

A special meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held Tuesday, November 12, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

President Lori Wilshire presided; City Clerk Susan K. Lovering recorded.

Prayer was offered by City Clerk Susan K. Lovering; Alderman Brandon Laws led in the Pledge to the Flag.

The roll call was taken with 13 members of the Board of Aldermen present; Alderwoman Melizzi-Golja and Alderman Ben Clemons were recorded absent.

His Honor, Mayor James W. Donchess, and Corporation Counsel Steven A. Bolton were also in attendance.

President Wilshire

I did hear from Alderwoman Melizzi-Golja, she will be joining us at our next meeting; she had a commitment this evening.

COMMUNICATIONS

From: Lori Wilshire, President, Board of Aldermen

Re: Special Board of Aldermen Meeting

There being no objection, President Wilshire accepted the communication and placed it on file.

DISCUSSION

Nashua Sculpture Symposium – presented by Kathy Hersh. Thank you for being here this evening.

Kathy Hersh Thank you very much for having me and I apologize that we are going to be seeing small pictures instead of large pictures. But I'd be happy to come back if you ever want to see it again. Anyways, sculptures, no because you know why, I have to come over to impress.

The Nashua International Sculpture Symposium has created many sculptures throughout Nashua that are enlivening our parks, can everybody pretty much see it; making our drive more pleasant; representing important Nashua values, like family; celebrating our industrial history, embracing our diverse cultures, offering a place to relax, giving us something to ponder, providing games like mancala, and welcoming immigrants to Nashua.

Each year in May, since 2008, sculptors have come to Nashua from around the world to create a sculpture as a gift to the City. People like Sarah Mae Wasserstrum from Israel and Luben Boykov from Bulgaria, and Michele Golia from Italy; all whose sculptures are at Rotary Common. People like Amgalan Tsevegmid from Mongolia, Lasha Khidasheli from the Republic of Georgia, and Kim Sunjin from Korea. They look like a very serious, conscientious group but they really had a lot of fun and silly moments when they were here in Nashua.

The Symposium work site is at the Picker Artists at 3 Pine Street in the Millyard, this is home 6 days a week, for 3 weeks for the sculptures as they create they sculptures. They love having visitors, like these children from the Ledge Street School, Gerard Oroo Motondi from Kenya, loved to sing his Kenyan song to the children and Jocelyn Pratt from New Zealand was very happy to give everyone pieces of her marble that created her sculpture that is now at Bicentennial Park.

The Telegraph has been a great supporter and they really express exactly what we want to express; that these sculptures are accessible. They all are in public places and they are created specifically for you to be able to access them, to go up to them, to touch them, to feel them, to climb on them, that's really the purpose.

It is art as part of everyday living, instead of having to go to a museum or an art gallery to see art and to experience art, it is in your neighborhoods, it is at your schools, it is at the Fire Station, it is behind City Hall. Everywhere you go, hopefully, you will be able to experience these sculptures. So it really surrounds you in Nashua.

Sometimes on occasion some of, once in a while one of our sculptures gets to be a little too accessible, like this sculpture that was installed at Legacy Park this past spring. My husband and I went by the day after it was installed, on our way to dinner, and there were kids up on the top over 14 feet high. So we knew that that was really not going to fly with everybody. So we had to move that sculpture, we moved it over by Exit 5, right at the entry way when you come off the Everett Turnpike and it is absolutely a gorgeous location for it and it is still accessible but it is a little less enticing for that age group.

So let's get down to the nuts and bolts; there's a lot of pieces to the Symposium whether it is host families or food or the web site or tours. There are many, many pieces to it. Just about all of those pieces depend on the community. The bottom line is that the Symposium only exists because of the tremendous involvement of individuals, businesses and organizations.

People like Karen Goddard who has hosted several sculptors over the years including Tony Jimenez from Costa Rica. We have people volunteer to bring lunches and dinners throughout the 3 weeks for the sculptors as they work at the work site; we never have hungry sculptors. People like Ansel Grandmaison who since the beginning, since 2008 has lent a hand, has helped to move the sculptures from the work site to their permanent location. We could not do this without Ansel and his truck and his crane. Every once in a while a sculpture is too big for Ansel's equipment, so when asked – this one was really funny actually – because as he tried to pick it up the whole truck was going down instead of the stone going up. So this is "Speaking Bush" by Asta Vasillaikaite from Lithuania; you notice I have to know how to pronounce all of these names. Some of these names are pretty big names. And it weighs about 5 tons, so Kinney Towing came in with their incredible equipment and moved this sculpture that year. These are all people from the community, we call, we say, "We really need your help" and they come and they donate that time. We have more in-kind services, the value of in-kind services is higher than our budget.

