



**City of Coral Gables  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
March 23, 2021**

**ITEM TITLE:**

A Resolution approving the artist team of Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee to design public artwork for the plaza of the new Public Safety Building. (unanimously recommended by the Public Safety Building Public Art Selection Panel, including members of the Arts Advisory Panel, approval/denial vote: 12 to 0, and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 6 to 0).

**DEPARTMENT HEAD RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval

**BRIEF HISTORY:**

A Public Safety Building Public Art Selection Panel was formed consisting of Arts Advisory Panel members, Police Chief Hudak, Fire Chief de la Rosa, and Leslie Pantin as an appointed representative of the Cultural Development Board.

Over 140 artists responded to a second Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Public Safety Building public art opportunity.

On June 25, 2020, the Arts Advisory Panel met and reviewed 145 qualified responses submitted for Public Safety Building public art request for qualifications. Panel members submitted individual scores in advance and discussed the top-ranking submissions in order. A motion was made recommending twelve possible artists for Police and Fire to consider for the Public Safety Building public art project: Rosario Marquardt, Rob Ley, Shane Allbritton/Norman Lee, Adam Kuby, Jephson Robb, Mark Reigelman, Matthew Mazzotta, Nick Ervnick, Resa Blatman, Jim Hirschfield, John K. Melvin, and the team of MIIM + JW.

The twelve artists names and qualifications were forwarded to Police Chief Hudak and Fire Chief de la Rosa, who were asked to select artists from the list to move forward in the process.

Chief Hudak and Chief de la Rosa selected artists: Shane Allbritton/Norman Lee, Adam Kuby, Nick Ervnick, and Jim Hirschfield, who were asked to interview with staff and the Police Chief and Fire Chief. Following the interviews, Shane Allbritton/Norman Lee and Jim Hirschfield were asked to submit concept proposals.

On October 29, 2020 the Artists were each given an equal amount of time to present their concepts to the Selection Panel. On February 24, 2021 the Panel unanimously agreed to recommend the proposal concept by the artist team of Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee to the Cultural Development Board.

The Cultural Development Board received the proposals and on March 2, 2021 discussed the proposals and the recommendation of the Selection Panel. The Board unanimously agreed to recommend the artwork concept of Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee for the new Public Safety Building to the City Commission with the recommended direction to remove the bench, raise the height of the base, and increase the height of the sculpture. The concept proposal was posted on a dedicated webpage inviting comments prior to the City Commission meeting.

Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee explore notions of community, identity, and memory in the context of public space. Allbritton and Lee draw on a site's cultural landscape to generate strong narrative concepts that resonate with local meaning that also transcend the familiar. Most notably, Norman Lee was named a finalist in the World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition. The largest design competition in history, his design was selected from an international field of over 5,000 submissions.

The location of the proposed public artwork and memorial, *Eternal Vigilance*, is on the plaza of the new Public Safety Building on the corner of Salzedo Street and Minorca Avenue. The artwork concept responds to memorializing fallen officers and firefighters while honoring current public safety professionals.

*Eternal Vigilance* evokes interwoven eternal flames creating a gesture of departmental unity and collaboration. The form of the interwoven flames is expressed as a translucent void space within a vessel of stacked glass, appearing as an iconic beacon that marks the main entrance plaza of the new Coral Gables Public Safety Building.

The eternal flame is universally known as a memorializing symbol. The motif of a flame within a vessel also harkens to lanterns that were used by both police and firefighters in American history. Poetically connecting past and present, this imbues the flame symbolism with the added meaning of shedding light to guide first responders as they protect public safety.

Water flows up underneath the sculpture streaming into a thin veil over a dark granite base with etched names of fallen responders.

At night, LED lighting within the pool dramatically illuminates the interwoven flames inside the sculpture. The bubbling water continuously diffracts up-lighting, creating a dynamic flickering effect evoking flames.

If approved by the City Commission, the Artist team will be required to enter into a contract with the City of Coral Gables prior to commencing work and will work with the professional team to properly permit, engineer, fabricate, install, and light the piece as appropriate.

The City will work with the artist and provide access to existing utilities on site.

Funding for the permanent artwork and related expenses is proposed through use of dedicated art acquisition funds.

The cost of *Eternal Vigilance* is \$450,000 (four hundred fifty thousand dollars) and related support is estimated to be \$25,000 (twenty-five thousand dollars). Staff recommends the City utilize up to \$475,000 (four hundred seventy-five thousand dollars) from the Art Acquisition Fund to cover project expenses.

The Public Safety Building Public Art Selection Panel voted unanimously (12-0) to recommend the public art concept proposal by the artist team of Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee at their meeting on February 24, 2021.

The Cultural Development Board voted unanimously (6-0) to recommend the public art concept proposal by the artist team of Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee at their meeting on March 2, 2021.

**ADVISORY BOARD/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Date.	Board/Committee	Comments
February 24, 2021	PSB Public Art Selection Panel	Recommended approval
March 2, 2021	Cultural Development Board	Recommended approval

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION: (If Applicable)**

Account No.	Amount	Source of Funds
001-1330-573-48-05	\$475,000.00	Art in Public Places, Art Acquisition Fund

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

1. **Draft Resolution**
2. **Excerpt Minutes from the Arts Advisory Panel/Public Safety Building Public Art Selection Panel meeting of February 24, 2021**
3. **Excerpt Minutes from the Cultural Development Board meeting of March 2, 2021**
4. **Proposal concept with Artist CVs**
5. **Agreement Draft**