

REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION  
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

April 20, 2021  
7:00 P.M.

**Call to Order & Roll Call**

Chair Fleischer called the regular meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission to order at 7:01 P.M. via Webex.

Present: Chair Tania Fleischer  
Vice Chair Len Dickter  
Commissioner Zoltan Pali  
Commissioner Brenda Williams  
Commissioner Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin

Staff: Christine Byers, Cultural Affairs Coordinator  
Louise Coffey-Webb, Public Art Collections Manager  
Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Program Associate

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Chair Fleischer wished everyone a Happy Earth Day and acknowledged the verdict in the George Floyd case.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Fleischer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**Public Comment – Items Not On the Agenda**

Chair Fleischer invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Commission:

Hope Parrish provided an update from the Culver City Historical Society noting that they would likely not reopen before the fall; she announced an upcoming presentation on April 28 by Eric Sims about the former Culver Theater and how it became

the Kirk Douglas Theatre; discussed outreach efforts and ways to attend; and she thanked the City for providing visibility on the City website.

Chair Fleischer thanked Ms. Parrish for the update and was looking forward to more Historical Society events in the future.

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### **Consent Calendar**

Item C-1

#### **CAC – Approval of Minutes for the Regular Meeting of March 16, 2021**

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PALI AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 16, 2021 AS SUBMITTED.

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### **Order of the Agenda**

No changes.

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### **Action Items**

Item A-1

#### **CAC – Recommendation to City Council on Extending Alexey Steele's Term as Artist Laureate to a Third Year through December 31, 2022 with a Stipend Increase**

Christine Byers, Cultural Affairs Coordinator, provided a summary of the material of record; indicated that she would alert the Commission when the item goes before the City Council for consideration; and she read an email from former Honorary Artist Laureate for Poetry, Dr. Janet Hoult, in support of the item.

Alexey Steele, Artist Laureate, thanked the Commission for their support; reported that Sehnita Mattison of the Culver City Arts Foundation had suggested a new subject to showcase in the "Love My Neighbor" project; discussed hate crimes toward Asian Americans; Culver City Neighbors Magazine; local heroes; policy makers and proposals; his involvement on the General Plan Update; the unique and special place for art in Culver City history; the tactical urbanism project; collaboration with the Culver City Unified School District (CCUSD); his upcoming exhibitions; and ensuring that cultural institutions are available to help heal everyone.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding support for retaining Mr. Steele as Artist Laureate; the unprecedented times; the importance of having the Artist Laureate during the recovery of the artistic community; bringing back live events; the process of searching for a new Artist Laureate candidate; appreciation to Dr. Janet Hoult and to the Culver City Arts Foundation for their unwavering support of the program; and gratitude for the work of Mr. Steele to keep the community involved in the arts during the pandemic.

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR DICKTER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WISNOSKY STEHLIN AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION RECOMMEND THAT IN LIGHT OF THE UNPRECEDENTED CIRCUMSTANCES ASSOCIATED WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THE CITY COUNCIL:

1. EXTEND ALEXEY STEELE'S TERM AS ARTIST LAUREATE FOR A THIRD YEAR THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2022, AND,
2. INCREASE THE ARTIST LAUREATE STIPEND TO \$6,000 FOR 2022 WITH \$4,000 COMING FROM THE CULVER CITY ARTS FOUNDATION AND \$2,000 COMING FROM THE CULTURAL TRUST FUND.

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**Public Comment - Items Not On the Agenda (Continued)**

The following member of the public addressed the Commission:

Sehnita Mattison, Culver City Arts Foundation, expressed support for extending the term of Alexey Steele as Artist Laureate; she expressed gratitude for his service; reported

the launch of the Artists Emergency Resiliency Fund; discussed the process; fund requests; ensuring there is a connection to the City; limited promotion of the program; the upcoming second round of grants; and she announced that the Foundation was looking for new Board Members.

Chair Fleischer thanked Ms. Mattison and the Foundation for their work to support the arts and artists.

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### **Receipt of Correspondence**

Christine Byers, Cultural Affairs Coordinator, indicated that no additional correspondence had been received.

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### **Items from Staff**

Louise Coffey-Webb, Public Art Collections Manager, reported that April is Arts, Culture and Creativity month and she read an excerpt from a presentation created by californiansforthearts.org.

Lee Lawlor, Performing Arts Program Associate, reported that 2021 grant performances would officially begin on May 1st; she announced upcoming online events noting that details would be available on the City website; she announced the official launch of the Virtual Performance Center created in concert with the Economic Recovery Task Force (ERTF) dedicated to promoting community arts organizations and linking to a variety of online performances; and she indicated that performances would be on the City website and promoted via email.

Christine Byers, Cultural Affairs Coordinator, reported that the City Manager was scheduled to deliver the proposed City budget for 2021-2022 on May 10; she expressed pride in the work of staff and the Commission and the growth and success of the division; and she asked Commissioners to follow the budget process through the month of May.

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### **Items from Commissioners**

Commissioner Wisnosky Stehlin thanked the Chair for her acknowledgement of the day's events, expressing hope that things would be getting better in the country; she reported being part of the ACTIVATE Arts Advocacy Leadership Program through Arts for LA; discussed the focus on arts and the economy; ensuring that jobs in the arts are part of California's recovery; Arts, Culture and Creativity month; statistics regarding the amount of lost revenue in the creative economy in 2020; severe impacts to creative businesses and workers; dire needs and conditions for performing artists; legislative actions; stimulus fund requests to restore the healthy arts, culture and creative ecosystem and stimulate California's economic recovery; the general budget request to end the historic undercapitalization of public funding for the arts; investment by other cities into the arts compared with the investment made by California; SB-628, California Creative Workforce Act of 2021; SB-805, support for small non-profit performing arts organizations to pay fair wages; the importance of fully and fairly funding arts education; and she thanked everyone for their efforts to support the arts.

Chair Fleischer thanked Commissioner Wisnosky Stehlin for her efforts.

Commissioner Williams thanked the Minneapolis prosecution team and the jurors for coming to the obvious conclusion noting that it was only the beginning of efforts to create real change; she expressed regret that Luis de Jesus would be moving his gallery out of the Arts District to Los Angeles; she hoped that new galleries would be able to open and create another area where fine art is available; noted that the restaurant area was teeming with people as the pandemic is winding down; and she hoped everyone would be able to enjoy cultural events again before too long.

Vice Chair Dickter discussed the ERTF focus on the Creative Economy; collaborative efforts between himself, the Economic Development Division, the Chamber of Commerce, and a working group that includes Susan Obrow to create more networking and interplay between Creative Economy constituents; an upcoming meeting of key Creative Economy stakeholders in May; short and long-term needs; and the latest Culver City Connect Report.

Chair Fleischer discussed attending the LA Times Festival of Books online, and the virtual Americans for the Arts Convention in June.

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 7:50 P.M., the Cultural Affairs Commission adjourned to a meeting to be held at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

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SECRETARY of the Cultural Affairs Commission

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

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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.

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Jeremy Green  
CITY CLERK

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Date