

## CITY OF RALEIGH ARTS COMMISSION

Tuesday, January 14, 2014

5:30 p.m., Room 305

Present: Joanne Casey, Jason Craighead, Linda Dallas, Gene Davis, Laurent de Comarmond, Diane Kuehn, Andy Martin, Clyde Lundy, Nancy Novell, Sarah Powers

Absent: Bob Rankin and Joe Cebina

Staff: Jerry Bolas, Executive Director  
Sharon Coleman-Bullock, Administrative Assistant  
Kim Curry-Evans, Public Art Director  
Kim Kittner, Superintendent, Business Process Management, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department  
Belva Parker, Arts Program Director  
Scott Payne, Assistant Director, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department

Guest: Ruffin Hall, City Manager

### **Call to Order**

Chair Lundy called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Lundy asked if everyone had read the minutes of the December meeting. It was then moved and seconded that the minutes be approved as read. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Remarks from Ruffin Hall, City Manager**

Chair Lundy introduced our new city manager, Ruffin Hall, and thanked him for taking the time to meet with the Arts Commission. He noted that Mr. Hall spoke earlier that day at the State of the Arts Program at the North Carolina Museum of Art.

Mr. Hall began his remarks by asking each individual to introduce himself or herself and share something about the last art or best art event he/she may have attended, and he started with himself.

Mr. Hall pointed out that when he thinks of the arts, three things come to mind. First, *economic development*: art and its role in the economy. He noted that the Commissioners understand the relationship between economic development and the arts, including jobs in the community and the recruitment and retention of businesses in Raleigh. It's more than economic impact, but there is a direct link to the overall economic development strategy. Challenges exist that it is our responsibility to address.

Second, *community*. Events like First Night and the blue grass festival let everyone have fun and capture people who are not typical art junkies. The bonds and connections that are formed in the community then have a positive impact on other things. This is very difficult to quantify, and is often conveyed through anecdotal storytelling. Storytelling is important for building relationships in our community.

Third, *personal and partnerships*. In the modern world of government - local, state, and perhaps the federal government - you can't go at it alone anymore, neither the funding nor the support is going to be there. We have to figure out ways to create links and partnerships in the community, which means compromising and leveraging what we have with others to make a difference. Bringing strengths

together in partnerships is very important and part of what the arts community does. Further, Mr. Hall stated that art, by its very nature, can be a very *personal experience*. On a personal note, he mentioned that his wife has played piano for 15 years, their oldest daughter is proficient with the violin, their middle schooler dances and plays flute, and their 9-year son olds plays the cello.

Mr. Hall's interests in the arts go back approximately twelve years to his time in Charlotte. He served on the board of the Arts and Science Council for almost nine years. This group is similar to the Arts Commission, but more like a United Way organization, larger, with more money and a board of 35 representatives from the public and private sector. Mr. Hall worked in the City of Charlotte budget office and assisted with administering the city's public art ordinance. Charlotte is at 1% for public art, with some limitations, and the county also spends 1%. Mr. Hall chaired the grassroots grants committee for several years, granting funds to smaller community organizations, including one-time grants to support startups and special events. Notable during his time as part of the city team was the development of a public-private partnership to develop cultural facilities in downtown Charlotte, funded in part by an increase in the tax on rental cars. As the budget director, Mr. Hall helped with the funding model, analysis of the performance measures related to the operating budget, and negotiations. Mr. Hall has a great appreciation for the value of arts to that community.

The City is in a role to challenge arts groups to do better. Part of our responsibility is to be good stewards of the arts money, and we most achieve at a higher standard than most other businesses because some view public funding of arts quite skeptically. We need to look at the arts from a business-oriented model. We are not always able to be purist about the art form. We also need to partner effectively with the hospitality industry.

The floor was opened for questions and comments.

Diane Kuehn asked about the similarities and differences with Raleigh. Mr. Hall responded that similarities include the values of the two communities in terms of the love for the community, passion for community, strong pride, wanting to do things the right way, clean government - with no corruption as far as can be seen - and the cities have some similarities as strong economic engines. The cities also have some similarities with regard to their prominence within the state.

Sarah Powers commented that the development of public art is a benchmark for our city. Raleigh is a capital city, but also a city of innovation. Mr. Hall observed that this is not an identity crisis, but a transformation of identity.

Gene Davis stated that this Commission should dream big. Mr. Hall said that using the arts plan approach is a great way and a good platform to plan for the future.

Mr. Hall reported that most of the public art one sees in downtown Charlotte is not publically developed but privately developed.

Chair Lundy noted that Raleigh currently has a number of public art projects. We have wonderful artwork. This is a creative community.

Ms. Kuehn commented that we don't see as many public-private partnerships in Raleigh as compared to Charlotte, and perhaps Mr. Hall can help guide us through process. Mr. Hall noted that risk taking makes a difference.

### **Public Art Wilders Grove**

Kim Curry-Evans provided an update on the public art project at the Wilders Grove Solid Waste Services Facility. The project is a 40- foot long interactive wall that conveys the transformation of waste products through use of materials commonly recycled in Wake County. Embedded within the wall relief are six animated kaleidoscopic videos of recycled and natural materials with a focus on elements of the recycling process including products, waste, recycling, environment and life. There is also an interactive kaleidoscopic disc. The overall project budget was \$34,643.00. The project will be inaugurated at an open house at Wilders Grove on Saturday, January 25, at 10 a.m. At their January 7 meeting, the Public Art and Design Board enthusiastically recommended accepting this public art into the Municipal Art Collection. Clyde moved acceptance of the art into the Municipal Art Collection, Sarah Powers seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

### **Glenwood South Tree Sweater Project**

Jerry Bolas reported on the Tree Sweater project along Glenwood Avenue. A community group spearheaded by Donna Belk, Executive Director of BEST (Beautifying Emerging Spaces Together, but this is not a BEST project) petitioned the City Council to allow the group to place knitted sweaters on trees in the right-of-way along Glenwood Avenue. There is an ordinance that prohibits affixing any object to trees on city property. The urban forestry team of the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department has provided the group a "Tree Impact Permit" that enabled City Council to authorize the project to proceed. The public art policy does not currently address such projects, so staff will develop some policy language for discussion by the Arts Commission regarding temporary public art projects ("pop ups") such as this one.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Executive Committee Report**

Chair Lundy reported that Councilor Wayne Maiorano is the new City Council liaison to the Arts Commission.

#### **Advocacy & Communication Report**

Andy Martin reported that the Piedmont Laureate program received seven applications.

#### **Arts, Education and Collections Committee Report**

Sarah Powers reported/discussed the following:

- The call for submissions for the IBMA public art project closes on Friday.
- The next Block Gallery exhibition, "Surface Matters," opens with a reception on February 6.

#### **Grants Committee Report**

Jerry Bolas reported that the first draft of the internal audit is complete, and the audit recommendations will strengthen the grant process.

#### **Public Art and Design Board Report**

Jerry Bolas reported that the Public Art and Design Board has approved David Dahlquist as the public artist for the Hillsborough Street project.

#### **Executive Director Report**

Jerry Bolas reported the State of the Arts program earlier in the day was quite successful. It included two outstanding performances by local middle and high school students, including an exceptional young singer named Reed Shannon.

**Adjournment**

With no further business or comments, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Submitted,

Sharon Coleman-Bullock

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