So this past spring, Ansel's equipment wasn't working right so he called Chasse Crane over in Hudson. Chasse Crane came over and brought over this crane and I have to look at my notes because I want to make sure I get the numbers right. Everyone was blown away by this incredible crane that can handle 175 tons. Our largest sculpture is about 6 tons. So this crane can extend 307 feet in the air. This is already small, but if you really look closely you will see "Bird Dreaming" which is the one at Bicentennial Park, right here in the middle just absolutely, you can hardly see it with the crane.

We have people like Mayor Jim Donchess and Chamber President Tracy Hall, seen here welcoming the sculptors at the opening reception and they provide valuable resources to the Symposium. We are grateful to places like Hunt Community who hosted us for the opening celebration in 2019 and will be doing so again in 2020. We are extremely excited about that and their beautiful space. Bronze Craft is one of the companies who have contributed to the Symposium and this is actually an interesting story. Luben Boykov from Bulgaria was here in 2009 and he created this sculpture "Encounter" at Rotary Common, it is the one with the 2 figures with the hands almost touching. It is an interesting story about how that was created. What he did was he collected 9 twigs from Nashua and he created a mold and then he went over to Bronze Craft who poured over 800 bronze twigs from that mold.

So then he made sure that he ground them down so the edges were all smooth. He then had 2 young people, a boy and a girl, and he created body casts from them and then took all of those bronze twigs and used the body casts to create those figures that you see at Rotary Common. So unless you are around for some of the Symposia and see as they progress in their creation, you might not know some of these stories.

We certainly have a lot of challenges, just like any organization has a lot of challenges. We have a very strong, all volunteer Board of Directors, many of whom have been involved with the Symposium since the beginning in 2008. Each year we pick a theme; our theme in 2019 was "Evolve" because we had so many challenges. One of our biggest challenges and most important challenges is our artist director. Our artist director is critical to the success of the Symposium. On the left is John Weidman, he's been our artistic director since 2008; he is the founder of the Andres Institute in Brookline, NH. The Nashua Symposium is modeled after the Symposium in Brookline. Well John retired in June 2019, this past June. Jim Larson is now our new artistic director; Jim is a graduate of Hamilton College majoring in art, particularly in sculpture. Jim has worked with John at Andre's over the past 8 years and has worked with the Nashua International Sculpture Symposium since 2014. So he has a lot of experience but he is young, and he is very, very talented, he is very energetic. So now he is our artistic director which kind of adds a little bit of a new challenge, because John had his traditional view of art and I think Jim's is a little bit more expressive, his art. So we will have to see how that all comes together for Nashua.

Another challenge is our location, since the beginning we were at Nimco for 10 years and that worked very well for us. But as the building continued to deteriorate and the City finalized ownership of the building, we needed to find a new home. So in 2018 we were at MakeIT Labs which we really loved and we loved the collaboration but the inside space that we had, our dedicated space was really too small. So we are at the Picker Building in 2019 and we are hoping that is our permanent home. It has great outdoor space, has great parking thanks to Gate City Fence and the Church. It has good indoor space, it has lots of artists who are very interesting and always milling around, so hopefully that space will work out well for us. The challenge with this space, though, was that it did not have all of the criteria, like for example, our power, it did not have 220 power so we needed to upgrade for that. It did not have a compressor; things like that. So there were an additional probably \$7,000.00 or \$8,000.00 in our budget this past year in order to accommodate a change in our location.

Another challenge we have is that once in a while we have a sculpture that is really difficult to find a location for. That was the case with the "Walk Through Triumph". So we were very fortunate that Norm Bouthilette at the Boys & Girls Club welcomed this sculpture to their site. It is the only sculpture from the Symposium that is not on public property. I just want to talk a little bit about this sculpture. There are 3 sets of legs, the first set of legs on the left hand side represent somebody new coming to our country and setting foot on land in our country. The second set of legs represents that person integrating and becoming part of our country and learning the language and finding a home and finding a job and all the things you need to do to live here really, to be able to live here. And then the third set of legs is stepping off into the future. That is really part of what happens when people come new to our country; it is very exciting and it is very, very appropriate from our standpoint that it be at the Boys & Girls Club. So we couldn't be more honored to have it there.

