

**City of St. Helens**  
**Arts & Cultural Commission**  
**Minutes from Tuesday, June 9, 2015**  
City Council Chambers

**Members Present**

Kannikar Petersen  
Luanne Kreutzer  
Kevin Chavez, Chair  
Joan Youngberg

**Councilors in Attendance**

Susan Conn

**Staff Present**

Jennifer Johnson, Secretary  
John Walsh, City Administrator

**Members Absent**

Diane Dillard, Vice Chair  
Rosemary Imhof

**Guests**

Antonia Doggett  
Al Petersen  
Nathan Don



**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Kevin Chavez called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Chavez gave a brief description on the proposed mural project. The Commission received two formal comments via email. Chair Chavez read the emails.

*I like the rhino, really well drawn, but think it should be a local animal. A deer or elk- even one of those crazy big horned cows out in the field when you come into town!*

*It's a great image, but it's a stretch to connect mail and the idea of an animal half a world away...*

*Thanks,  
Stephanie Bryan*

*Not enough time to get comments in. Just saw the art on facebook. Please do not create another art project that puts the city in a negative light. Shades of the infamous volcano fiasco. Bring back Paul Coca's art.*

*This is more than whimsy. It is plain ugly. Keep Portland weird, not St. Helens. If it were taken from a children's book about the city, maybe. But a rhinoceros has nothing to do with the town or its history. And to see kids depicted as playing with the mail, it is a bad example to kids and adults. Mail is not to be trivialized.*

*Lynn Chiotti*

The Commission discussed all the positive verbal feedback from members of the community. Antonia Doggett said the Rhino was chosen to ask that question, "Why the Rhino?" She hopes kids will look at the mural and ask more questions about rhinos. We all live together on the same planet even if you don't see these types of animals every day. It could spark awareness that rhinos are endangered. She mentioned the location of the school. Children will pass by the mural everyday on their way to school. Native animals are something we see all the time she hopes to bring something different to the mural.

Commissioner Kreutzer was concerned about negative opinion.

Chair Chavez said the feedback he has been seeing on the project is mostly the question why. He shared a quote with the Commission. He said this project will show that the City has tolerance for new ideas. People are asking why means this is a good project.

Commissioner Petersen said when something is predictable it becomes invisible. Art is not always understood.

Councilor Conn said art should stimulate conversation.

City Administrator John Walsh mentioned extending the public hearing to the next meeting if the concern is not enough public comment. Commissioner Petersen said they would like to get this project in front of the Council next week. She would like to get this approved in time to start painting in August. City Administrator Walsh asked about the postmaster agreeing with the concept. Chair Chavez said the postmaster is okay with the project. They did ask why the Rhino.

## **VISITORS**

Visitor Al Petersen commented. He said it all depends on the concept. What the art looks like or if someone thinks it's "ugly" is not criteria for a recommendation to City Council. He wanted to remind everyone that the Before I Die wall project was also called ugly. There is now overwhelming positive comments on that project. Petersen has heard positive comments about the mural project. He mentioned people are tired of seeing the same old thing such as an elk or salmon.

Visitor Nathan Don commented. He studies art and enjoys art. He has visited the Art Institute of Portland and has seen all kinds of art. He said this is a wonderful idea for the fact that it is different. Not many cities have a rhino on their post office. It will be like a landmark.

## **PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED**

The public hearing was closed at 6:02 p.m.

Chair Chavez called the regular meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

The Commission reviewed the guidelines for a recommendation to the City Council.

Commissioner Kreutzer mention a written agreement is needed from the postmaster. The City has communication that supports the use of the building for the mural. City Administrator Walsh suggested a use and maintenance agreement.

**Motion:** Commissioner Petersen made a motion to recommend approval of the mural project to the City Council. Commissioner Kreutzer seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 30, 2015 at 6 p.m.

✎

Submitted by:

Jennifer Johnson  
Utility Billing Specialist

*Present=P Absent=A*

Date	Kreutzer	Petersen	Dillard	Youngberg	Imhof	Chavez	Vacant
February 5, 2015	A	P	P	P	P	P	-
March 5, 2015	P	P	P	A	P	P	-
April 2, 2015	p	P	P	P	P	P	-
June 9, 2015	P	P	A	P	A	P	-