenhauer stated that she will work with the College of Health Sciences as to how to display the artwork.

Old Business

The committee then briefly discussed the progress being made on the Half Acre gymnasium, and the committee noted that they would like to receive an update at the May meeting. S. Moldenhauer also noted that she had not heard any updates regarding the planter project for the College of Business. The meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.