**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING**

**OF THE REIDSVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**HELD FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2014 AT 9 A.M.**

**FIRST-FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL**

**CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor John M. “Jay” Donecker

Mayor Pro Tem Harry L. Brown

Councilman Tom Balsley

Councilman Donald L. Gorham

Councilman William Hairston

Councilman Clark Turner

Councilwoman Sherri G. Walker

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** NONE

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:** Michael J. Pearce, City Manager

Angela G. Stadler, CMC, City Clerk

David Bracken, Fire Chief

**DISCUSSION OF DOWNTOWN ART.**

Mayor Donecker called the meeting to order. He then turned the meeting over to City Manager Pearce, who discussed the accident that toppled the Confederate Soldier, the meeting with Susan Haskell last February which showed that putting something in the intersection was a lot more complicated than they had imagined. He worked with local artists Brad and Tammy Spencer, who knew what needed to be done and what type of process was needed to select an artist. He said he also got a lot of good advice from John York, who helped him advertise the “Call for Artists.”

Pearce then introduced the Artist Selection Panel comprised of Patricia Harden, Calvert Smith, Rochelle Tucker, Ginger Waynick, Tilda Balsley and Barbara DeJournette and advisor David Finn, who is a professor of art at Wake Forest University.

The City Manager explained the process used, beginning with a nationwide “Call for Artists.” At first, he had planned to restrict applications to North Carolina but was told he wouldn’t get enough artists apply. The Call went out over various artists’ blogs, through Tri-State Sculptors and York’s website beginning August 29.

Pearce then took a minute to recognize Jen Nixon of the Reidsville Area Foundation, which contributed $30,000 of the $60,000 budget for the project.

Pearce used a PowerPoint presentation to explain the process. (A COPY OF THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION IS HEREIN INCORPORATED AND MADE A PART OF THESE MINUTES.) Applications were due by September 29th, and 51 artists responded, only three of which were from North Carolina. The panel met and went through 500-plus slides, about 10 images from each of the artists. The panel went through and gave a “thumbs up, thumps down” to each artist and narrowed the field down to four finalists: Michael Dillon, Joshua Wiener, Christopher Fennell and Jim Gallucci. He reviewed images from the finalists and discussed them briefly. Three of the four submitted a proposal with Fennell, who recycles items representative of the local community, explaining his process. However, Fennell’s method would probably add another six months to the process, the City Manager said.

The panel selected Jim Gallucci of Greensboro, Pearce stated, adding that it was “icing on the cake” that Gallucci was a local sculptor.

Pearce said the question is “What’s next?” He said the process will include a lot of tweaking of the proposed sculpture. He added that we plan to invite citizens to Café 99 to meet the artist soon. He reviewed the proposed schedule, including that for maintenance, that will be followed once the Council agrees to enter into a contract with Mr. Gallucci and his final concept is accepted by the Artist Selection Panel.

The City Manager then turned the presentation over to Mr. Gallucci, who provided some history about himself. He noted that he has been in Greensboro for 35 years and has known Brad and Tammy Spencer since coming to the area. He said he has over 40 years making art.

Mr. Gallucci then went through a PowerPoint presentation showing past public art projects and detailing how he came up with his concept for Reidsville’s downtown art project. (A COPY OF THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION IS HEREIN INCORPORATED AND MADE A PART OF THESE MINUTES.) He explained that his concept “Bud” is all about hope and is rooted in rediscovering the City’s agrarian past. The re-enforced concrete star at the base represents the City’s “All-America City” designation and at 30-inches tall meets NCDOT standards in case it is struck by a vehicle, he continued. The sculpture is made out of stainless steel, he said.

Mr. Gallucci discussed the use of LED lighting at the bottom and inside the top of the sculpture. He talked of the longevity of the lighting, which can last up to 50,000 hours, as well as its versatility, noting the capability of changing the colors used. The LED technology is constantly improving and the life of the lighting may be greatly improved by the time this sculpture is finished, he pointed out.

