



# Civic Arts Commission Minutes

---

City Council Chamber – 200 Old Bernal Avenue, Pleasanton, CA  
March 4, 2019 – 6:00 p.m.

## CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairperson Casey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

### **Roll Call**

Commissioners Present: Sandra Jellison, Varsha Nene, Huiling Song, Stephanie Wedge-Bonde, Judy Wheeler, and Vice Chairperson John Casey.  
(Commissioner Jeanne Farley-Rodgers arrived at 6:15 p.m.)

Commissioners Absent: Isabelle Morales and Chairperson Stephanie Pelegrino

Staff Present: Tamara Whitney, Recreation Manager; Michael Patrick, Management Analyst; Michele Crose, Assistant Director; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

## AGENDA AMENDMENTS

None.

## MINUTES

### **1. Approve regular meeting minutes of February 4, 2019**

A motion made by Commissioner Nene, seconded by Commissioner Jellison, to approve the minutes from the February 4, 2019 meeting. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

## MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

### **2. Introductions/Awards/Recognitions/Presentations**

None.

### **3. Public Comment from the audience regarding items not listed on the agenda**

None.

## **MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

### **4. Review and comment on the 2018 Library and Recreation Department Annual Report**

Ms. Whitney reviewed Commissioners the 2018 Library and Recreation Department Annual Report.

Commissioner Song felt it was a great report and she was surprised that so many activities and programs were offered by the City of Pleasanton.

Vice-Chairperson Casey also liked the report and was especially pleased with the structure and numbers it provided as well as the number of residents that were being served.

Commissioner Nene commented on how visual the report was and the number of activities that are being provided to the community.

### **5. Recommendation to Allocate Community Grant Funds in the Civic Arts Category for Fiscal Year 2019/2020**

Ms. Whitney advised that a total of \$44,402 had been allocated in the FY 2019/2020 Operating Budget for the Civic Arts category of the Community Grant Program, with a total of five (5) applications having been received with funding requests totaling \$29,500 received from:

Amador Livermore Valley Historical Society	-	\$3,000 (Afternoon & Evening – Series)
Livermore Valley Opera Outreach	-	\$7,500 (Student Outreach Program)
Pleasanton Community Concert Band	-	\$5,300 (Commissioner Composition)
Pleasanton Community Concert Band	-	\$7,500 (Program Enhancement)
Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council	-	\$6,200 (Community & Opps Awareness)

Commissioners were informed by Ms. Whitney that less grant applications had been received this year. Those applications received had met all requirements and there were sufficient funds to fund requests for the full amounts.

Commissioner Jellison questioned what had happened to applications received where applicants had not met all requirements and what decisions regarding these had been made by City staff, and why information regarding the decision had not been provided to Commissioners by staff.

Mr. Patrick commented on applications that were not submitted on time which meant they could not be considered for funding. He indicated that if the Commission wanted to make a change to the rules regarding the mandatory requirements that applicants had to meet, it would require forming a subcommittee of members from both the Civic Arts and the Youth Commissions to consider and make a recommendation.

### **Vice Chairperson Casey opening the meeting for public comment.**

Pleasanton Community Concert Band (PCCB) & Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council (PCAC) – Les Duman – provided information about his representation of both Pleasanton Community Concert Band and the Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council. He indicated that PCCB had requested funding to allow them to provide a more historical commissioner composition entitled “Alisal Suite”. He then advised that PCAC has been in existence for over 40-years providing art programs and opportunities and also provides funding for arts in local schools.

Vice Chairperson Casey commented on the dilemma the Commission is in with having more funding available than funding requested. He questioned staff on whether the Commission can allocate more funds than has been requested and if not, what will happen to the funds that will remain. Mr. Patrick advised that remaining funds would go into the next grant funding cycle.

Vice Chairperson Casey questioned whether the City has considered supplemental opportunities for agencies to apply for funding again later in the year. Mr. Patrick advised that there is no mechanism in place, or staffing available, for another grant cycle to take place.

Commissioner Wedge-Bonde questioned if the Commission could award larger grants higher to an agency than what they had requested. Mr. Patrick advised that the agency would have to be able to identify a scope for which the additional funds would be used. Commissioners questioned staff on whether this was something that could be done and discussed initial request submissions that had been made on Zoomgrants.

Commissioner Wedge-Bonde asked if members of the Commission were still visiting agencies as a follow-up to determine how funds received were being used.

Livermore Valley Opera Outreach – Jim Schmitt – commented on the school assemblies that Livermore Valley Opera provides that includes professional opera singers. He encouraged members of the Commission to attend an upcoming dress-rehearsal event being held at 7 p.m. on March 7 at the Bankhead Theater.

Commissioner Wheeler questioned whether remaining funds could be set aside and used for the next “Ignite” event. Ms. Whitney indicated she was unsure and needed to better understand the grant funding process but would check on this and email information to the Commission on what she is able to find out.

Commissioner Jellison felt that since Ignite is a city sponsored event that some funds should be allocated towards it from the Commission.

Commissioner Nene suggested the funds be rolled-over for the next funding cycle and some of the funds be used to better advertise the grant funding program so more applicants will apply for funding in the future.

Kelly Cousins – stated that the reason so few organizations had applied for funding was because they did not receive the information. She also advised that East Bay Jazz would be playing at the Firehouse Arts Center on June 7 and encouraged members of the Commission to attend.

