

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION  
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

May 23, 2024  
7:00 P.M.

**Call to Order & Roll Call**

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

Present: Chair Brenda Williams  
Commissioner Ehsaan Mesghali  
Commissioner Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin

Absent: Vice Chair Leora O'Carroll  
Commissioner Tania Fleischer

Staff: Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager  
Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst  
Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**Public Comment - Items NOT On the Agenda**

Chair Williams invited public comment.

Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst, reported that no requests to speak had been received for Items NOT On the Agenda.

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**Receipt of Correspondence**

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

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**Consent Calendar Items**

Item C-1

**Approval of Minutes for the Regular Cultural Affairs Commission Meetings of March 19, 2024 and April 16, 2024**

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER WISNOSKY STEHLIN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MESGHALI THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETINGS OF MARCH 19, 2024 AND APRIL 16, 2024.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

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

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**Order of the Agenda**

No changes were made.

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**Action Items**

Item A-1

**1) Discuss Review and Timeline Change for Artist Laureate Program 2) Vote to align Artist Laureate Program with City of Culver City's Fiscal Year Calendar**

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Commissioner Wisnosky Stehlin read comments from fellow Artist Laureate Ad Hoc Subcommittee Member Commissioner Fleischer in

support of aligning the Artist Laureate Program with the fiscal year, streamlining budget processes, reviewing the Artist Laureate Program, and gaining input from the new Cultural Affairs Manager; discussed running the Performing Arts Grant Program on the September 1 through August 31 timeline as is common with most performing arts seasons; and allowing for a better and more complete job of programming.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding support for comments from Commissioner Fleischer; origin of the Artist Laureate Program; the wish for the program to continue and flourish; aligning the Performing Arts Grant Program; allowing for a six month extension to the process; fiscal efficiencies; providing lead time to gather data; feedback from past Artist Laureates and community members; the honorary Poet Laureate; establishing best practices; acting as an advocate for the creation of an affordable Culver City public art gallery; creating an artist-in-residence program; quarterly shows; allowing for growth; attracting people to Culver City; and making it easier for applicants to program their year more easily around the grant system.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MESGHALI AND SECONDED BY CHAIR WILLIAMS THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION: VOTE TO APPROVE A CHANGE TO THE PROGRAMMATIC SCHEDULE FOR THE 2024 - 2027 ARTIST LAUREATE PROGRAM TO ALIGN WITH THE CITY'S FISCAL YEAR, INCLUDING A REVISED START DATE TO THE ARTIST'S TERM OF JULY 1, 2025 AND COMPLETION DATE OF JUNE 30, 2027.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: MESGHALI, WILLIAMS, WISNOSKY STEHLIN

NOES: NONE

ABSENT: FLEISCHER, O'CARROLL

Chair Williams received consensus from Commissioners Mesghali and Wisnosky Stehlin to bring back information about changing the dates for the Performing Arts Grant Program to September 1 through August 31 each year.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the number of people involved in the Performing Arts Grant process; length of time to get information together; clarification that current grantees would not be affected; and discussion at the subcommittee level to determine next steps.

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**Public Comment - Items NOT On the Agenda**

Chair Williams invited public comment.

Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst, reported that no requests to speak had been received.

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**Items from Commissioners/Staff**

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, discussed participation in City Council budget meetings; expressed appreciation to Commissioner Mesghali for attending the Olympics Subcommittee meeting; and she reported that the City Council would consider adoption of the final budget at the June 10, 2024 City Council meeting.

Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst, noted that the proposed budget was available online with visible detail about Cultural Affairs funding.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding clarification that there was very little questioning related to Cultural Affairs at the budget meeting; the first year of the CIP (Capital Improvement Projects) process; the public portal; and the ability to delve deeper into projects.

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, expressed deep appreciation to Lee Lawlor for her efforts and for her work on the new system.

Lee Lawlor, Cultural Affairs Analyst, indicated that she would be emailing information about upcoming grant performances in June and July.

Commissioner Mesghali discussed regular Olympics Subcommittee meetings and questioned whether he and Vice Chair O'Carroll would be able to meet more regularly.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding regular City Council Olympics Subcommittee meetings; increased

frequency of Cultural Affairs Commission Olympics Ad Hoc Subcommittee meetings; alignment with LA28; and licensing.

Commissioner Mesghali reported on his attendance of the Olympics Subcommittee Super meeting.

Commissioner Wisnosky Stehlin was looking forward to the Culver City Unified School District (CCUSD) Art Celebration at the Wende Museum; reported attending the Non-Profit Convening at the Wende Museum, attending the subcommittee meeting about the Summer Concert Series, attending Leadership Culver City at Sony Studios, attending the Sony tour, watching the City Council budget meeting, and attending meetings about various upcoming projects in the City noting the need for art components as part of all City projects; discussed the state budget deficit; projected cuts to state arts funding that would result in California being ranked 45<sup>th</sup> in the nation; and she encouraged those interested to write letters in support of retaining arts funding.

Chair Williams received clarification regarding the dates of the Summer Sunset Concert Series; reported attending the Non-Profit Convening; and discussed meeting other people committed to helping the City in social, artistic, and physical ways as much as they can.

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 7:35 P.M., the Cultural Affairs Commission adjourned to a regular meeting to be held at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, June 18, 2024.

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*Lee Lawl*

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SECRETARY of the Cultural Affairs Commission

APPROVED

8/20/24

*Brenda Williams*

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BRENDA WILLIAMS

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*  
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Jeremy Bocchino  
CITY CLERK

5 SEP 2024

Date