



Stephen Seymour, District 1
Mahdad Nassiri, District 1
VACANT (1 seat), District 2
VACANT (1 seat), District 2
Belinda Hernandez Arriaga, Dist. 3
VACANT (1 seat), District 3
Jeanne Heise, District 4
Farah Yasmeen Shaikh, District 4
Victoria Magbilang, District. 5
Reno Anoa'i, District 5

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REGULAR MEETING OF THE ARTS COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 17, 2023 – 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

455 County Center, 4th Floor, Room 405, Redwood City CA 94063

MINUTES

- 1. Roll Call** Interim Chair Jeanne Heise called the meeting to order at 3:03 with roll call.
In Attendance: Commissioners Heise, Magbilang, Nassiri, and Shaikh
Absent: Commissioners Seymour, Anoa'i, and Hernandez Arriaga
Staff: Robin Rodricks, Mara Grimes, Jacki Rigoni

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS:

- Commissioner Nassiri said he comes from the business world, closet artist mostly sculptures, drawing, and photography
- Commissioner Shaikh said she was born in CA and has lived in San Mateo County since 2004, working full-time performing artist, owns Noorani Dance, and wants to bring a diverse perspective to the commission

INTRODUCTIONS OF GUESTS:

- Rohaan Iyer is a rising senior at Crystal Springs Uplands and is a summer intern working with the Admin-Manager on the Countywide Celebration and other projects as they arise.

- 2. Agenda Amendments**

None

- 3. Oral Communications**

DANIEL STREBULAEV stated that he has is a student at Menlo Atherton High School, and a delegate to the UN ECOSOC Youth Forum in 2023. He has a large local and global following, as he is a classically trained pianist, and for the last couple of years has been organizing local concerts to raise money. He has found that students at his school are not interested in classical music and hopes that he can find a way to work with the Office of Arts and Culture to advocate for the arts.

GALINA FEDOROVA is Co-Founder of GOODdler (an innovative technology for civic and charitable organizations working in Humanitarian Aid and Development, Disaster Preparedness and Recovery), Co-Founder of Social Innovation Youth Summit and Social Impact Youth Incubator. She works with youth like Daniel Strebulaev. She promotes all art forms and how they influence peace in the world. She does a lot of humanitarian work and also wanted to see if there was a way for her to work with the Office of Arts and Culture.

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4. **Consideration of Minutes** of March 15, 2023, regular meeting

Minutes were not considered as there was not a quorum in attendance. Will be voted on at the July 19, 2023, meeting.

5. **Reports**

A. Staff Reports

Robin Rodricks: Director stated that the muralist for the North Fair Oaks Healthy Community Murals project, Emily Fromm, has begun painting and her work can be seen as she progresses. She has days available when the community can come and paint with her. She is also working on other public art projects including the new Navigation Center that provides temporary living spaces and support services for people in need. The OAC has received \$100,000 in funds and she will work with the Project Development Unit to add public art to the site. She is also working on public art at the Cordilleras Mental Health Center which will include benches made from reclaimed wood and a water feature. She is also working on a piece of artwork that will be placed in the courtyard honoring veterans and first responders. She also mentioned that the OAC submitted a grant to the California Arts Council as their state-local partner and she is hoping to be rated a 6 out of 6 this year. Lastly, she has been working with Aileen Cassinetto on the Youth Cultural Ambassador Program. We received 30+ applications and five Ambassadors will be selected. They will be required to come up with a project and the OAC will provide \$500 stipend to each Ambassador.

Mara Grimes: She has been focused on the grants program. We received 38 grant applications, up from 32 in 2021. OAC convened a panel of experts to review and rank the applications. She noted that the panelists agreed the majority of the time and those that ranked at the bottom were because they did not fit the requested criteria. In addition to the OAC grant program she has been working to promote the Individual Artists Fellowships grants an opportunity offered by the California Arts Council. San Mateo County had a record number of artists apply this year. SamTrans has moved the dates for the next Art Takes a Bus Ride Competition, and she met with them and the SMC Office of Education, Allison Gamlen, to finalize dates, theme, and details. The date has been pushed out to match the school year and will be promoted in August. She will continue to work with intern Rohaan Iyer to plan, promote, and present the Countywide Celebration of the Arts on September 30th and the calendar of events for the month that will be hosted on the OAC website. He will also help develop a list of events and competitions for students that can be shared with the SMC Office of Education, in libraries, with organizations working with teens and on the OAC website.

Jacki Rigoni: She stated that she and Supervisor Corzo are in the process of interviewing potential Arts Commissioners and that they will decide in the near future. They had five applications for the two positions and are excited to be working with the Arts Commission and Office of Arts and Culture. Ms. Rigoni also noted that she had attended the Mental Health Awareness poetry event hosted by Commissioner Cassinetto and it was very well done and impactful. She stated that both she and Supervisor Corzo care deeply about the arts.

B. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Magbilang: She shared that she has been working with Commissioner Seymour prepare for the art show at the San Mateo County Fair which will take place on June 3-10. She announced that Olivia Vroy has been selected as the 2023-24 Daly City Youth Poet Laureate. She is only an eighth-grader but has beatific poetry and is already involved in civic engagement. San Mateo County Poet Laureate Jorge Argueta, also a Daly City resident, made the announcement. She thanked the Director and Admin-Manager for attending the event. She reported that Daly City Library held four poetry events over the last month featuring local poets writing workshops, and an open mic that was funded by Dragonfly Community Arts. She is also working with a high school student who has started a nonprofit called Youth for Political Engagement that will use the arts as part of their platform. She has been in conversation with the City of Colma who wants to create a mural and will have an RFP shortly. The Director noted that she has samples of RFP's if they would like them. Commissioner Magbilang said that the City Manager is retiring which might delay things and that she is working closely with them. Lastly, she announced that her organization, Daly City Public Library Associates will hold their 2nd annual Art & Lit Festival on September 9th as a fundraiser and also to promote the arts. Commissioner Shaikh suggested that maybe youth performers could participate in the festival.

