

**PAC from page 1A**

The last year has been a difficult one for PAC and the city council, as members of the two groups have clashed over the issues of leadership, autonomy and process.

The installation of murals on two sides of the Central Lincoln PUD building, on the corner of Quince Street and Highway 126, seemed to crystallize opposition to the use of public monies for the purchase and installation of art.

The Quince Street mural was created by Marino-Heidel Studios in response to a "Call for Artists" from PAC and the artists were selected from more than 100 entries received. Public forums and packed city council meetings which questioned not only the art selected but the process used to select the art resulted in a concerted effort on the part of Mayor Joe Henry and others to separate PAC from the city.

Henry has been at the center of the debate regard-

ing not only the performance of the committee, but also in questioning the need for PAC to continue. To that end, Henry introduced a motion at the July 15 Florence City Council meeting that would require PAC to present to the council a plan to fundamentally change the committee's operating mandate. The council passed the motion on a 3-2 vote to allow PAC 90 days to reimagine the way it operates.

Monday's meeting was a joint workshop intended to further that goal.

At a tense city council meeting last month, the animosity between city councilors Joshua Greene, Geraldine Lucio and Henry ended with Greene angrily leaving the meeting before its conclusion. That level of frustration was not evident during Monday's work session as Henry and Greene were restrained in their comments. While some tension was evident, the meeting was civil and ultimately productive.

The main tangible result

of the work session was the agreement that the PAC by-laws would be reviewed by councilors and their recommendations would be incorporated into a new version of the governing rules for the committee.

While the actual work produced by the joint work session on Monday was limited, it represented steps made by the two entities to move forward.

Greene was in attendance at the Monday meeting, which centered on the responses given when Henry asked PAC members to consider the role art played in the overall assessment of the city's needs. The discussion then continued with Henry asking PAC members and councilors to share their vision of what form that relationship between the two entities would take in the future.

As the thoughts and concerns of PAC members were presented, Henry listened and expressed his appreciation for the work done by the volunteers of PAC.

Henry has been forth-

coming with his criticism of PAC leadership and what he considers to be the unprofessional behavior of former ex-officio representative of the city council, Greene. Henry has also expressed irritation with comments allegedly made by Harlen Springer, Chairperson of PAC.

Henry was noticeably less strident in his approach to the future of PAC on Monday.

Springer assured councilors that the new funding challenges faced by PAC would be incorporated into whatever emerges as the end decision of the council regarding the committee's future.

He also guaranteed members of the joint meeting that whatever decisions the council made in regard to PAC would be accepted and incorporated into the new PAC mandate.

The next meeting of the Public Art Committee, which is open to the public, will be Monday, Aug. 26, beginning at 10 a.m. For more info, visit ci.florence.or.us.

**COUNCIL from page 1A**

passion to sharing the history to those who visit the lightstation and interpretive centers," Henry read before proclaiming this week as Keepers of Heceta Head Lightstation Week in the City of Florence.

"This will honor Florence Oregon's Heceta Head Lightstation and its keepers of days gone by to the present, and encourage citizens to join in this observance," he said.

The proclamation was received by staff members and volunteers from the Heceta Head Lightstation. Terry Abeyta, Program Development Specialist for the Lightstation, is inviting the community to come for a visit on National Lighthouse Day today, Aug. 7.

"We didn't publicize this upcoming event because with summer, the park parking lot has been filling up almost daily and with more publicity, the parking situation becomes overwhelming," said Abeyta, who explained that the Aug. 7 celebration will be from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. "We will have a picnic stand set up at the bed and breakfast lawn, and sell picnic items, pourings of our 125th Anniversary private label wine and other refreshments."

There will also be lawn games, entertainment on the porch, docent-led tours at the Keeper's House and lighthouse and a community coloring-craft table for visitors to enjoy.

The positive start to the meeting continued throughout the evening and stood in contrast to recent meetings that have focused on problems between the Public Art Committee (PAC) and the Florence City Council. The heated debates of recent meetings was absent as the council seemed to be trying to move past some of the divisive issues surrounding public art.

Area resident Michael Allen was the only individ-

ual who spoke during the public comments portion of the meeting, requesting the city take concrete action to address the continuing problem of gun violence in America.

"I lament the failure of President Trump and the Republican-controlled Senate under [Mitch] McConnell to back bans on military-style assault weapons and limits on magazine cartridges," Allen said. "I lament the tactics of the Republicans in our state Senate and the response of the Democratic leadership, backed by [Arnie] Roblan and [Kate] McKeown, to kill the omnibus gun bill which included a gun safety storage measure. But most of all, I lament the lack of resolve by Mayor Henry and our city council to take steps to deal with the important matter of protecting our citizens from gun violence when the state and federal government is unwilling."

Allen accused the mayor and others of suggesting that passing gun control laws by the city council is "preempted" by state statutes.

"This is true," said Allen, "but our mass slaughters and daily killings using guns dictate that we do something at the local level."

Allen then made a formal request of the City of Florence and the mayor to advocate with state legislators to modify the preemption statutes, allowing local governments to pass tougher gun violence prevention measures.

Other items on the limited agenda for the meeting included an introduction by Florence Events Center Director Kevin Rhodes of a new employee, Matt Miller, and consent items related to changes in the city's fee structure.

The council also heard a staff presentation from Florence Finance Manager Lezlea Purcell in support of a request for street closure related to the Rods n'

Rhodies event planned for Sept. 14.

Purcell reported to the council that the applicant had successfully completed all of the required paperwork and staff recommended approval of the request, which the council agreed to. There was a brief public hearing to allow for community input but there were no public comments on the request.

The only action item that required councilor attention was from Public Works Director Mike Miller, who asked the council to approve the awarding of a construction proposal bid to Ray Wells, Inc., for \$284,426 for water services along the southside of Highway 126.

The council unanimously approved the request.

City Manager Erin Reynolds' report included a positive update on a grant application and reminded councilors and the community about the second National Night Out, held last night, and today's dedication of the new mural. She encouraged residents and councilors to attend.

Henry ended the meeting on a positive note with comments regarding the PAC and the work session attended earlier in the day by committee members and councilors.

"This morning we had what I consider a productive meeting between our city council and our PAC. As everyone knows, there has been some stress involving the city council and the PAC, and I believe we made some progress on trying to resolve some of those issues and at least possibly created a path forward that we can work on in the next few months," Henry said. "I was encouraged by this meeting."

The next Florence City Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, Aug. 19, at 5:30 p.m. at Florence City Hall. For more information, visit ci.florence.or.us.



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