



# MEMORANDUM

## REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

July 17, 2023, at 7:00 PM

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**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Rich LaBombard, City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Shawn Phillip Morin – Sculpture Acquisition

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Maryjo Lemanski, formerly of the Saugatuck Douglas Fennville Art Initiative (SDFAI) has approached the City of Douglas about an opportunity to acquire a new public art installation using insurance proceeds from a damaged sculpture. Ms. Lemanski was successful in coordinating the acquisition of a Jason Quigno sculpture called “Seven Grandfathers” and “Pyramid” for the City of Douglas. The damaged sculpture was located at Wades Bayou and was damaged in 2020 and found to be irreparable. A claim was filed, and the City received insurance proceeds in the amount of \$1,750 in April 2023.

Ms. Lemanski proposes the City acquire a sculpture by artist Shawn Phillip Morin. Two sculptures are available for approximately \$4,500 each (See attached). The City would have to contribute the balance of approximately \$2,750 from general fund or from community fund raising efforts. The installation cost would be approximately \$650. If acquired, the sculpture would be installed at Wades Bayou.

Per the Public Art Policy “Selection Criteria for Community Initiated Public Art”, artwork proposals will be reviewed by staff for recommendation to the Douglas City Council. The works of art will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Verification that the artwork will be located on public property and be publicly accessible.
2. Ability of the artist/applicant to complete the project within the proposed timeframe and budget.
3. Commitment of proposed partners involved in the project. Application should include a clear explanation of the responsibilities of each entity involved in the project.
4. Ability/willingness of the artist/applicant to work with the City.
5. Ability of the applicant to provide funding (if proposed).

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6. Verification that the completed and installed artwork will become the property of the City of Douglas.
  7. Artwork meets design, safety and maintenance criteria, funding availability, appropriateness of the artwork for the site and the ability of the piece to contribute to the identity and viability of the community and promote the image of the City of Douglas.

**Sample Motion: I motion to use insurance proceeds to acquire a sculpture by Shawn Phillip Morin to be located at Wades Bayou Park.**

Canary Cole Mine/ Shawn Phillip Morin  
painted steel / 11' \$4500

Courage Under Fire/ Shawn Phillip Morin  
painted steel/ 9' \$4500

### **Shawn Phillip Morin**

Shawn Phillip Morin is a Professor and the Assistant Director of the School of Art at Bowling Green University in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Morin has exhibited in more than 125 competitive national, regional and international exhibitions. With numerous awards to his credit, he won the 2006 Best of Show Award at the Toledo Area Artist Exhibit at the prestigious Toledo Museum of Art. His works are included in more than 50 public and private collections in the United States and Seoul, South Korea.

Shawn is a stone carver. His passion for the ancient technique in modern forms has been his focus for his entire art career. He taught stone carving at Bowling Green University until the administration requested he discontinue due to health hazards for the students.

He began this steel series two years ago moving in a new direction and changing his curriculum at Bowling Green. Before the two sculptures above, he had created one welded steel work.

Morin found a change in materials and technique involved creating new forms. As he is finding his "voice" in steel, the works created involve multiple sections or pieces. He welds each piece unlike many sculptors who work with a fabricator after creating a maquette or small sculpture that is sent to be made.

Similar to "children's blocks" Morin moves the forms until the overall sculpture is a successful composition.

**"My work is predicated by the personal belief that compositional complexity can only be achieved through the use of multiple forms. The forms may or may not stand out. They may even seem inconsequential. But think about this... Is the Acropolis any less magnificent just because it now lies in ruins?"**

### **Canary in a Coal Mine**

Shawn ruminates over titles for his sculptures as he is making the piece. This piece was entitled **Canary in a Coal Mine** with a reference to steel. The origins of this material is in the ore that comes from mines.

The story is about the miners that bring a canary into the mine. Canaries sense danger and when a canary is underground and knows a natural disaster is coming, he flies out sending a message to the miners that they too need to get out.

The color yellow is in direct reference to the canary.

### **Courage under Fire**

This title is less defined. When Morin was in graduate school, there were two professors that strongly influenced his work through directing his growth not only in the technical skills but also in a philosophical perspective. Artists leave their "mark" in the world. Sculptors create works that are often seen in public art collections so their mark is "out there". It takes courage.

Courage under Fire can apply not only to the process of welding steel but also to the public reaction to the sculptures. It takes courage to listen to critical comments about your work which is under fire when exposed to the public.