Commissioner Heise: She noted that she was especially interested in public arts and grants. She has been working on the North Fair Oaks Mural project and was excited to report that the work has begun on the 16 panels for, and she brought pictures for share with the group. The muralist, Emily Fromm has a mural at the San Francisco Airport. The theme of the mural is Healthy Communities and Emily will paint three of the panels

and has invited the community to help with the others. The RFP for the Causeway Mural project has a deadline of May 19. She is also working with the Director on the First Responders and Veterans public art project which is all about accessibility, which aligns with her work at the Fine Art Museums where she gives tours for people with special needs and dementia.

Commissioner Nassiri: Glad he is on the Commission and as yet nothing to report at this time, as he is so new.

6. Discussion Items

A. Countywide Celebration of the Arts Events

The Administrator-Manager stated that the September 30th date and the use of the Main Stage at Central Park has been confirmed by the San Mateo City Parks & Recreation Department. The event will be featured in the June newsletter, and we will begin recruiting performers using a sign-up form. We plan to include more visual artists and also tables for arts organizations. We will not have a participatory art project this year and will have more art activities that people can participate in at the event. She also stated that we had set aside funds in the budget to hire Nathan Cottam of Mannakin Dance to help with stage management and also to compensate performers. Commissioner Shaikh said she has a previous engagement the day of the event but would be happy to help with planning. Commissioner Heise said she would be able to help at the event and Commissioner Magbilang stated that she would help with both planning and at the event.

B. Arts Advocacy: California Arts/Culture/Creativity Month Follow Up

The Director stated that Arts, Culture and Creativity Month (ACCM) in April is an opportunity for arts and culture organizations to connect with elected officials to advocate for the importance of the arts. She noted that Supervisors Corzo and Slocum produced a proclamation in this vein which was presented at a recent Board of Supervisors meeting. She reminded the group that advocacy should take place all year and is highlighted each April during California's recognition of April as Arts/Culture/Creativity Month. The OAC and advocates met with state legislators' staff: Cari Templeton from Senator Becker's office; David Burruto of Assemblymember Papan's office. The advocates included leadership from nonprofit arts and culture organizations:

- Invest in Creative Workers - Support \$5M to "Create the Corps!"
- Support \$50M to Launch the Equitable Payroll Fund
- Increase Baseline Funding for State Arts Agency – CAC
- Support Implementation of Prop 28 as Intended by Voters
- Protect Cultural Funding - Opposed to \$1.2B cuts to the Arts, Music, and Materials Block Grant and \$29M cuts to CA Museum Grants Program
- Oppose \$20M cut to the CA Cultural District Program

She added that they were very interested and attentive and said they would do what they can to help us. She expressed that next year we would only meet in person, no meetings via Zoom.

7. Action Item

A. Election of Officers

Motion was made by Commissioner Magbilang to accept the slate of officers for Chair and Vicechair for FY2023-2024; seconded by Commissioner Shaikh. Roll Call Vote: Belinda Hernandez Arriaga and Jeanne Heise were approved unanimously as Chair and Vice Chair.

B. Discussion and Approval of Recommended 2023 Grants

The Director reiterated that the OAC provided two types of grant opportunities; general support or project/program support. We use the Common Grant Application platform and when organizations log in, they must review the criteria and complete an eligibility quiz before they can apply. OAC has made the application user-friendly and streamlined to get to the heart of the matter. One of the criteria we use is the organization must have a budget under \$1M and we offered a grant writing workshop at no-cost to all potential applicants facilitated by an expert presenter to encourage more organizations to feel confident in applying. This workshop not only prepared them to submit a grant to the OAC but for future grant opportunities.

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It was an excellent group of panelists. The panel included:

- Jim Fung- works full-time as marketing manager for the Peninsula Symphony and has a background in grant writing and has served on evaluation panels for the California Arts Council and Packard.
- Barbara Mumby – she is an artist and works with Indigenous people; Director of Native Arts and Culture Foundation
- Laura Schultz – works in the nonprofit field, with over a decade of experience as a grant writer for nonprofit organizations large and small, including community arts organizations

Commissioner Nassiri asked if the panelists had access to the websites and budgets of the applicants. The Director replied that the panelists had access to this as did the Commissioners when we shared access to the Common Grant Application platform with them. The Admin-Manager noted that it was very clear which applicants clearly stated their mission, programs, and their need for funding. The applications that were not recommended to receive funding did not make their case for how they supported arts and culture in our County. The Director went on to describe how we had determined where to make the breaks between the amounts recommended for the grants. There were many natural breaks, where the rankings were within a close range and then a few points difference, which guided our choices. She told them they could choose Option A or B.

Motion was made by Commissioner Shaikh to accept Option B; seconded by Commissioner Magbilang. Commissioner Nassiri stated that he felt that Option A was actually more financially responsible and would provide for a better balance and higher distribution amounts and benefits. The Director stated that she agreed. A roll call vote was taken and denied unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Mahdad to accept Option A for funding of grantees; seconded by Commissioner Heise. Roll Call Vote: approved unanimously.

8. Adjournment

Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:48 pm.

NEXT REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING: July 19, 2023 – 3:00-5:00 PM