

Dear Council Members,

I am writing in regards to item Number 10, the Public Arts Committee.

While I'm a huge fan of public art, I am writing to say that given Sebastopol's size, budget and staff that we should dissolve the Public Arts Committee and use the remaining funds for maintenance of current work and to commission a few permanent sculptures in Ives Park.

Currently the Public Art Fund is sponsored via Special Impact Fees on projects over \$500,000. This program requires large commercial/industrial development to either install public art on-site, or pay a 1% fee in-lieu of this art to the City.

While Public Art is a value to the community, the City is facing a budget shortage when it comes to essential City services like fire service.

In addition, a small town like Sebastopol does not have the budget nor expertise to maintain a public art collection. There have been several issues and delays with getting the Ned Khan piece installed. It has been completed for over two years and still not installed.

The Ives' Park sculpture garden requires on-going time and management. Public Art requires expertise on many levels from selection to site preparation to installation to ongoing maintenance. At this time, Sebastopol does not have the resources to effectively build and maintain a public art collection.

I suggest closing the Public Art Impact Fee and replacing it with a Public Safety and Emergency Service Fund which would create a fund for equipment replacement, evacuation planning, citizen response networks, fire prevention and community events which help people prepare for emergency situations and evacuations.

The Public Art Fund will have a projected balance of \$32,100 at the close of the 2022/2023 fiscal year. I suggest keeping these funds for future maintenance of existing art works, commissioning 1-3 permanent pieces for the Ives sculpture garden.

I suggest redesignating this account for Emergency Service Funds so that any future large development would give resources for Public Safety and Emergency needs.

The Sebastopol Center for the Arts is in a fiscal crisis. In terms of bringing in visitors to the City, the Center for the Arts has much more potential to draw a wide variety of visitors via on-going events versus an extremely limited audience

for a static public art collection. In fact, most visitors go to Florence Street for public art and that is entirely a private endeavor.

Council needs to address if, at this point in time, our community has the resources to direct extremely limited Special Impact Fees toward a public art collection which requires staff time, public works time, volunteer time and on-going maintenance. At minimum, the PAC uses 80 hours per year of staff time.

The PAC has been running for 12 years and has completed two professional commissions (Ned Kahn's piece has yet to be installed as it has been delayed at least 2 years) and a 1 year community sculpture garden. While this is admirable, it speaks to the fact that a small town such as Sebastopol with limited resources will always be constrained in building and maintaining a Public Art collection.

Once again, while I admire and generally support public art, Sebastopol has extremely limited funds, limited staff time and limited ability to maintain a public art collection.

I ask the Council to reflect on this program and consider dissolving it and using Special Impact Fees toward Public Safety and Emergency Services. Dissolution of this fund would save staff time, public works time and also would be on less committee for the City to staff with volunteers.

Best,

Kate Haug