



Civic Arts Commission Meeting Minutes

**Zoom Webinar – Pleasanton, CA
October 4, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson Huling Song.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: John Baiocchi, Katie Brunner, Janice Coleman-Knight, Jeanne Farley-Rodgers, Anne Giancola, Jamie Yee, and Chairperson Huling Song.

Commissioners Absent: Stephanie Pellegrino and Hira Raghaven

Staff Present: Lia Bushong, Assistant Library and Recreation Director; Michele Crose, Assistant Library and Recreation Director; Ania Pawlak, Office Manager; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

Ms. Bushong noted that “Matters Initiated by Members of the Commission” had been omitted from the agenda and should be added after “Matters for the Commission’s Review / Action / Information.”

MINUTES

1. Approve regular meeting minutes of April 5, 2021

Approval of the April 5, 2021 meeting minutes was postponed till the next meeting since only one member who attended the meeting attended this meeting.

2. Approve regular meeting minutes of August 2, 2021

A motion was made by Commissioner Farley-Rodgers, seconded by Commissioner Baiocchi, to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2021 meeting. **The motion was approved.** (Commissioner Giancola abstained).

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

3. Public Comment from the audience regarding items not listed on the agenda. Speakers are encouraged to limit comments to 3 minutes.

Chairperson Song welcomed new commissioner Anne Giancola to the Civic Arts Commission. She then provided updated information on the State approved AB361 that suspends provisions of the Brown Act and that people participating in a Zoom meeting who wish to speak under the Public Comment segment of the meeting should use the “raise your hand” function on their computer when the agenda item is opened, or if they are calling from a telephone they should press the #9 to be recognized, this allows for the time to speak to be set.

Ms. Bushong introduced commissioners to the Library and Recreation Department’s new Office Manager Ania Pawlak and advised that she will be a connection for commissioners on questions they may have or resources they may need.

MATTERS FOR THE COMMISSION’S REVIEW / ACTION / INFORMATION

4. Review Municipal Code Section 2.39.020 Regarding Civic Arts Commission Duties and the Library and Recreation Strategic Plan 2019-2024

Ms. Bushong reviewed with commissioners a PowerPoint presentation providing details on the Library and Recreation Strategic Plan that provides a multi-year endeavor for better serving the community. She noted the Values of the Department include collaboration, customer service, integrity, inclusiveness, and innovation, while the Multi-Year Goals include A) programs, plans, and services; B) community engagement, customer service, and communication, C) facilities and technology, and D) organizational effectiveness and talent management.

Commissioners were provided the following information on the Multi-Year Goals:

Goal A – Strategies includes implementing Council approved plans, evaluating effectiveness of department services and programs, and identifying and enhancing programs.

Goal B - Strategies include 1) Working with the Youth Commissions to create awareness of health and safety issues/policies and expanding youth and teen services connections; 2) Working with the Human Services Commission to develop a Human Services Communication Plan; 3) Collaborating with the City’s communications team to develop a communications and marketing plan to reach new local audiences and demographic groups; 4) Enhancing customer services, produce quarterly and annual reports to provide information to commissions; 5) Expanding and promote volunteer programs; and 5) Identifying opportunities for increasing partnerships.

Goal C – Create a document that outlines who is responsible for tasks that relate to repair, replacement, maintenance, and enhancement requests for the department. Assess utilization of current city facilities to determine capacity for adding programs. Develop a 5-year information technology plan.

Goal D – Expand recruitment strategies. Prioritize and implement recommendations. Co-locate and cross-train staff. Develop comprehensive staff training and teambuilding. Identify new funding opportunities. Improve effectiveness of working with committees, commissions, and “friend” groups. Create inventory of existing agreement and determine conformance with city policies. Evaluate and streamline processes with vendors and instructors.

Ms. Bushong noted that to date, key accomplishments of the Strategic Plan have included: 1) banning of flavored tobacco, 2) planning and coordination of the 125th Anniversary Celebration, 3) Inclusion Focus, 4) Quarterly/Annual Reports, 5) Partnership Expansion, 6) Virtual Library and Recreation Department, 7) Staff serving as Disaster Workers, 8) Providing Grant Funded Wi-Fi Enabled Laptops, and 9) Grant Funded Virtual Program Bridging Visual and Literary Arts.

Ms. Bushong commented on the Municipal Code Section 2.39.020 with commissioners noting that City Council is the policy and budget authority for the city, however, not all policies go through city council because some are administrative, and these go through commissions. She commented on the role of being a commissioner noting that City Council relies heavily on commissions for input when considering priority planning of projects during the budget process, and another key role of commissioners is working as liaisons with the community providing them with information about programs and services.

Chairperson Song had questions about funding of the Harrington Gallery since no fee was charged when she recently visited. Ms. Bushong indicated that a report could be requested for the commission to review at a future meeting by the Gallery staff.

Chairperson Song thanked Ms. Bushong for the presentation and asked commissioners to provide comments.

Commissioner Farley-Rodgers thanked Ms. Bushong for the presentation and agreed that it would be good if the commission could receive a report about how funding is provided for the Harrington Gallery.