So of course funding, this Symposium is always a challenge, our costs are our artistic director's, we pay a stipend of \$3,000.00 each to our sculptors who come from our different countries around the world. They have to cover their own transportation with that \$3,000.00. Then we have materials, the stone, the metal, we have tools, bits, blades, all those types of things. Pretty much everything else is donated by the community. Now that we are a non-profit organization, we also have administrative costs like insurance and things like that as well. Sculpture Sponsorships are a great way to support the Symposium and to create a lasting memory. Sponsorships are very personal. The "Path of Truth" by Sarah Mae Wasserstrum from Israel is a great example. When Garry and Joanna Clarke-Pounder sponsored "Path of Truth", Garry talked about why they did so.

He said, "I've been searching for a long time for an appropriate way to thank and honor my parents, Ian and Brenda Clark Pounder. I selected this particular sculpture because of its title, its inscription and its location. You see my dad has been a member of Rotary for over 20 years and has always supported its mission; service above self. My mom was a Welcome Wagon Hostess in this community for many years and has welcomed many families into the Nashua Community. So this location, Rotary Common, this sculpture "The Path of Truth" is a perfect way, in my judgement, to honor my parents and also give back to the community we call home".

As I said before, sponsorships are very personal. John Rudolph and his family sponsored "La Familia" because of its relevance to him and his family. "La Familia" was purposely placed at Park Social in the Tree Street neighborhood because it represents the importance of family. 50% of the families in that neighborhood are headed by single females. The Rudolph's are a very close knit family and they dedicated the sculpture to John's sister because she was a Spanish teacher.

Businesses and residents were so excited when South Nashua finally got its first sculpture that they teamed up and sponsored "Mother & Child" by Ennica Mukomberanwa from Zimbabwe. I'm sure you recognize or you would recognize if you could see it, several Aldermen and several of the women who are in this picture and other prominent Nashuans.

The Greek Community sponsored the sculpture from Greece by Vasilis Vasili; and the Indian Community sponsored Gopinath Subbanna's sculpture from India. Out of 35 sculptures there are 8 that are not sponsored and of course every year we get 3 additional ones. So I have pictures of the 8 that are in here and certainly if anyone is ever interested in either sponsoring a sculpture, or bringing a meal or other volunteer opportunities, we have plenty of them and we always welcome them. Honestly it is really from our standpoint one of the goals of the Sculpture Symposium is to engage the community in the creation of art. So it is part of our mission as part of what we want to do.

We are already planning for 2020; our theme for 2020 is "Whimsy" which should be very interesting. Our opening celebration will be at Hunt Community, I'm excited to say. That will be on Thursday night May 7th and then our closing is on Saturday, May 30th at 1:00. One more example of how the community participates in all of that is the City trolleys are donated as part of the effort to bring people around to see all the sculptures at the closing on Saturday.

So thank you. I want to thank everyone for making the Sculpture Symposium a success. I want to thank the City for financial support through the Nashua Arts Commission. I want to thank so many of you in this room and beyond who have been involved in this Symposium in some way and in many ways over the past 12 years. You know better than most, the importance of involvement in our community because that is what you do every day. It is why Nashua is such a great place to live. Your enthusiasm and support for the Symposium is truly appreciated. Thank you.

President Wilshire

Thank you. We appreciate your presentation that was very interesting.

Ms. Hersh I'd be happy to answer questions if there are any questions?

President Wilshire

Anyone have questions?

Alderman Lopez

Can we get that fourth turtle, because we only have 3 right now?

Ms. Hersh What's the fourth turtle?

Alderman Lopez

You have 3 turtle sculptures, it just feels like there should be a fourth?

Ms. Hersh Oh we will work on it, probably part of "Whimsy" but I never can tell what I'm going to get, it doesn't matter what the theme is, they seem to pick their own. Anything else? Thank you very much.

President Wilshire

Thank you very much, we appreciate you being here tonight.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO ADJOURN
MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Attest: Susan K. Lovering, City Clerk