

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

October 21, 2025
7:00 P.M.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Mesghali called the regular meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission to order at 7:00 P.M. in Mike Balkman Council Chambers at Culver City Hall.

Present: Ehsaan Mesghali, Chair
Tania Fleischer, Commissioner
Shona Gupta, Commissioner

Staff: Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager
Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst
Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst

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Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment - Items NOT On the Agenda

Chair Mesghali invited public comment.

Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst, indicated that no requests to speak had been submitted.

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Receipt of Correspondence

Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst, reported that no correspondence had been received.

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Presentation

Item P-1

Update and Presentation by Artist Laureate Victoria Marks

Victoria Marks, Artist Laureate, provided a presentation on the first four months of the Culver City Artist Laureate program from July through October 2025; reported attending events and meeting with people to gain different perspectives in order to answer the question of how people care for and belong to a city; discussed information gathering; the letter of introduction she sent to all Culver City employees; a topic that surfaced around generational changes occurring in the City; her interview of Tom Welsh after attending the Culver City Summer Concert Series; the August Culver City Arts Foundation Board of Directors meeting; encouraging people to get to know one another better; the September Artist Meet Up at the Culver Hotel; meetings with Bubba Fish, Kim Mitchell, Heather Moses, Alicia Ide, Jill Thomsen and Hope Parrish; monthly meetings with CAC staff; Culver City Art Walk & Roll Festival; creation of Connecting Culver City; participation by teen docents; she presented a video incorporating some of the answers to the question of what people hoped for their community with a score composed by Jesse Pearlman; discussed looking at ways to continue building community; establishing a free drop-in community Action Conversation starting in January 2026; and she welcomed questions and requested thoughts and support on how to move forward.

Discussion ensued between Ms. Marks, staff, and Commissioners regarding production of physical objects; support for engaging in an exploration of meaningful art that is consumed digitally; sharing different viewpoints and ideologies through art; continued information gathering through *Connecting Culver City*; use of the digital content produced from the program as a tool to learn more about the City and bringing people together to connect the community through art.

Additional discussion ensued between Ms. Marks, staff, and Commissioners regarding program initiative; conversations between the older and younger generations of Culver City; creation of a plan for outreach and engagement; social media; gathering contact information for residents participating in the videos; and utilization of parks, the Senior Center, and schools in all of the different neighborhoods to increase engagement.

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Action Items

Item A-1

1) Appointment of Vice Chair; and (2) Creation of an Ad Hoc FY 2025-2026 Historic Preservation Subcommittee; and (3) Assignment of Commissioners to fill existing vacancies on the Artist Laureate, Performing Arts Grant Program, Communications & Outreach, Creative Economy & Cultural Plan, and 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games/Cultural Olympiad Ad Hoc Subcommittees, and the newly created Historic Preservation Subcommittee

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners that not all positions had to be filled immediately but some positions were more urgent than others, and the nominee for Vice Chair.

MOVED BY CHAIR MESGHALI, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GUPTA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION: APPOINT TANIA FLEISCHER TO SERVE AS VICE CHAIR OF THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding prioritization of appointments to be made; willingness to serve; continuity; input from the consultant on the tree surrounds and the MGM sign; historic preservation vs. public art; further consideration by the Public Art Subcommittee; outreach to the community to fill Commissioner vacancies; subcommittees that are on hold including the Olympics Subcommittee and the Communications and Outreach Plan Subcommittee; Commission agreement to retain the current membership on the Public Art Subcommittee and to revisit subcommittee assignments in the future; standing

subcommittees vs. ad hoc subcommittees; the inability of standing subcommittees to meet without a quorum; and clarification that ad hoc subcommittees are not subject to The Brown Act.

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR FLEISCHER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GUPTA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION: APPOINT COMMISSIONERS TO THE FOLLOWING SUBCOMMITTEES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026:

STANDING SUBCOMMITTEE:

PUBLIC ART: CHAIR MESGHALI/COMMISSIONER GUPTA

AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES:

ARTIST LAUREATE: VICE CHAIR FLEISCHER/COMMISSIONER GUPTA

CREATIVE ECONOMY & CULTURAL PLAN: CHAIR MESGHALI/VICE CHAIR FLEISCHER

FY 2025-26 CULVER CITY ARTS FOUNDATION: CHAIR MESGHALI/COMMISSIONER GUPTA

2026 PERFORMING ARTS GRANT PROGRAM: VICE CHAIR FLEISCHER/COMMISSIONER GUPTA

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Public Comment - Items NOT On the Agenda (Continued)

Chair Mesghali invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Commission:

Denise Neil discussed her efforts to prepare for the Olympics; creating opportunities to monetize the major world sports events to benefit the local economy; the US India Friendship Project; collaboration to build infrastructure needed for parks, entertainment venues, housing, and commercial space for the upcoming events; she noted New Zealand's intended occupancy of the Culver City Hotel and asked staff to research backup plans for short-term rentals in the event of the hotel strike anticipated during the Olympics; discussed taking full advantage of the opportunity to support the local economy; she reported that Joanna Papada with Manchester Bidwell

wanted to come to Culver City in November to discuss setting up strategic infrastructure; discussed a project she had presented to WestCOG (Westside Council of Governments); and connecting resources along transportation corridors to make it convenient to get to regional events.

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Items from Commissioners/Staff

Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst, discussed information attached to the staff report about committee actions; provided an update on the 2026 Performing Arts Grant program applications; announced performances in November and December 2025; and she noted that information for all events was posted on the Culver City website.

Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst, provided an update on the *Culver City: Colorful Communities* poster program; discussed applications received; indicated that he would be sharing information with the Public Art Subcommittee; and stated that he would be working to find community representatives for the five neighborhoods being featured.

Commissioner Gupta reported attending an art show about grief by former Cultural Affairs Commissioner Brenda Williams; discussed the successful *Art Walk & Roll* event; exciting art activations; and the mural on Washington Boulevard.

Vice Chair Fleischer discussed the Creative Economy Mixer at the Wende Museum on October 29, the Performing Arts Grant application process; transparency; panelists; number of firms that responded to the Cultural Plan RFP (Request for Proposal); the timeline; and next steps.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding new art and cultural updates and recommendations.

Chair Mesghali discussed the Tito's Tacos *Fiesta Mexicana* fundraising event organized by the Culver City Arts Foundation, and he highlighted the *Art Walk & Roll* event and the efforts of the Artist Laureate in organizing the video installation.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 8:03 P.M., the Cultural Affairs Commission adjourned to a regular meeting to be held at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, November 18, 2025.

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SECRETARY of the Cultural Affairs Commission

APPROVED _____

ESHAAN MESGHALI
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