Commissioner Yee also agreed with the idea for the commission to receive a report on the Harrington Gallery. She also asked for a clarification to better understand the relationship between the Library Commission and the Civic Arts Commission. Ms. Bushong provided information about the joint meeting of commissions when there is a specific interest in a project by the two commissions, for example the “little free library” project and the “teen poet laureate” selection. Commissioner Yee stated that she thought collaboration on key projects was important but felt strongly that commissions should remain separate. Ms. Bushong noted that the Strategic Plan was for the whole department and at one-point civic arts was embodied in recreation areas such as sports, etc.

Commissioner Brunner noted that at one time there had been a Pleasanton Literary Arts Ambassador and questioned if the role still existed. Ms. Bushong advised that when the Ambassador had completed her term the city recruited to fill the position but unfortunately no applicants were received, and the program was paused, and focus was placed on filling the Teen Poet Laureate position.

Commissioner Giancola appreciated the presentation and learning more about the role of being a commissioner and Commissioner Coleman-Knight felt the presentation was very comprehensive.

5. Select Public Art Website Subcommittee

Ms. Crose introduced herself to commissioners and advised that Goal 5 of the 2014 Cultural Plan states “Improve marketing and visibility of the arts and make information about arts offerings more readily available to residents, workers and visitors”. She noted that the two ways of currently promoting the public art collections are: 1) a public art brochure that highlights only downtown pieces, and 2) accessing the entire public art collection via the mobile app, STQRY.

Commissioners were advised by Ms. Crose that staff has recognized the limited amount of information available about the public art collection and acquisition process and believes putting together a subcommittee that would meet Goal 5 of the 2014 Cultural Plan would be helpful in improving the marketing and visibility and provide easier access to information for the community. She noted there are currently approximately sixty-four pieces in the public art collection, some purchased by the city, but mainly pieces that have been donated.

Ms. Crose asked commissioners to consider becoming a member of a Public Art Website Subcommittee and liaison with staff to brainstorm on this. She advised that staff anticipates there would be a minimum of two or three meetings of about one-hour in length. Chairperson Song and Commissioners Coleman-Knight and Yee stated they would like to join the subcommittee. Commissioner Yee asked about the time of meetings and noted that as her day job she is a digital media manager so has experience in doing much of what she believes will be required. Ms. Crose indicated that meetings would be scheduled as not to conflict with commissioner work hours and after the subcommittee has met, details of their plan in updating the website would be shared with the commission.

6. Select Mobile Wallpaper and Virtual Background Art Subcommittee

Ms. Crose discussed the idea of creating some mobile wallpaper or virtual background that had been suggested by a member of the commission. She noted that the suggestion had been to create a contest where someone creates a Pleasanton themed, or art themed virtual background or wallpaper for the city and staff believes creating a subcommittee to work on this would be helpful to determine if this should be a contest or a project for a local artist could be hired to do the design.

Commissioners were asked by Ms. Crose to consider becoming a member of Mobile Wallpaper and Virtual Background Art Subcommittee to liaison with staff and work on this. Chairperson

Song and Commissioner Giancola indicated they would both be interested in working on this subcommittee. Ms. Crose thanked them and indicated she would email them information on dates and times for working on this.

7. Review Civic Arts Project Status Report

Ms. Bushong reviewed the Civic Arts Project Status Report with commissioners. She commented on: 1) some small changes needed to ensure a secure installation of the Evantide piece, 2) noted that Project Paintbox has been paused but is definitely something to be retained, 3) there will be updates on the Community Grants program in November, 4) the Teen Poet Laureate Nikita Jayaprakash has been busy working on a number of projects, 5) the Ignite event has been paused because of COVID, 6) Theater events are taking place, 7) Free Shakespeare in the Park is on hold, 8) a contract amendment for Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre is going to City Council for approval, and 9) to date 9 goals and 36 strategies from the Cultural Plan have been completed.

Commissioner Brunner was provided details about the Teen Poet Laureate selection process by Ms. Bushong and the need to start the process before the end of a school year.

Commissioner Giancola asked about the restarting of the Ignite event. Ms. Bushong advised that staff continues to track state and county information on mass gatherings because of the pandemic situation and Ms. Crose indicated that the city waiting to receive direction on this, so they feel comfortable about opening this up to the community since it is an open admittance event and control is difficult.

Commissioner Biaocchi was pleased to learn about all that is being done by the Teen Poet Laureate and asked for background information about the Ignite event. Ms. Crose advised that Ignite is an art and technology event that was started from a smaller event that the Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council had been doing for a few years and had reached a point of struggling to get volunteers and had asked the city for some support. She provided information about the activities taking place at and Ignite event and the success of it prior to the pandemic and noted this was event that took place in the month of October.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight commented on Alameda County changing the County Fair to the month of October and suggested in projecting future Ignite events that consideration be given to not colliding Ignite with the County Fair. Ms. Crose advised that when deciding on October for Ignite events the committee had considered events taking place in other communities and the impossibility of not conflicting with other things.

Commissioner Yee stated she had some questions and would like an opportunity to meet with staff to discuss some of her thoughts. Ms. Bushong suggested she contact her.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

- **Amador Theater**
- **Assessment of Virtual Programs**

Commissioner Biaocchi stated that the Amador Theater was a project of interest to him, and he would like to be on a committee that works on it. Commissioner Brunner indicated that she would also like to work on this and questioned if repairs to the theater had already begun. Ms. Bushong indicated that in accordance with following the Brown Act she would love to add this to the agenda for another meeting so that members of the community could attend and learn about what is happening with the theater.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m.