

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

February 21, 2023
7:00 P.M.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Fleischer called the regular meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission to order at 7:00 P.M. in Council Chambers at City Hall and via Webex.

Present: Chair Tania Fleischer
Commissioner Ehsaan Mesghali
Commissioner Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin

Absent: Vice Chair Brenda Williams
Commissioner Leora O'Carroll

Staff: Christine Byers, Cultural Affairs Manager
Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Associate
Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager

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Pledge of Allegiance

David Voncannon led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment - Items NOT On the Agenda

Chair Fleischer invited public comment.

Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Associate, indicated that Sheila Korsi had registered to speak but was not present on Webex.

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Receipt of Correspondence

Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Associate, reported that no correspondence had been received.

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Consent Calendar Items

Item C-1

Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 17, 2023

Chair Fleischer reported that Commissioner O'Carroll had asked that the words "make changes" at the top of page 4 of the minutes be replaced with the following language: "Reinstating a power and duty from the 2019 municipal code."

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MESGHALI AND SECONDED BY CHAIR FLEISCHER THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF JANUARY 17, 2023 AS AMENDED.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: FLEISCHER, MESGHALI, WISNOSKY STEHLIN
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: O'CARROLL, WILLIAMS

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Action Items

Item A-1

CAC – Consideration of (1) FY 2022-23 Cultural Affairs Work Plan Updates; (2) FY 2023-24 Cultural Affairs Work Plan Priorities; and, (3) Provide Comments and/or Make a Recommendation to the City Manager as Appropriate

Chair Fleischer introduced the item.

Sehnita Mattison, Culver City Arts Foundation, expressed support for continuing the partnership with the City; discussed recommendations of the Foundation; the Work Plan; promoting arts in the city; the Artist Laureate Program; Performing Arts Grant Program; the need for the City to invest in the arts; implementation of a street banner program utilizing local and student artists; utilization of vacant commercial space in the city for art exhibits; use of projections; opportunities to showcase art on a regular basis; utility boxes; beautification of the city using local artists; ensuring a strong arts component in the 2028 Olympics; using artists and artwork to delineate the city's borders; development of a municipal art gallery and community art center; showcasing art at all levels; borrowed space; distribution of the red walking tours books; and support for adding to the Art in Public Places Program.

Discussion ensued between Ms. Mattison, staff and Commissioners regarding logistics and costs for a street banner program; vacant storefronts art program; the Public Art Subcommittee; the Economic Vitality Task Force; Cultural Corridor marketing; the 2028 Olympics as part of the Work Plan discussion; entrances to the city; approval of *A Frame for a Tree*; understanding the main gateways to the city for vehicular access and filling in the gaps; the proposed municipal art gallery; the Community Cultural Plan; reinstating the summer concert series; redevelopment of Veterans Memorial Building; the need for Cultural Affairs events to be promoted through social media; consideration of banners by the Public Art Subcommittee; use of funds; efforts to create a black box theatre at Veterans Memorial Building in the "Basketorium"; the need for performance spaces in Culver City; performing arts grants; improvements made and plans for the auditorium; current and proposed

usage of the space; and that Culver Arts offered their assistance and support.

Dr. Luther Henderson reported serving as a member of the Cultural Affairs Commission from 2001-2009; he requested consideration of bringing back the *Music in the Chambers* series; discussed fundraising by the Culver City Arts Foundation; the summer concert series; the city as a cultural mecca on the westside; and he clarified that in the past, the Commission had evaluated the vendor for the summer concert series, and *Music in the Chambers* was part of the Commission's Work Plan.

Sheila Korsi was called to speak but was not present.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the former *Music in the Chambers* program.

Dr. Luther Henderson proposed that the Music Performance Trust Fund could potentially finance the events.

Christine Byers, Cultural Affairs Manager, provided a presentation on Cultural Affairs Work Plans; discussed core functions; Commission meetings; subcommittees; staffing; biannual reports to the City Council; Cultural Affairs being under the purview of the City Manager and part of the newly created Office of Economic and Cultural Development; the Art in Public Places Program; developments that trigger the APPP requirement; in-lieu fees; cultural facilities; the theatre space under construction at The Wende Museum; active and new projects; collections management; regular maintenance, restoration, relocation and repair; the Historic Preservation Program update; staffing to facilitate the progress; creation of a Community Advisory Committee; recommendations; Certified Local Government status; development projects with public art components; restoration of the building that contained the first indoor swimming pool in Culver City; the Artist Laureate Program; the General Plan Update; the Culver City Arts Foundation's Spotlight Awards; the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Proposed Work Plan; reinstating language from 2019 regarding the powers and duties of the Cultural Affairs Commission in the municipal code; and staff presentations to the City Council during the budget process.

Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Associate, discussed outreach and marketing for the Art in Public Places Program; contribution of articles to *Culver City Neighbors* magazine; postcard distribution; the Otocast free mobile app; the red tour books; the Public Art Archive; and the Performing Arts Grant Program.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding workload; staffing; the need for additional support for programming; use of consultants; growth of the creative economy while staffing has shrunk; attendance at events sponsored by the Performing Arts Grant Program; the recent Vox Femina concert; event promotion; outreach; grant recipients; the community calendar; color coding different types of events; the difficulty of finding information on the City website; staff agreement to investigate ways to make the community calendar more clear; the ability to amend the status update; and clarification that the items in the FY 2022-2023 Work Plan come from the adopted budget book and cannot be changed for this year.

Chair Fleischer provided specific wording changes from Commissioner O'Carroll to staff.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding use of the word "considered" rather than "made" before the word "recommendations" on page 2 where Performing Arts Grant awards are discussed; involvement in the creative economy and the Economic Vitality Task Force; creating a plan for future creative economy activities and networking events; wording to indicate the need for "reinstate power and duty that was erroneously deleted in the 2019 municipal code"; a suggestion to create a Cultural Affairs Subcommittee for the 2028 Olympics; status updates; the Work Plans; implementing suggestions from the Culver City Arts Foundation; feasibility; the staff report; staff implementation with available resources; clarification that the City Council would see all suggestions made; the priority of hiring a new staff person; and upgrading the part-time position.

Christine Byers, Cultural Affairs Manager, reported that Lee Lawlor had been appointed to the Cultural Affairs Analyst position as of February 27, 2023.

Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Associate, discussed the job posting; qualified applicants; and she indicated going through a competitive application and interview process.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the need for another staff member; update of the red tour book; outreach; work with communications consultant Tripepi Smith; clarification that there is not a marketing plan for business attraction to the arts; tourism; the creative economy; other departments that handle their own social media; incorporation of tourism language into the process; the Economic Vitality Task Force; creation of an arts-focused City-run social media apparatus tied to Cultural Affairs; shared posts; making use of the power of social media; addressing the fact that people take the arts for granted; the Creative Vitality Index; the 2017 Creative Economy Report; WESTAF; the Public Art Archive; the pandemic as an important illustration of how important the arts are; and clarification that a motion was not necessary, staff had noted comments and would take them under advisement.

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Public Comment - Items Not On the Agenda (Continued)

Chair Fleischer invited public comment.

Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Associate, indicated that there was no Public Comment for Items NOT on the Agenda.

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Items from Members/Staff

Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Associate, announced April 3, 2023 as the deadline to file Form 700, the Statement of Economic Interest; she indicated that staff was available to help; and she encouraged everyone to get it done.

Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager, welcomed Lee Lawlor to her new position.

Commissioner Mesghali reported running into Vice Chair Williams at Amir Fallah's first solo exhibition at the UCLA Fowler Museum.

Commissioner Wisnosky Stehlin discussed attending the Culver Arts Board retreat on February 5 at These Hands Maker's Collective and expressed appreciation for support of the arts by the Culver City Arts Foundation.

Chair Fleischer reported attending the Vox Femina concert at Culver City Presbyterian Church as well as a performance by Culver City Symphony Orchestra (CCSO); noted that attendance of CCSO concerts has expanded greatly once there was no longer a charge to attend; she stated that with the passing of Frank Fetta, CCSO was auditioning for a new conductor; and she was looking forward to attending more concerts in March.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 9:06 P.M., the Cultural Affairs Commission adjourned to a meeting to be held at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

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SECRETARY of the Cultural Affairs Commission

APPROVED _____

TANIA FLEISCHER
CHAIR of the Culver City Cultural Affairs Commission
Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

Jeremy Bocchino
CITY CLERK

Date