

## Minutes

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Special Call Meeting, 4800 Town Center Drive, at 6:00 P.M. on Monday, June 7, 2021. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

**Councilmembers Present:** Jim Rawlings, James Azeltine, Andrew Osman, Mary Larson, Julie Cain, Chuck Sipple, and Lisa Harrison

**Councilmembers Present via Zoom:** None

**Councilmembers Absent:** Deb Filla

**Staff Present:** Scott Lambers, City Administrator; Patty Bennett, City Attorney; Stacie Stromberg, Assistant City Clerk; Ross Kurz, Information Services Director; Mark Tepesch, IS Specialist; Chris Claxton, Parks and Rec Director; Holly York, Cultural Arts Coordinator

**Others Present via Zoom:** Rick Howell, PLAID Collaborative; Kim Hinkle, Leawood Arts Council

## **Parks and Recreation Public Arts Master Plan**

Holly York introduced Rick Howell with PLAID Collaborative and Kim Hinkle, Vice-Chair of the Leawood Arts Council. Mr. Howell addressed the Governing Body via Zoom. He stated that it has been a pleasure working with the staff and he is looking forward to a continued relationship with the City. He stated the goal is to review the Master Art Plan and receive any final input from the Council. Mr. Howell explained that his report includes an overall site plan with existing and future art pieces, and background information from the start of the City's art program in 1995. He stated the purpose of the plan is to inventory and document the current outdoor sculptures and to identify future art sites throughout the City.

He pointed out that members of his team traveled by car, bike and foot across the City to get a good understanding of current and future art pieces from many different vantage points. In the report each existing piece is listed by a photograph, its location, the name of the artist, dedication date, materials, current site conditions, and recommended site enhancements. Mr. Howell mentioned that the report lists the sculptures in order, as they are located within the City from north to south.

Mr. Howell pointed out *Lllooppi* at the entrance of Leawood City Park. He suggested different landscaping to create a broader base in order to connect with the scale of the sculpture and to screen the utility box and uplights. Mr. Howell suggested some site enhancements for the sculpture *Dancers (Tango)*, located on Roe Ave. north of City Hall, which could be an extension of the pedestrian trail and an addition of trees to screen the single-family homes nearby. Mr. Howell suggested that *Point Defiance* could be enhanced with an addition of low prairie grass to hide the uplights, more limestone blocks around the base, and replacement of the existing mowed grass island to native grass for a more naturalized setting.

Mayor Dunn complimented Mr. Howell for his site suggestions. She mentioned that his recommendation would not be a huge expense to the City.

Mr. Howell explained that for potential art sites, they create a criteria of categories called “art typologies” which are Monumental, Intermediate, Intimate, Mural, Gateway, Serial Expression, and Temporary.

Mr. Howell pointed out several areas of interest from his report:

- At the former City Hall location, his team suggested an art piece to integrate with the design of the future park area that could include the history of the fire station.
- He remarked that Leawood has an extensive bike/hike system throughout the City, especially along Indian Creek and the underpasses are a great opportunity for murals and wall art. He indicated that graffiti can be a concern but that there are sealants and other products that make graffiti easier to remove.
- He suggested sculptures arranged in three different areas around Middle Lake would be a good area for a Monumental art piece or Serial Expression.
- In front of City Hall there currently is a piece that will be moved to a lake adjacent to Tomahawk Creek Parkway. He stated that because of the large open area the consideration could be for a Monumental or Serial Expression art type that could commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Leawood.
- The area at Tomahawk Creek Pkwy at the parking trailhead is an important pedestrian node and that an Intermediate art piece on a human scale would be good at that location.
- Mr. Howell pointed out other areas that he recommended would be good opportunities for art pieces that would work as vehicular gateways into the City.
- In the location of Ironwoods Park, he suggested a dance or performance piece that would tie into the amphitheater.

Mayor Dunn stated that the suggestion of 37 potential sites for future art pieces is exciting.

Councilmember Harrison agreed with Mayor Dunn. She stated that she is a big fan of murals because of the opportunities for social media exposure and publicity for the City. She expressed some concern for artwork located in floodplains and at high-traffic intersections. Mr. Howell replied that murals are a great opportunity to involve local artists. He acknowledged that some of the areas of interest are in a floodplain or low-lying areas, but that they have noted it and will make accommodations accordingly. He replied that a gateway art piece in a median location will be coordinated with the City staff and that traffic safety measures would be implemented.

Councilmember Larson thanked Mr. Howell for his plan. She stated that she is interested in the gateway pieces because they can enhance the image and branding of the City.

