



City of Homer

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Memorandum

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
FROM: PUBLIC ARTS COMMITTEE
THROUGH: RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK
DATE: JANUARY 13, 2014
SUBJECT: DONATION OF ARTWORK – BRONZE BUST OF BROTHER ASAIAH

BACKGROUND

John Nazarian has commissioned local artist Leo Vait to create and sculpt a life size bust of **Asaiah Bates, commonly referred to as “Brother Asaiah”**. Mr. Files or Ms. Martha Anderson are acting as Mr. **Nazarian’s** local representative for this proposed donation.

The WKFL Park was donated by Brother Asaiah to the city. Within the selected location there is a rock with a dedication plaque and it is here that the proposed bronze bust will be placed. It is intended to be a permanent placement and will be attached by the appropriate means.

At a special meeting on January 9, 2014 the Public Arts Committee deliberated and heard public testimony against the idea of a sculpture and or placement in WKFL Park. Following is the excerpt from the minutes of their discussion and ensuing motion:

NEW BUSINESS

A. Donation of Commissioned Artwork for Placement within WKFL Park

- 1. Gift proposal form*
- 2. Pictures of proposed art donation*
- 3. Resume of artist*
- 4. Artist previous works*
- 5. Photos of Asaiah Bates*
- 6. Letters of support*

Vice Chair Miller read the title into the record. Ms. Krause noted this started with an inquiry from Ms. Otteson.

Ms. Otteson stated that Leo Vait, local artist, contacted her regarding his commissioned sculpture, stating that he wanted approval before further work was done on the sculpture and submittal to the foundry. Ms. Otteson felt that it should go before the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission since it was being requested to be placed in a city park. She contacted Ms. Krause who notified her about the process in place for donating works of art to the city.

Chair Newby expressed appreciation for Ms. Otteson and the city manager for their support of the protocols; she stated that she received emails with photos from Mr. Will Files.

Discussion ensued on the cost of the artwork and what the procedure was regarding the donation application. Chair Newby provided a summary explanation on the background of the application and recalled the donation of the bench as a memorial for the eagle lady. Vice Chair Miller stated that it still did not explain the procedure on what the committee should do now. Ms. Aplin stated that while the idea of the donation is acceptable, it is apparent that the venue may not be acceptable.

Commissioner Lowney was permitted to offer her comment stating that this item was on the Parks and Recreation Commission agenda next week and she believed that due to the conflict on the appropriateness of the suggested placement in WKFL Park that they provide more opportunity for the public to weigh in, she further opined that she understood the concern expressed by Mr. Landfield regarding the overcrowding of the park but she had less concern on that since it would be installed on top of an existing rock, technically it is not taking up space.

The committee discussed the need for further opportunity for a public hearing; that Brother Asaiah was a very unassuming man; why this project needed fast tracking through the process and making a quick decision. The committee expressed concern on the venue being appropriate. It was determine that council was the appropriate forum to get the word out to the public.

Vice Chair Miller requested a motion. Ms. Krause requested a few minutes to draft the appropriate motion for the committee.

APLIN/NEWBY - MOVED TO RECOMMEND THAT THE DONATION OF THE SCULPTURE WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO ADD TO THE MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION HOWEVER THERE IS A QUESTION REGARDING THE LOCATION BEING APPROPRIATE AND THEREFORE RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE ISSUE. FURTHERMORE, THE COMMITTEE WOULD ALSO RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL INCLUDE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING ON JANUARY 16, 2014 IN THEIR DELIBERATIONS.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

RECOMMENDATION

MOVE TO RECOMMEND COUNCIL HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING TO OBTAIN MORE INPUT ON THE PLACEMENT OF A LIFE SIZE BUST OF BROTHER ASAIAH IN WKFL PARK