Mr. Gallucci explained the total height of the sculpture is 15-16 feet tall but could go up to 18 feet. He explained further how the computerized LED lighting works and the access panels. The stainless steel is reflective, he said, and site preparation is minimal and existing footings may be used for the sculpture. He said the base should be okay since it held a 10,000-pound statue. He said installation may require the closing of the street for a couple of days.

Councilman Turner noted that the sculpture’s stainless steel appears to be edged with some kind of design. Mr. Gallucci explained it has a random pattern to it, which accentuates the lighting and catches the sun.

Councilman Balsley asked if recyclable material is used? Mr. Gallucci said that stainless steel is globally recycled from places like Finland, Sweden and Duluth, Georgia.

City Manager Pearce also pointed out that Mr. Gallucci’s selection was a unanimous decision by the committee. He asked if any of the Artist Selection Panel members wanted to make any comments?

Ginger Waynick said Gallucci’s sculpture fit the space better than anything else they saw. Rochelle Tucker said she had liked the concept of hope in the sculpture. She added that nobody else picked up on Reidsville being an “All-America City”, something the City was able to do because we all pulled together. She said she was enthusiastic with the sculpture and what can come from it. Mayor Pro Tem Brown made reference that Rockingham County is called North Carolina’s North Star.

Councilman Turner said he was impressed that Gallucci took the time to study Reidsville to come up with the concept.

Fire Chief David Bracken said that the whole bud concept stood out from among the other concepts, that it was agricultural and reflects that we haven’t forgotten our heritage and where we come from.

Bob Wickless said he liked that Gallucci picked up on the “All-America City” designation and the art deco influence that he got from the City Hall building. The other finalists had fabulous pieces that would work in other places, he said.

Ginger Waynick noted that the piece builds on the base of our previous success. Patricia Harden said the sculpture is accessible to all.

Councilman Hairston said he likes the lighted “bud” which captures attention, showing we are very much alive, that there is light within our City.

Discussion turned briefly to using art to engage youth. Ginger Waynick noted that they had discussed opportunities to teach youth about art through this process. Councilwoman Walker said our students are our future or our “buds.” Waynick noted that during football season, she could see the bud being blue and gold, representing Reidsville High School’s colors. It was noted that the nearby Reidsville Public Library might be a good location to house the computer for the lighting.

David Finn, the committee’s advisor, said he was really excited about working with Gallucci, adding that we are fortunate to have him close by.

Brad Spencer talked about his relationship with Gallucci. When this process started, he said he thought of Gallucci although he made sure not to influence the process. He said he didn’t even know whether Jim had submitted an application, stressing that this was not an inside job but the committee’s decision. He said the committee should be commended for treating this process very seriously and coming to a terrific decision.

Bob Wickless noted that the four finalists were great, but Gallucci was the only one who nailed it. While all four were capable, Gallucci was the unanimous decision, he stressed.

Councilman Gorham said the sculpture looks like it is complete to him. He said he agreed with everything that has been said although he joked that he saw the sculpture lighting in green, Green Bay Packer green.

City Manager Pearce said the next action is to approve a contract with Mr. Gallucci so that we can keep working on the process. His budget falls within our budget, and we are satisfied that he can accomplish it with the monies available. Therefore, he said he is recommending Mr. Gallucci.

Mayor Donecker thanked the committee, noting it had been an amazing process that ended with this. It makes sense and has been well thought out, he said, stressing that everybody has an opinion, but this makes sense.

**Councilman Balsley made the motion to accept Gallucci going forward to put a piece of art in the space. The motion was seconded by Councilman Turner.**

Councilman Balsley said he didn’t even know this committee was meeting. Tilda Balsley, who is the wife of the Councilman’s cousin, said when Jim produced this, everybody said “that’s it.” We were really taken by this and the whole group agreed, she said.

**The motion then passed in a 7-0 vote by Council.**

**Councilman Gorham then made the motion, seconded by Councilwoman Walker and unanimously approved by Council in a 7-0 vote, to adjourn.**

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John M. “Jay” Donecker, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Angela G. Stadler, CMC/NCCMC, City Clerk