Public Arts Commission

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September 6, 2016

Dear Mayor Alexander and members of City Council,

The Public Art Commission met with Mrs. McClellan and heard from Dr. Whibley to carefully review the history and circumstances of the padlocks attached to The Hague Bridge. We understand that some Norfolk citizens believe them to be unsightly and wish to have them removed. The Public Art Commission does not find the locks problematic. In fact, to the contrary, we enjoy the grass root effort by citizens to create a special place. These efforts help make Norfolk a vibrant waterfront community.

Each year as funding is designated, the commission drafts a work plan of projects and sites to produce public artwork. Our priority is to install art in the best locations for public viewing so it can benefit all citizens. We do not believe allocating taxpayer money and commissioning artwork to hold padlocks fits into these priorities.

However, if members of the community wish to raise private funds, we would be happy to manage a love locks public art project using our normal process. This process works with a committee made up of stakeholders. This committee works through the RFP, submission, selection, design approval and fabrication and installation. We recommend a budget of $25,000 - $30,000 in order to cover the cost of artist fees, foundation, engineering, fabrication and installation.

Thank you for requesting our opinion. And thank you for your continued support of the public art program.

Best Wishes,

Ann Stokes, Chair

cc: Marcus Jones, City Manager
    Wynter Benda, Deputy City Manager