



## Civic Arts Commission and Library Commission Joint Special Meeting Minutes

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**Zoom Webinar – Pleasanton, CA  
May 24, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Civic Arts Chairperson Huling Song.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

### **ROLL CALL**

#### **Civic Arts Commission:**

Commissioners Present: John Baiocchi, Jeanne Farley-Rodgers, Hira Raghavan, Stephanie Pellegrino, Jamie Yee, Katie Brunner, Janice Coleman-Knight, and Chairperson Huling Song.

Commissioners Absent: None

#### **Library Commission:**

Commissioners Present: Pam Cosby, Joanne Hall, Michaela Hertle, Sharon Murphy, Pranesh Ragu, Sonia Rai, Cindi Sabatini, and Chairperson Larry Damaser.

Commissioners Absent: Wendy Kimsey.

#### **Staff Present:**

Tamara Whitney, Recreation Manager; Lia Bushong, Assistant Director of Library and Recreation; Yu Tao, Library and Recreation Manager; Katie Delang, Librarian; John Elison, Library and Recreation Coordinator; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

### **AGENDA AMENDMENTS**

None.

## **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

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

Chairperson Song welcomed everyone and asked that all commissioners introduce themselves and indicate which commission they represented.

## **MATTERS FOR THE COMMISSION'S REVIEW / ACTION / INFORMATION**

### **2. Approve the Appointment of Nikita Jayaprakash as The Pleasanton Teen Poet Laureate for the 2021/2022 School Year.**

Ms. Whitney introduced Katie Delang and asked that she provide information about the Teen Poet Laureate program and recommendation to approve the appointment of Nikita Jayaprakash as the Pleasanton Teen Poet Laureate for the 2021/2022 school year.

Ms. Delang provided details about the establishment of the Pleasanton Poet Laureate position in November 1998 and with the success of the Adult Poet Laureate position, the city started in August 2012 the formal process of recruiting and appointing a Teen Poet Laureate, who is invited to share poetry and literary pieces at public events and dedications, as well as conduct workshops, poetry readings and events.

Because of the COVID pandemic, the Teen Poet Laureate selection process was paused for the 2020/2021, but in April 2021, the Library and Recreation staff once again began the formal recruitment process for the 2021/2022 school year and on May 17, 2021, commissioners from the Civic Arts, Library, and Human Services Commissions joined staff members in the interview and selection process of candidates for the Teen Poet Laureate position and recommend the appointment of Nikita Jayaprakash. Nikita is a Pleasanton teen actively involved in the community, has volunteered at the Pleasanton Public Library as a Kid Power volunteer, and at the Senior Center as a Leader in Training. She has also received the district Award of Excellence, the state Award of Merit, and has been published in two anthologies.

Ms. Delang introduced Nikita Jayaprakash to commissioners who then recited for them her poem entitled:

“The Way We Watch”

When I was younger

I'd watch my favorite movies within 30 minutes  
Because I'd only watch the scenes with the best people in it  
I'd watch the best moments and disregard the rest  
and get that happy feeling in my chest  
I'd listen to the funniest jokes that I've heard before  
the ones that never fail to make you laugh some more;

I knew my favorite lines by heart  
and I never had to rewatch the scary parts

When I was younger  
I'd watch my favorite movies within 30 minutes  
because I'd only watch the scenes with the best people in it  
And looking back,  
it's quite a clever tactic,  
that we should all have adopted.

Rewind the film of this year  
and watch your favorite scenes once more:  
so many family meals that our schedules never allowed for  
so many pets not spending the waiting at the door  
so many friendships that prove misfortune can't break a rapport  
so many stories that become the next generation folklore

Find your favorite lines to quote to your family  
and see if they remember just the same  
the small moments that you won't give away  
every memory tucked in your pocket for a rainy day

And then it's time to retire the remote  
and let the story continue  
It's time to buy the next ticket  
and go to a different venue  
It's time to remove the bookmark  
though the shock of our plot twist has yet to settle  
It's time to turn the page  
for we have yet to write our next sequel

Commissioners complimented Nikita on her beautiful poem and those who had been members of the Teen Poet Laureate Selection Committee were pleased to recommend her for the position and thought she had stood out as the strongest candidate and would be able to work well with both seniors and youth.

Chairperson Damaser thanked staff and the committee members for their recommendation of Nikita Jayaprakash as the Teen Poet Laureate for the 2021/2022 school year.

Commissioner Raghaven felt Nikita's poem was very insightful and Commissioner Farley-Rodgers felt it was a heartwarming piece of poetry.

