



Village of Niles
PUBLIC ARTS & CULTURE ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.
In-Person, Village Hall, 1000 Civic Center Drive, Niles
2nd Floor Conference Room/EOC

Members Present:

Marina Samovsky – Photographer
Carol Luc – Artist
Carly Derec – Artist

Tracy Holmes - Niles Chamber of Commerce
Kathleen Gallegos – Artist
Barbara Karawacki – Niles Historical Society

Members Absent:

Sarah Djordjevic – Maine East Fine Arts Dept
Victoria Luz- Niles - Maine District Library
Ramon Pierto – VFW Post 3579

Julie Jentel - Niles Park District
Angie Schab – School District 63

Village Officials/Staff Present:

Katie Schneider – Community Engagement Coordinator
George D. Alpogianis - Mayor

I. Call to Order:

Marina Samovsky called the meeting to order in person on Tuesday, August 15 2023 at Village Hall, EOC, 1000 Civic Center Drive at 4:35 p.m.

II. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Carol Luc made a motion to accept the Minutes of the July 11, 2023 meeting with an update to the attendance. Tracy Holmes seconded the motion, all were in favor, none opposed. Minutes approved.

IV. Organization Representative Reports

Members of the Council each gave an update as it relates to art and culture initiatives.

V. Niles Artisan Guild

No report was given.

VI. Old Business

- a. **Golf Mill Park Art Sculpture:** Mayor George D. Alpogianis spoke to the Council regarding three proposals for a sculpture at Golf Mill Park. The artists were asked to pay tribute to WW2 Veteran Matthew Wojtaszek, US NAVY Veteran and longtime Niles resident. The artist and proposals were selected by contracted consultant Sandro, Inc. with the recommendation that artist Mark Arnold’s “Lest We Forget: Quiet Courage” be selected for the indicated site. Sandro, Inc. was of the opinion that the three soldier bronze statues were a beautiful tribute to Veterans and would tell a compelling story of WW2, soldiers and the impact of war on our country and our town. The sculpture that has lifelike statues was recommended as a first step for Niles to enter into the art world. The piece is more traditional. Mayor Alpogianis spoke to the Council and stated that he supported the recommendation and wanted to move forward with this piece, he asked the Council to discuss and dismissed himself from the meeting. The Council discussed and determined that the proposed sculpture by Mark Arnold was a tribute and a beautiful way to honor WW2, but it was not art. The recommended piece is a memorial and if the goal is to bring art to Niles, this is not the right piece. The Council suggested that there may be a better place for it, potentially by the Veteran’s Waterfall (Touhy/Milwaukee).

They were also concerned that the piece was too small for the space and that before we spend the money, there should be an artistic concept for Golf Mill park centered around a general theme. The purpose of Golf Mill Park is for all ages to enjoy and be a welcoming place for events that bring people together. With the park district sports and recreational part at the other end, it implies that the park is kid centered and a war memorial is probably not the best fit. The Council agreed that Marina and Katie would prepare a memo response for the Mayor and Trustees.

b. **A&C Community Grant Program** – No discussion was had on this topic.

c. **VII. New Business**

a. **Village Wide Art Plan:** This was part of the discussion during Old Business. No further discussion was had.

VIII. Open Discussion

There was no open discussion.

IX. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. and will be in person only.

X. Adjournment

Julie Jentel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 p.m. Angie Schab second the motion, all were in favor, none opposed. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: Katie Schneider, Community Engagement Coordinator