



# City of Culver City

City Hall  
9770 Culver Blvd.  
Culver City, CA 90232  
(310) 253-5851

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 15-403, **Version:** 1

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**Consideration of a Recommendation from the Ad Hoc 2016 Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee and a Recommendation to the City Council Related to the 2016 Performing Arts Grant Program Awards.**

**Contact Person/Dept:** Susan Obrow / Parks, Recreation, & Community Services  
**Phone Number:** (310) 253-6628

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes ☒ No ☐ **General Fund:** Yes ☐ No ☒

**Public Hearing:** ☐ **Action Item:** ☒ **Attachments:** Yes ☒ No ☐

**Public Notification:** Meetings and Agendas - Cultural Affairs Commission (11/06/15); Sony Pictures Entertainment (10/27/15), 2016 Performing Arts Grants Program Applicants (10/27/15)

**Department Approval:** Daniel Hernandez, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services (11/03/15)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Ad Hoc 2016 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee (Subcommittee) recommends that the Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC): (1) consider the recommendation of the Subcommittee; and, (2) make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the 2016 Performing Arts Grant Program awards.

### **BACKGROUND**

Culver City's Performing Arts Grant Program (Program) was established in 1994. The Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) stipulates that no more than 25% of the money deposited into the Cultural Trust Fund in the prior fiscal year be allocated for performing arts in the subsequent year. \$50,000 have been allocated in Fiscal Year 2015/2016, and \$15,000 have been allocated from a contribution made in 2015 by Sony Pictures Entertainment (for a total available of \$65,000 for the 2016 Program).

Staff issued the 2016 notice of funding availability to the public during the week of July 27, 2015. The application stated that awards would be in the \$1,000 - \$5,000 range, and grant requests should be for less than 50% of the applicant's projected proposal costs. The application was posted on the City's web site, and notices were distributed electronically to Culver City-based performing arts organizations as well as through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission's Los Angeles Culture Net arts forum. A current list of possible performance venues in Culver City was also posted on the

City's web site.

On August 13, 2015 staff held a workshop at Veterans Memorial Building during which the grant guidelines, the application, the electronic submittal process, and the possible performance venues were reviewed in detail. The application deadline was September 16, 2015.

On October 15, 2015, applications were reviewed by a Peer Review Panel. Five distinguished panelists were joined by Subcommittee Members Regina Klein and John B. Williams. The Subcommittee attended as observers and as an additional resource for questions.

The 2016 Performing Arts Grant Peer Review Panel Members were:

|                    |                                                                                                    |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nate Bachhuber     | Associate Manager, Artistic Planning - Los Angeles<br>Philharmonic Association                     |
| Nathan Birnbaum    | Cultural Affairs Administrator - Grants & Special Projects - City<br>of Santa Monica / Culver City |
| Raëlle Dorfan      | Managing Director - Dance Resource Center                                                          |
| Courtney Robertson | Managing Director - East LA Rep                                                                    |
| Catherine Rotunno  | Manager, Global Corporate Social Responsibility - Sony<br>Pictures Entertainment / City Resident   |

## **DISCUSSION:**

Nineteen applications were submitted electronically, via the City website, by the deadline. An email was then sent to the panelists, prior to the review panel meeting, with a link to a digital folder that contained all of the grant applications. The panelists were also provided a score sheet for each applicant. The following three scoring criteria were identified in the application:

- Artistic excellence of proposed project (50 points);
- Realistic budget and diversified funding base (25 points); and,
- Outreach and promotion to the Culver City community (25 points).

Staff opened the review panel discussion by providing a brief overview of the grant program's history, guideline changes, and discussion of the three review criteria listed above. After the overview, each application was reviewed, with its corresponding artistic material, in alphabetical order. Staff provided updated information, then panelists took turns in leading the discussion about the applications. Each panelist had the opportunity to ask questions and then offer comments to the group. This was followed by panelists providing scores in each of the three categories, resulting in an overall average score for that applicant. Only the five panelists provided scores during the peer

review session.

Once the review of the individual applications was completed, the nineteen applicants' scores were tallied which resulted in a ranking of the applications from highest to lowest. Averaged total scores for all nineteen ranged from 76 to 97.6. The panel recommended that those applicants with average scores of 88.2 or higher should receive 100% of their requested funding. The panel recommended that applicants with scores between 86 and 87.8 should receive \$4,500 of their requested funding. The panel recommended that applicants with scores between 82.4 and 84.8 should receive \$3,500 of their requested funding. The Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival received a score of 81 and No Limits Theater Group received a score of 82. The panel recommended funding for each organization as a demonstration of support. The funding allows each organization to participate in the community access programs developed by the City for the Ivy Substation and the Kirk Douglas Theatre. Center Theatre Group's community access program includes a waiver of rental fees which would be in excess of \$1,000 for No Limits Theater Group. Further, staff recommended that No Limits Theatre Group review the new Community Impact Arts Grants recently launched by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. The panel did not recommended funding for applicants with scores below 80.

The grant process was more competitive this year due to the increase in applications. The total amount recommended for awards is \$65,000. A chart, noting the amounts requested and the recommendations for awards, is included as Attachment 1. Staff will work closely with the grant recipients on the promotional plans for their performances and provide them with a performance survey as well. Marketing options, provided by the City for grantees, include:

City Website Promotion

Home Page

Arts & Culture Page

Community Calendar

Time Warner and Verizon Fios Cable Television Promotion

Slide

Email Blasts

City of Culver City

Sony Pictures Entertainment

Public Announcements

Announcements at City Council and Cultural Affairs Commission Meetings

A brief summary of the nineteen applications (ranked from highest to lowest) is attached (Attachment 2). The City Council will consider the Commission's recommendation for grant awards on Monday, December 14, 2015.

**FISCAL ANALYSIS:**

The total amount available for the 2016 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program awards is \$65,000. The funding includes monies from the Fiscal Year 2015/2016 Art in Public Places Program (Cultural Trust Fund) budget in the amount of \$50,000, as allocated pursuant to the CCMC, and \$15,000 from the 2015 contribution from Sony Pictures Entertainment.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Overview of 2016 Performing Arts Grant Request Amounts.
2. Peer Review Panel Summary of Recommendations.

**MOTION:**

That the Cultural Affairs Commission:

1. Consistent with the recommendation from the Ad Hoc 2016 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee, recommend to the City Council that 2016 Performing Arts Grant Program awards be allocated as outlined in the staff report.

**OR**

2. Recommend to the City Council that 2016 Performing Arts Grant awards be allocated as amended.