



Agenda Abstract

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date:	Aug. 11, 2025
Department:	Public Space and Sustainability
Agenda Section:	Consent
Public hearing:	No
Date of public hearing:	N/A

PRESENTER/INFORMATION CONTACT

Stephanie Trueblood, Public Space and Sustainability Manager

ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED

Subject: Selection of Artwork from Uproar Festival of Public Art for Town Hall Campus

Attachments:

1. Photos and description of proposed artworks
2. Plan showing artwork and proposed location

Summary:

In December 2022, the town received a donation of \$20,000 from Tom Stevens to purchase artwork to start a sculpture garden/walk at the Town Hall Campus. The town board accepted the donation which had very few limitations other than its use at the Town Hall property.

In Summer 2023, Orange County hosted the Uproar Festival of Public Art, the first event of its kind in North Carolina. The festival included 60 pieces of work installed for one month in the downtown areas of Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Hillsborough. The festival presented an excellent opportunity to select a piece of art for permanent installation at the town hall and the town's commitment to purchase a piece of art was an additional incentive for Uproar artists.

After a recommendation was made by a selection team, the town board authorized the purchase of "*Perpetual Bond*" by TJ Christiansen, a Durham, North Carolina artist. The artwork is made of reclaimed steel and depicts a mother and child giraffe. The work was installed on the east side of the front lawn at Town Hall in Fall 2023.

This summer, Uproar returns to Orange County and presents another opportunity for the town to purchase art for the Town Hall sculpture garden. A balance of \$7,000 from the original donation remains available and the Hillsborough Tourism Board has authorized \$4,000 in additional funds for the project.

A selection team including Gail Cooley, arts supporter/enthusiast, Commissioner Robb English, Victoria Pace, Tourism Board and Tourism Development Authority, and Stephanie Trueblood, Public Space and Sustainability Manager reviewed eligible 2025 Uproar artworks and unanimously recommends to the town board two pieces for the Town Hall campus. The available funding allows for the purchase of two art works this year.

The first piece is "*A Feather in Time*" by Stewart Beavers, a Durham, North Carolina artist. It depicts an owl and is made of scrap metal, weighs 150lbs., and stands 59" tall. The selection team recommends locating this piece on the east side of Town Hall near the picnic area and woods line but suggests working with the artist to identify the final location and orientation.

The second piece is "*The Sound of Tranquility*" by Jason Smith, a Hillsborough, North Carolina artist. It is an interactive structure made of steel and reclaimed materials, weighs 250 lbs. and stands 7' tall. The selection team recommends locating this piece adjacent to the sidewalk on the east side of the Town Hall but suggest working with the artist to identify the final location and orientation.

The works have been approved by Historic District Commission staff. No further permits are required.

Financial impacts:

A balance of \$7,000 remains of the donated funds. The Tourism Board has allocated \$4,000 toward the project for a total of \$11,000 available. The total costs for the artworks are \$8,700, leaving ample funding for any sitework required for installation.

Staff recommendation and comments:

No additional comments.

Action requested:

Approve use of the donated funds for the purchase of "*A Feather in Time*" by Stewart Beavers and "*The Sound of Tranquility*" by Jason Smith to be installed at Town Hall.