## **Vice Chairperson Casey closed the meeting for public comment.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Wheeler, seconded by Commissioner Wedge-Bonde, recommending the following Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Community Grant Fund Allocations in the Civic Arts Category:

\$ 3,000 - Amador Livermore Valley Historical Society (An Afternoon & Evening With...)  
\$ 7,500 - Livermore Valley Opera Outreach (Pleasanton Student Outreach Program)  
\$ 5,300 - Pleasanton Community Concert Band (Commissioned Composition)  
\$ 7,500 - Pleasanton Community Concert Band (Program Enhancement & Outreach)  
\$ 6,200 - Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council (Community & Opportunities Awareness)  
\$29,000

### **ROLL CALL VOTE:**

AYES: Commissioners Farley-Rodgers, Jellison, Nene, Song, Wedge-Bonde, Wheeler, and Vice Chairperson Casey  
NOES: None  
ABSENT Chairperson Pellegrino  
ABSTAIN: None

Commissioner Wedge-Bonde questioned whether a motion was needed regarding use of the remaining funds. Mr. Patrick advised that staff needed to determine whether any of the funds could be set aside for Ignite and Commissioner Jellison indicated remaining funds would be deferred until the next grant funding cycle or until something was determined regarding possible use for Ignite.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Whitney indicated that staff would look at details pertaining to staff requirements for them working on events during the year and will email Commissioners with information.

### **COMMISSION REPORTS**

7. **Committee Meetings**
  - a. Public Art Selection Sub-Committee – no report.
  - b. Special Event Sub-Committee – no report.

### **COMMISSION COMMENTS**

A. Commissioner Nene indicated she would like to see a report on advertising and how to better get the word out about the grant cycle as a means of attracting more non-profit organizations to submit applications.

Ms. Whitney commented on the grant process and asked Commissioners if they had been notified about the program before information had been sent out to the agencies.

Vice Chairperson Casey felt that the Commission was not achieving the funding guidelines it had adopted at the November 5, 2018 meeting:

- Engage new and diverse participants and/or new audience members for the arts in Pleasanton
- Target a specific community need or a gap in art services, and/or
- Involve co-production and collaboration with local organizations.

He felt outreach efforts had failed and he was frustrated that because of the city's policy, agencies not attending a mandatory meeting, that some good eligible organizations had not received funding. Also, Vice chairperson Casey noted that the Commission had requested City Council increase the funds allocated for the Grant program and now the Commission did not have enough agencies requesting funding for the funds that were available.

Commissioner Jellison expressed concerns with information about organizations that had been provided on Zoomgrants and gave some wrong impressions to the Commission. Ms. Whitney apologized on behalf of staff. Commissioner Wheeler suggested that a brainstorming session was needed.

Commissioner Jellison felt it would be worthwhile to contact agencies that have applied for funding in the past and Commissioner Wedge-Bonde questioned whether these agencies were still being contacted and were receiving information about the grant fund program.

Commissioner Jellison commented on the lack of responsibility from both the agencies and the City of Pleasanton and the need to determine the real reasons why organizations are not applying for grant funding.

B. Commissioner Wheeler indicated that she would like to receive regular updates on what is happening regarding renovations at the Amador Theater. Commissioner Jellison provided information on an upcoming event for which they were not able to sell seat tickets for the balcony. Ms. Whitney noted that the Amador Theater is a City Council priority and will be discussed at their Two-Year Work Plan Prioritization meeting.

Ms. Crose apologized for her late arrival at the meeting. She provided an update regarding the problem with the balcony at the Amador Theater, noting that two inspections have taken place and unfortunately the work is going to be expensive and once work begins, will likely open a Pandora's Box. Ms. Crose indicated that this theater is a top priority for City Council, but until approval is received and work begins the balcony cannot be used.

Commissioner Nene questioned whether theater uses had been taken into consideration with the new Library/Civic Center Specific Plan on the Bernal property, with the possible inclusion of another theater. Ms. Crose advised that they had not, however, a small theater was included in the original plan for this site, but further studies found through the Cultural Plan, that another theater was not needed in the Tri-Valley area. She advised that an outdoor amphitheater was being considered.

Commissioner Nene thought it would be better to build a new theater for the high school rather than try to fix the existing theater. Ms. Crose advised that staff hopes the Amador Theater

priority would be kept in front of City Council and while a new theater would be good it would be very costly.

C. Commissioner Farley-Rodgers asked about the painting of more utility boxes. Ms. Whitney advised that staff will be sending out requests for applications soon. Ms. Crose noted that a lot of boxes are in poor condition and in need of repair.

D. Vice Chairperson Casey requested staff provide the Commission with recommendations for what should be done with the grant funds that remained and suggested information be provided regarding 1) conducting a supplemental grant policy or on why something like this cannot be done, and 2) why events such as Ignite can be funded with the City grant funds.

Ms. Crose agreed that these were valid questions and she was unsure whether there was anything in writing that indicated the grant process could only be done once each year, or the funds cannot be used to help with city sponsored special events. She stated that staff would conduct the necessary research and provide information to the Commission.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Ms. Whitney thanked Commissioners for being understanding and apologized for not being able to provide answers to their questions. She advised that agenda items for discussion at the next meeting will include: 1) Literary Ambassador, 2) Programming, and 3) Outreach plan for the next grant cycle.

Vice Chairperson Casey suggested adding something on how the Commission can determine Ways of reaching its priorities. Ms. Whitney questioned whether guidelines needed to be changed and Commissioner Jellison indicated that finding out why the Commission was not able to meet the guidelines was what was needed.

Ms. Crose stated that grantees felt communication was not as strong as it had been in previous years and she felt that staff should look into what is being done at the communication level. She was not sure social media was effective and research was needed on how word about the grant program was being administered.

Commissioner Nene suggested a separate page be added to the city's website for Civic Arts that would provide all pertinent information and Commissioner Wedge-Bonde felt information about Ignite could also be added. Ms. Crose agreed putting everything in one place would be very helpful.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m.