Councilmember Osman stated he was very impressed with the portfolio that Mr. Howell presented. He asked if the “wish list” for potential art pieces is under a ranking system for priority or cost. Mr. Howell replied that it is likely driven by cost, but noted the potential art pieces in his report on not ranked in any particular order but rather listed geographically on the map, running north to south. He suggested that the wish list would be an internal decision. Councilmember Osman opined that he would like big pieces in north Leawood, especially at the location of the new Fire Station park area.

Chris Claxton, Parks and Rec Director, stated that the process for selection would start with the Arts Council. She mentioned that there are 37 potential sites and the process can take approximately 2.5 years from the time a piece is commissioned to its installation. She explained that the most recent art pieces were donated, so that process time was shorter.

Ms. York stated that Mr. Howell's presentation is a great guide to use over the next 10 years. She noted that staff is reviewing another donated art piece and they will likely use this plan to find an appropriate location for it. She stated that the Arts Council can use this as their strategic plan.

Councilmember Osman commented that 135<sup>th</sup> St. from State Line Rd. to Nall Ave. was an area he envisioned as a 2 part concept. He referenced areas in Overland Park and Prairie Village that have used different lighting fixtures as artwork so that their roads feel like boulevards. He noted that in the case of murals he would like to review the Leawood Development Ordinance (LDO) for compliance. He stated that shopping centers and commercial building owners work with artists to depict artwork that is unique to their stores.

Councilmember Rawlings agreed with Councilmember Osman on an art piece at the new Fire Station. He pointed out that since construction on the Station will begin soon, the time to plan an art piece should start now. He suggested that the City consider combining an art piece along with a monument sign at 135<sup>th</sup> and State Line Rd. Councilmember Rawlings expressed concern for murals with the wet conditions under a bridge. Ms. Claxton stated there is special paint and a sealer that the City already uses at Gezer Park that can be applied, if necessary. She noted that murals can be temporary or constructed with tile. She stated that the Art Council does a great job with diversity and different types of art.

Mayor Dunn noted that 133<sup>rd</sup> and 137<sup>th</sup> Streets are frontage roads to 135<sup>th</sup> St. and both have decorative lighting.

Councilmember Cain stated she is a member of the Arts Council and has been pleased with the new energy and direction on the committee. She thanked Ms. Claxton and Ms. York and noted that Ann Blessing and Kim Hinkle do a great job. She mentioned that donated pieces are relatively less expensive. She suggested that the City consider the new branding and logo to complement future artwork for the City's identity. She agreed with Councilmember Osman that north Leawood and 135<sup>th</sup> St. need more art pieces. She remarked that she is a fan of murals but not under bridges.

Mayor Dunn stated underpass walls are also a concern of hers with graffiti.

Councilmember Azeltine agreed with Councilmember Cain. He stated that the Arts Councils needs to consult with Public Works over safety concerns in high-traffic areas and floodplains.

Councilmember Sipple stated that he is not in favor of underpass artwork. He would like to increase citizens' interest in art pieces and have greater accessibility from the trails to see art up close. He suggested creating a map or have a QR code available that lists descriptions, artist names, etc. for self-guided tours. Ms. Claxton replied that QR codes are a great idea. She pointed out some of the planned improvements are benches, trails and sidewalks to increase public connections. She stated that Ms. York is currently working on a public art brochure that will be available online. Ms. Claxton acknowledged the Council's concern with murals. She suggested starting with one behind City Hall to tie into the plans with the newly received grant funds for that area.

Councilmember Osman agreed that there needs to be communication between the Arts Council and Public Works for future planning. He mentioned that if the roundabout at Town Center Drive is approved, he suggested a fountain or showcase an art piece in the center. Mayor Dunn agreed that it would be good timing for City's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and a good location.

Councilmember Harrison stated that she liked the idea of a trio of art pieces that Mr. Howell suggested at Middle Lake. She remarked that the art piece at Gezer Park is one of her favorites and loves that it appears to float in the pond. She suggested that a future art piece could be installed in the water at Middle Lake instead of along the shoreline.

Councilmember Sipple stated that he would like to see a list of priority preferences from the Arts Council.

Kim Hinkle addressed the Governing Body via Zoom. Ms. Hinkle stated she would pass along comments to the Arts Council Chairperson and Art in Public Place Initiative (APPI) Committee. She stated the opportunities are great.

Mayor Dunn stated that this is a master plan that could be modified or edited each year. She thanked Mr. Howell and his team at PLAID Collaborative, as well as the staff and Arts Council.

*The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.*