A motion was made by Commissioner Baiocchi, seconded by Commissioner Hertle, recommending approval of the appointment of Nikita Javaprakash as the Pleasanton Teen Poet Laurate for the 2021/2022 school year.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

Civic Arts Commission

AYES: Commissioners Baiocchi, Farley-Rodgers, Raghavan, Pellegrino, Brunner, Coleman-Knight, and Chairperson Song.  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Commissioner Yee  
ABSTAIN: None

Library Commission

AYES: Commissioners Cosby, Hall, Hertle, Murphy, Ragu, Rai, Sabatini, and Chairperson Damaser.  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

**3. Review and Comment on Collaborative Library and Civic Arts Grant Program, “Youth Arts Over a Virtual Summer”**

Ms. Whitney introduced Mr. Elison and asked him to provide information about the Collaborative Library and Civic Arts Grant Program.

Mr. Elison advised that with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the inability to gather in-person, virtual programming has become necessary for organizations that serve community needs, and the Pleasanton Library and Recreation Department adapted to the change by offering a variety of virtual programs that includes story times, game nights, field trips, teen improv nights, and scavenger hunts.

Commissioners were advised that being able to continue virtual programming requires technology upgrades and creative applications and a LSTA grant was submitted to address certain technology needs with a \$13,000 grant being awarded.

Mr. Elison noted that the goal of “Youth Arts Over a Virtual Summer” is to enhance existing technology and be able to add new programs that will foster self-discovery, build social connections, and enhance engagement with the Pleasanton Library and the Firehouse Arts Center in programs that will include interactive events.

Commissioner Hertle stated she was happy to see the library moving forward with such programs. Commissioner Rai agreed and was pleased with the programs that had been offered throughout the Pandemic.

Commissioner Sabatini was pleased to learn that staff had applied for the grant. Commissioner Ragu agreed and stated he had enjoyed many of the library programs.

Mr. Elison provided Commissioner Hall with details about the timeline for the program.

Commissioner Murphy felt there was going to be diverse programs for many people. Commissioner Cosby and Chairperson Damaser agreed.

Commissioners Baiocchi and Farley-Rodgers felt the Virtual Summer program was a good idea and were appreciative of all the library has been able to offer during the pandemic. Commissioner Raghaven also agreed it would be a good program and Commissioner Pellegrino was pleased to see it offered something for all age groups.

Commissioners Brunner and Coleman-Knight congratulated staff on obtaining the grant and discussed details of the 3-day step-by-step drawing program with Mr. Ellison.

Chairperson Song also thanked staff for submitting an application for the LSTA grant that will help continue providing enriching programs for the community.

Commissioner Yee asked about the evaluation process for the grant and how the City of Pleasanton was able to meet the required goals. Mr. Ellison provided details and noted that an evaluation report will need to be processed and presented.

#### **4. Review and discuss Library and Civic Arts Reopening Plan**

Ms. Whitney reviewed with commissioners a presentation on the City of Pleasanton's plans for reopening. She commented on how the Library and Recreation Department has needed to change how services are delivered because of the COVID-19 pandemic and advised that in analyzing usage and feedback from the community, staff has been working with the Human Resources and Operation Services departments on developing reopening plans for facilities, programs, and performances. As State and County public health orders change, Library and Civic Arts services will reopen in a phased approach.

Commissioners were provided details by Ms. Whitney of safety measures and facility upgrades that have taken place in response to COVID-19 together with information on the reopening of the Pleasanton Library and Firehouse Arts Center with members of the community being encouraged to "Discover-Connect-Enjoy" and starting their journey at these locations.

Chairperson Song thanked the Library, Recreation and Civic Arts staff for all their hard work during COVID-19. Commissioner Hertle agreed and was pleased that the Discover-Connect-Enjoy slogan was being used to encourage people back into the community.

Commissioner Rai was hoping to soon be able to get back being able to socialize with everyone and getting back to some normalcy. Commissioner Sabatini liked the idea of being able to do things again.

Commissioner Ragu liked the presentation and questioned whether the city would still require people to wear masks. Ms. Whitney advised that guidance would be taken from the County.

Commissioner Hall liked the comprehensive reopening plan and Commissioner Murphy liked that the word “Discover” was included in the slogan.

Commissioner Cosby thanked Ms. Whitney for the presentation and gave kudos for the safety steps to be taken during the reopening.

Chairperson Damaser noted that “Discover-Connect-Share” was the slogan used first by the library.

Commissioner Baiocchi felt the reopening presentation was good and Commissioner Farley-Rodgers thought the word “Participate” should be included in the slogan.

Commissioner Raghaven felt the plan was awesome and stated she was amazed at what the city has been able to offer during COVID.

Commissioner Yee suggested the word “Caution” be used because the City of Pleasanton will likely take a conservative approach to reopening. She indicated that she works for the County and commented on numbers that are being noticed from youth sports.

Commissioner Brunner asked about the new staff workspaces at the library and questioned if any improvements had been made to the Amador Theater balcony. Ms. Whitney provided details.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight stated that she would choose the word “Imagine” for the slogan because the community is ready to imagine possibilities.

Chairperson Song indicated “Innovate” is the word she would choose for the slogan and that she would also like to see some of the virtual programs maintained.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Next Meeting:	Civic Arts Commission	August 2, 2021
	Library Commission	August 5, 2021