

Youth Commission
Wednesday, June 2, 2021
Downtown Reading Art Walk
6:00 pm

Members Present – G. Munoz Arias, K. Shapiro, M. Hutchinson, W. Butler, W. Butler, B. Hernandez, W. Victoriano

Others Present – S. Smith, J. Zabala, L. Sihelnik, D. Reed

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Sihelnik called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

DOWNTOWN ART WALK

Ms. Sihelnik noted the importance of public art and place making.

Ms. Reed provided an overview of the draft legislation currently being considered by City Council. She also noted the importance of public art and explained the past program of development projects putting a percentage of the cost of the project into public art.

The group walked through the courtyard between 6th & 7th St from Penn St to Cherry St and observed four pieces of public art. There was discussion about the need for an Art Commissioner to oversee public art and to ensure that it is maintained. Several of these pieces of art are currently in need of repair.

The group then walked the 600 block of Cherry St and observed the artwork that is hanging on the parking garage. There was a discussion about food vendors and sidewalk sales.

The group walked along 7th St and admired the pretzel murals, a joint art project with Reading's sister city, Reutlingen.

The group then crossed Penn St and continued on 7th St along the railroad tracks toward the County Services Center. Two murals were admired along the tracks. The walk continued to Reed St and to the courtyard behind 645 Penn St. Downtown architecture was also admired.

All members were encouraged to review the public art legislation and send

comments and questions to Ms. Smith. They were also encouraged to walk their neighborhoods to find works of art – sculpture, murals, landscaping, etc.

DISCUSSION OF ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Zabala explained that since terms expire on July 1 and a member will be aging off the Commission, elections will occur at the July meeting.

Ms. Sihelnik reminded members that this is a recommendation but that the Commission will make its own decisions. She described how Council members must also consider staff recommendations when making decisions.

Ms. Munoz Arias questioned how the election would occur. Mr. Zabala stated that it would occur at the meeting. He reminded all that the Youth Commission operates publicly.

Ms. Victoriano questioned how members will know enough about the candidates to make a decision. Mr. Zabala stated that each candidate will make a statement before voting to assist members with their decisions.

Ms. Sihelnik stated that those who have volunteered for positions will be presented and motions will then be taken from the floor. She agreed that there needs to be open discussion.

Ms. Smith offered to send an explanatory email to members to explain the election process in Roberts Rules. She stated that it can be confusing especially for those who are not familiar with Roberts Rules. The members agreed that this would be helpful.

A poll was taken and members noted their preference for in-person meetings.

Ms. Sihelnik charged all members to find art in their neighborhoods. She expressed the belief that Reading is a very walkable City.

Mr. Zabala agreed and reminded all that if the art in their neighborhoods is not included on the art map, to be sure to add it.

NEXT MEETING

Ms. Sihelnik stated that the City's Managing Director will make a presentation at the next meeting. She stated that he will describe the City's Departments and how

they work together. She stated that she is unsure if the meeting will be held in City Hall.

Ms. Smith stated that Reading has many parks. She suggested that the next meeting be held in a park to remain outdoors for in-person meetings. She asked members to send suggestions of parks and she will make the necessary arrangements.

The next regular meeting of the Youth Commission will be held on Wednesday, July 7 at 6 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Shelly Smith, CMC
Deputy City Clerk