



City of Culver City

Staff Report

File #: 21-718, Version: 1

Item #: C-7

CC - (1) Authorization of Award of \$150,066 for the 2021 Performing Arts Grant Program for 21 Organizations, and Designation of Related Performances as City-Sponsored, as Recommended by the Cultural Affairs Commission; and (2) Approval of Related Grantee Contracts.

Meeting Date: March 8, 2021

Contact Person/Dept: Lee Lawlor - Administrative Services / Cultural Affairs

Phone Number: (310) 253-5716

Fiscal Impact: Yes No

General Fund: Yes No

Public Hearing:

Action Item:

Attachments: Yes No

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (03/03/2021); Cultural Affairs Commission (02/11/2021); Sony Pictures Entertainment (02/11/2021), Culver City Arts Foundation (02/11/2021), 2021 Performing Arts Grants Program Applicants (02/11/2021).

Department Approval: Serena Wright-Black, Assistant City Manager (03/01/2021)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council: (1) authorize the award of \$150,066 for the 2021 Performing Arts Grant Program for 21 organizations, and designate related performances as City-sponsored, as recommended by the Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC); and (2) approve the related grantee contracts.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

Arts grant programs are considered a central component to programs and services provided by local arts agencies throughout the United States and provide a diverse array of cultural services to the community served by that agency. In many cases, arts grants help subsidize ticket prices and provide free cultural services to the public. Arts grants are an investment in the community and in the quality-of-life residents and visitors can enjoy in Culver City.

The Cultural Affairs Commission and staff have implemented Culver City's Performing Arts Grant Program (Program) since its inception in 1994. Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) Section

15.06.160 stipulates that no more than 25% of the money deposited into the Cultural Trust Fund (CTF) in the prior fiscal year be allocated for performing arts in the subsequent year. \$200,000 has been appropriated from the CTF for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Additionally, contributions have been made in support of the 2021 Program by Sony Pictures Entertainment (\$25,000) and Culver City Arts Foundation (\$15,000).

Due to the closure of performing arts venues, as well as COVID-19 emergency cancellation of performances/events, the grant program and application schedule was delayed by three months. Staff issued the 2021 Application Guidelines and Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to the public during the week of September 30, 2020. A copy of the NOFA is attached to this staff report. The NOFA included an advisement that all grant activities, events and projects will be subject to the public health orders in effect at the time, and that applicants should be flexible in transitioning projects to online platforms as needed.

The NOFA and electronic application were posted on the City's website, and notices were distributed by email, social media, list-servs and other appropriate third-party sites, including the Los Angeles County Department of Arts & Culture. A current list of potential performance venues in Culver City was also posted on the City's website. Staff scheduled individual meetings to discuss the application and requirements with potential applicants by request.

Twenty-three performing arts organizations submitted signed applications electronically via the City's website by the published deadline of January 7, 2021. This is consistent with the number of applications received in prior years. On January 27, 2021 the applications were evaluated by a Peer Review Panel (Panel) of six individuals with professional performing arts experience. The Panel determined total scores for each application and made general recommendations for full and partial funding allocations based on total scores. The panel did not recommend funding for applications that scored below 65. CAC Chair Tania Fleischer and Commissioner Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin, who sit on the CAC Ad Hoc 2021 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Subcommittee (Subcommittee), observed the panel process.

On February 1, 2021, the Subcommittee convened and reviewed the total Panel scores and the requested grant amounts for all 23 applications and recommended funding for 21 organizations. At its regular meeting on February 16, 2021, the CAC confirmed the proposed grant awards and recommended that they be approved by City Council.

Twenty-one music, dance and theatre applicants are recommended for grants. Two companies were not recommended for awards. The Subcommittee supported a plan for staff to review the application process with the organizations which were not recommended for awards this year so that they would be more competitive in the future if they wished to apply again.

The total amount recommended for all grant awards is \$150,066. Should the City Council award the grants, staff would work closely with the grant recipients on the promotional plans for their performances and post information about City-sponsored events on the City website.

The February 16, 2021 staff report for the Cultural Affairs Commission is attached, as well as chart of the 23 submitted applications, panel scores, recommended grant awards and a brief description of each proposed performance.

The completed Performing Arts Grant electronic applications are available for public review by

sending a written request by email to cultural.affairs@culvercity.org

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The Cultural Affairs Commission recommends a total amount of \$150,066 be awarded for the 2021 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program. The funding includes monies from the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Art in Public Places Program (Cultural Trust Fund - 41322400.619800 PZ614) budget in the amount of \$110,066, as allocated pursuant to the CCMC; \$25,000 from the 2020 contribution from Sony Pictures Entertainment (42080000.619800.PZ614); and \$15,000 from the 2021 contribution by Culver City Arts Foundation (42080000.619800.PZ614).

ATTACHMENTS

1. 21-03-08_ATT_2021 Performing Arts Grant Program Application Guidelines and Notice of Funding Availability
2. 21-03-08_ATT_Cultural Affairs Commission Staff Report
3. 21-03-08_ATT_Overview of 2021 Performing Arts Grant Program Applications, Scores and Recommended Awards

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Authorize the award of \$150,066 for the 2021 Performing Arts Grant Program for 21 organizations, and designate related performances as City-sponsored, as recommended by the Cultural Affairs Commission, and as outlined in the staff report; and
2. Approve the related Grantee contracts; and
3. Authorize the City Attorney to review/prepare the necessary documents; and
4. Authorize the City Manager to execute such documents on behalf of the City.