

**Pompano Beach  
Public Art Committee – Collier City Artist in Residence Subcommittee  
Meeting**

City Hall  
Commission Chambers Conference Room

March 2, 2017  
3:00 P.M.

**MINUTES**

**A. Call to Order**

**B. Roll Call**

Mimi Botscheller

Terrence Davis - *LATE*

Kevin Dorival - *ABSENT*

Tobi Aycock

Dahlia Baker (Chair)

**C. Evaluation:**

**1. Interview Shortlisted Artist – Michael Parker**

Mr. Parker stated that he would like to ask questions of the subcommittee. He has never been to Pompano Beach, and he would like to get a feel for the City. He is also looking for what the Committee's intent for the Collier City project is.

Ms. Atria stated that the Committee would like the artist to engage the community and teach the community.

Mr. Parker stated that his work is all based on the process. He wants to know what the committee wants from the project. He has had push-back from allowing the community to have a voice.

Ms. Botscheller stated that it is an opportunity for the artist to learn about the community and for the community to understand the world of art. The Committee is open to whatever the artist wants, but it should reflect the spirit of the community.

Terry Davis joined at this time.

Mr. Parker stated that he spent time at the Collier City library to find out about the area. He feels that he can go into the community and express the community, but he will not sugar-coat the result.

Ms. Atria asked Mr. Parker to elaborate on not sugar-coating the work.

Mr. Parker stated that he has used images of some residents of Bradenton and things that were related to them. He received push-back from the community because they were seen as "thugs."

Ms. Aycock asked what medium he would use.

Mr. Parker stated that he is comfortable with wood, metal, and paint. He would be able to use his workshop. He asked what the expectation is for his presence in the community.

Mr. Davis stated that he would not have to move in, but he should be able to have an understanding of what the community means. The area is predominately African-American and the residents have been there for generations. There should be outreach to the community at the churches, stores, and community areas. The artist is in charge of the art, but it should be an extension of the community. The area likes large-scale art.

Ms. Baker stated that the CRA will be painting several houses in the community.

Mr. Parker stated that he noticed that there were a lot of people who came out to the sporting event, but not many are in the area during the day. He wondered if the community would react well if he called for a “try-out.”

Ms. Atria stated that the artist would be responsible for the final product.

Mr. Parker stated that he would like to use volunteers and he would cover them under his insurance. He had used a “try-out” format for a previous installation. The area had a high truancy rate and it kept the kids engaged. His murals were done completely by the volunteers. He taught the kids how to do the work and that way the work did not have his bias.

Mr. Davis asked if the work would be shown to the Public Art Committee before it is installed.

Mr. Parker stated that it is mandatory. He wants to make sure that the committee is ok with him being a facilitator of the work and not an artist who is doing it himself. His work in the community included a papier-mâché project with the kids. While working with artists from the University of South Florida, he introduced the kids of Sulpher Springs to music and sculpture. The kids performed a live cardboard concert in front of 150 people at the local community college. He has worked with children from the community and college students.

Mr. Davis asked how Mr. Parker is with older people with strong personalities.

Mr. Parker said that he doesn't know.

Ms. Aycock stated that the people in the community are outspoken, but they know what they are talking about.

Mr. Davis stated that it may take some time for the residents to warm up to the artist, but there are lots of creative people in the community.

Mr. Parker stated that it is important to him to have many voices when he is doing outreach. It is important to have everyone get. He stated that when learning about a community, usually it starts with places and landmarks, then to family and friends. After that, he finds that people open up about emotions and beliefs. That is where he likes to go.

Mr. Davis stated that he needs to have a teaching space, but asked what else he may need.

Mr. Parker stated that he would like a place to stay if possible.

Ms. Atria stated that she is working to see if there is anything that the City can do.

Mr. Davis stated that the community shies away from murals.

Mr. Parker stated that he has heard before that murals are equated with depressed communities, but he feels that what he's doing is bigger than just painting a mural.

He presented some of his past works.

Mr. Parker asked if he could be put in touch with a police officer in the area. He wants someone to lead him into the community in order to gain the trust of the community.

Ms. Baker said that she could get him in touch with police officers or Code Compliance officers.

Mr. Davis stated that it may be difficult to find a location, but if there are locations that may need to be altered, the artist could approach the committee with his ideas.

Mr. Parker stated that he likes the idea of spacing the engagements out, but he worries that he may lose people. He would like to have a couple months where he could stay in the area. Some of the prep could be done in Ruskin.

