

# Poughkeepsie Public Arts Commission

## Agenda | September 15, 2022 | 6:30pm | City Hall

### **I. ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm

Members in attendance: Jeff Aman, Art Jones, Tim McQueen, Jean Hinkley, and Onaje Benjamin

### **II. APPROVE MINUTES OF JULY 21, 2022 MEETING**

Onaje Benjamin moved to approve the minutes; Tim McQueen seconded.

The minutes were approved by a thumbs up vote.

### **III. CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS**

After introducing Onaje Benjamin as a new member of the PPAC, Chm. Aman spoke about the recent success of PorchFest, as well as New York Stage and Film, and other arts activities that were held during the summer months around Poughkeepsie.

Chm Aman mentioned future events at the Poughkeepsie Trolley Barn and upcoming Kaal Rock Park concerts. Tim McQueen also mentioned the “Saturday Night Soul” event that will actually be held in the afternoon at Kaal Rock Park on September 24.

### **IV. OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **1. PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS—update.**

Chm. Aman spoke about current PPAC vacancies. He said the Common Council will be appointing a new member next week, and the PPAC will be appointing an additional member also.

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### **IV. OLD BUSINESS (continued):**

#### **2. WHALE SCULPTURE IN WARYAS PARK— Recommendations from the focus group.**

Chm. Aman said that over the past year there has been an independent focus group. They will conclude their business next week and will soon make recommendations. The PPAC webpage has a section called “Save the Whale.” It discusses the history of the sculpture, which was installed between 2001 to 2002. The webpage documents the sculpture’s origin and why it was created. Serious attempts have been made to find ways to preserve it a little longer, but being on the waterfront creates extra problems. Among the recommendations will be that a 3-D scan be made of the entire piece, and then masons will be hired to remove tiles that might be salvaged for a future project. Then the entire sculpture will be demolished and the ground restored. Hopefully something else associated with the whale theme will replace the sculpture, which has particular relevance to Poughkeepsie’s past involvement with the whaling industry.

Realizing that children will likely be tempted to climb on any sculpture in the park, Art Jones pointed out how this might create public safety issues, which should be considered if or when a new sculpture replaces the existing one.

A motion was made by Onaje Benjamin for the PPAC to recommend that a new whaling-themed sculpture be considered for Waryas park after the current Whale Sculpture is removed. Tim McQueen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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**V. RESOLUTIONS: None.**

**VI. NEW BUSINESS: RT. 9 UNDERPASS MURAL—request from City Administrator Nelson.**

Chm. Aman discussed the poor condition of the mural in the rt. 9 underpass near the Poughkeepsie Train Station, which is stained by drippings, cluttered with litter, and overgrown with weeds. The City is seeking a solution to this unsightly problem.

Art Jones, however, said he has examined the mural and agrees that the current situation does not reflect well on Poughkeepsie; however, he does not think the mural is in such terrible condition. He suggested that if the site is cleaned up, with trash, litter, and weeds removed, the mural might still be an enhancement for the City's image. It would also be important to maintain the site. To do so, perhaps community service volunteers could get involved—similarly to how “adopt a highway” programs operate.

**VII. PRESENTATION: COMMUNITY CHESS—Matthew Tether**

Matthew Tether spoke about a giant chess set on the campus of Saint Paul's at 161 Mansion St., which was created to give people something to do as a positive activity. He also showed chess pieces and other full chess sets located elsewhere. The idea was tried out earlier in Newburgh during the summer of 2019. It has been re-applied to several locations in Poughkeepsie during the period of the pandemic. Mr. Tether did not come to the PPAC meeting to make a specific proposal at this point in time, but only to inform the PPAC and the City of Poughkeepsie about the Crossroads Chess Community and its concept of public engagement, which is based on inclusivity.

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### **VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: 3 minutes on any topic.**

Poughkeepsie artist Suprina said she just came to be an observer at the meeting, but spoke briefly about the chess pieces, which impressed her.

### **IX. CURRENT EXHIBITS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- Gallery 40: Lisa Winika and Lynne Breitfeller
- Kaal Rock Park Concert Series: September 10, 17, and 24
- WomensWork.art: Karen Madden and Monica Church
- Fall Kill Creative Works: Classes and workshops at [www.fallkillcreativeworks.org](http://www.fallkillcreativeworks.org)
- Adriance Memorial Library: Bridget Pavalow “Embracing”
- Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center: exhibit by Kristen Lowe, Diane Christi, and Stacie Flint
- Palmer Gallery at Vassar College
- Majed J. Nesheiwat Convention Center: [www.midhudsonciviccenter.org](http://www.midhudsonciviccenter.org)
- Bardavon 1869 Opera House: [www.bardavon.org](http://www.bardavon.org)

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### **X. ADJOURNMENT:**

Art Jones moved to adjourn the meeting; Tim McQueen seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

The next PPAC meeting is scheduled for Thurs. October 20, 2022 at 6:30pm

*Minutes prepared by Art Jones, PPAC Secretary*