

Westport Arts Advisory Committee
Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 12 noon, Town Hall room 201

Present: Miggs Burroughs, Nancy Diamond, Richard Epstein, Shobana Mani, Elizabeth Strick, Dina Upton.

Guests: Harris Falk; Beth Huisking (Westport Playhouse)

Unable to attend: Kathie Bennewitz, Eric Chiang, Frederic Chiu, Lee Goldstein, Jerri Graham, Jessica Noyes, Charles Rosoff,

Call to order 12:10pm: co-chair Nancy Diamond

Welcome guests: Beth Huisking from the Westport Playhouse

Downtown Planning Committee, [DPC] Dina Upton

Dina will put together photographs of sculpture for consideration for the Westport downtown area by the river. The DPC are looking for one large work, one midsize environmental piece and some smaller works. Installation and lighting will be provided by the DPC Committee. The WAAC agreed that artists should be remunerated for their work, a budget is to be established. The committee recommended some artists names and Dina will follow up as well as other sub-committee members. (Kathie, Dina, Eric, Nancy and Elizabeth)

Discussion of WAAC's role:

The committee continued to discuss WAAC's role as it relates to the community and to non-profits. The committee debated whether (other than TEA Talks) we should hold events or bolster the events of the art's nonprofit community. No conclusion was made but the discussion continues.

Discussion of New WAAC Members:

Three new members were discussed at the committee meeting, although none were in attendance. They are Mary Ballantyne, Kyla Sullivan, and Britt Steel. Andrea Moore met with Britt Steel and Shobana Mani met with all three potential members ahead of the discussion. Shobana Mani also circulate bios/cv of these potential members. Nancy made a motion to make a recommendation to invite Brit Steel to the join committee. Richard seconded the motion and all were in favor. Her name will now go to the First Selectwoman for approval and appointment. The committee will consider the other two people at our next meeting. WAAC feels that Britt Steel can focus on social media and work with a hired social media professional to create a WAAC social media presence.

Discussion of Social Media:

The "Lets Connect" meeting on February 7th which brought local arts organizations together had been helpful to the arts community and all expressed that we do it again in six months'

time. A few different ideas were discussed. First, how to improve and create a presence for WAAC on Instagram, with our website and our Facebook Page.

Nancy put forward the idea for hiring a part time social media person. Britt Steel could work with this person to craft our presence. The committee felt that they could best bolster the activities of the arts nonprofits with a following on social media. Moreover, a facebook page has been created by Eric Chiang. The page would be a way for arts organizations to share ideas and work together. The committee liked the idea. Dina will contact Liz at MOCA and Rachel Cohen for possible names for consideration, Nancy and Shobana will meet with possible candidates for the social media role.

How to buy art: Shobana

After further discussion the committee agreed to hold an event co-organized by *My Design Port*. It would include a panel discussion on how to choose and buy art and would be held in the Barn at the Playhouse during the artist collective exhibition in June. The event will also include an auction of WestPAC art that has been de-accessioned. A tentative date for the how to buy art event is Wednesday, June 14. Refreshments will be served. Shobana established a sub-committee for the event to include Kathie, Charles, and Miggs. She will follow up at the next meeting with details for the event.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, April 11, 2023, at 12 noon Town Hall room 201.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:10pm

Respectfully submitted.

Elizabeth Strick. Secretary Westport Arts Advisory Committee