## **2. Interview Shortlisted Artist – Ya Levy-La'ford**

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she is from Broward County and that she joined her parents in their outreach. She went to college for Law and lobbied in Washington DC to ensure that children can get an education. She has worked with kids in drawing classes to encourage creativity and life skills. Her practice is mostly public art. She creates installations that only work when the viewer's intervene. She feels that it is important to understand the challenges of the community. That comes with gaining the support of the community leaders and by having the trust of the communities. She has art that is interactive and that can be engaging. Some of her work is based on some technology

from China. Some of the children she has worked with learn about China and express an interest in other cultures. She has worked with various causes including domestic abuse victims and environmental protection. Most of the work presented is from the past few years. She is passionate about her work and has opportunities to continue doing this work throughout the world. Children that she has worked with have been excited to see someone that looks like them create beautiful work. Her work instills in those she reaches a need to pass on the knowledge that they gained. One of her installations included children, a band, and hundreds of people to unveil the piece. While she gets the children to create with her, she also has them give back to their community and to the homeless. She is interested in helping the homeless and has used pictures of homeless people to start conversations about homelessness. Her work attracted sponsors and has inspired people after it was done. She believes that her work is not successful just because it is pretty, but because it has engaged the community. She has done wooden sculptures as well.

Mr. Davis asked if she would be doing the work.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she includes the children in each part including the ideas, the creation, the finish, and the unveiling. Her work with the Tampa Bay Rays and the Boys and Girls Club allowed kids to be a part of an installation that symbolized promises to be better people. Her work with the medical field allowed her to connect with those who have gone through traumatic events and to believe in the human spirit. She also worked with guide dogs and allowed kids to see what it's like to lose senses. The kids were able to empathize with blind people and they realized that they can overcome their own problems. She presented her work in China, Thailand, and Cuba. Even though they could not speak the same language, the universal language of art allowed them to communicate. She is working with the Fairmount community and will be installing a metal sculpture. She will be putting her work in the middle of nowhere to make it somewhere. The most important thing is transformation. She will be learning the area and will focus on transforming Collier City to become a great location. She will use her travels to bring other cultures to the children of Pompano Beach. She has a trailer and would be looking for a champion in the community. The additional money for the art will be going to the community, not to the artist. She would do a pop-up event that would allow the community to approach her and find out what her intentions are. She would use social media and livestream. Public housing is important to her and her husband's families. It is also an important part of the community. She would work with the housing authority to find a space for the mural.

Mr. Davis stated that there is little section 8 housing or public housing in Collier City. The residents like large installations and would expect a big impact. He asked about her installations that include light.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she uses light because she believes it symbolizes life. She uses LED, which is inexpensive. Her work is not political or controversial because it is geometric shapes.

Mr. Davis suggested getting support from the Collier City Library.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she loves working with libraries.

Mr. Davis noted that the community is relatively older and not as cooperative.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she has worked with older people as well. She also engages banks and teaches the kids the importance of money management. She would allow public figures to engage the children of the community. She brings in Police and other public figures as well.

Mr. Davis asked how much time she would be spending on this work.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she will be spending a great amount of time doing it. She has a trailer and her parent's home in Coral Springs. The only thing she needs is support.

Mr. Davis stated that the folks in Collier City have been there for a long time. The committee wants something that is created from the community, not something that is installed in the community.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she believes that the art should reflect the community.

Mr. Davis stated that some of the residents do not like murals.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that when you can show the community what they would get and have them understand that it is valuable and upscale, the community embraces it. She is used to having push-back from murals.

Mr. Davis stated that finding a location may be difficult.

Ms. Levy-La'ford asked if there are any spaces that would be wanted.

The subcommittee stated that they do not have specific places in mind, but places that are important to the community would be preferred. If the artist needs help getting a place, the Subcommittee can help the artist out.

Ms. Atria asked if Ms. Levy-La'ford would be able to cover the volunteers under her insurance.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she would be able to do that.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that her work doesn't get vandalized because it is protected by the community.

Ms. Baker asked if Ms. Levy-La'ford had gone into the community.

Ms. Levy-La'ford stated that she has been there and has friends that live there.

Mr. Davis doesn't want to push the residents out, but instead to embrace them.

Ms. Levy-La'ford shared that she thinks that the community should be preserved. She wants to do something for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. She would also like to engage the homeless and work with them.

### **3. Select Final Artist**

Ms. Atria asked what the subcommittee thought of the applicants.

Ms. Baker stated that she thinks that the two are completely different

Ms. Atria stated that she is worried that Mr. Parker seems less positive.

Ms. Baker felt that Mr. Parker is about the final piece, whereas Ms. Levy-La'ford is about the journey.

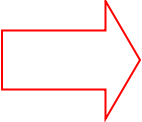
Ms. Botscheller stated that Mr. Parker seems like a warm person.

Ms. Baker is worried that Mr. Parker is worried about push-back.

Ms. Aycock stated that he has dealt with similar communities.

Ms. Baker is worried that the geometric shapes may not be a lasting symbol for the community.

Mr. Davis stated that he likes how she seems like she would work well with other people's ideas.

 **MOTION** by Mimi Botscheller and seconded by Tobi Aycock to select Ya Levy-La'ford. All voted in favor of the above motion.

The committee expressed their appreciation for the work of Michael Parker.

### **D. Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Dahlia Baker to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 5:32.

**\*NOTE: If access to City Hall is needed, you may contact Laura Atria, Public Art Program Manager, at (954)632-3006.**

