



Civic Arts Commission Meeting Minutes

**Zoom Webinar – Pleasanton, CA
November 1, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER

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

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Katie Brunner, Janice Coleman-Knight, Jeanne Farley-Rodgers, Anne Giancola, Hira Raghaven, and Chairperson Huiling Song.

Commissioners Absent: John Baiocchi, Stephanie Pellegrino, and Jamie Yee.

Staff Present: Lia Bushong, Assistant Library and Recreation Director; Michele Crose, Assistant Library and Recreation Director; Jeff Zavattero, Recreation Coordinator; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

None.

MINUTES

1. Approve regular meeting minutes of April 5, 2021

A motion was made by Chairperson Song, seconded by Commission Raghaven to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2021 meeting. **The meeting was approved unanimously.**

2. Approve regular meeting minutes of October 4, 2021

Correction:

Minutes, page 1, April 5, 2021 meeting minutes.

...only one member who attended the meeting ~~attended the meeting,~~ *was in attendance.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Brunner, seconded by Commissioner Farley-Rodgers, to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2021 meeting as corrected. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

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.

a. Overview of the Youth Theater Program – presented by Jeff Zavattero, Library and Recreation Coordinator

Mr. Zavattero advised that he is the Library and Recreation Coordinator at the Firehouse Arts Center. He then reviewed with the commission a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of the Youth Theater Program, commenting first on the award-winning Teen Improv Troupe that has performed in Chicago, New York, and San Francisco. He advised that five main stage shows are provided each year and the holiday season just began with the Halloween Show “Nightmares”.

Commissioners were informed that the Teen Improv Program and students who participate in the program typically stay for about four years and are very enthusiastic about it and the skills they learn and can take with them into their careers.

A second program Mr. Zavattero provided information about was the High School Music Collaborative in which students write, create, and perform their own music at community and charity events. This program has also been expanded to include radio events where podcasts are released, and participants learn about providing rights to music owners and important skills about the music industry.

Additionally, commissioners were provided information about the different camps that include three musical performances at the end of the camp. Mr. Zavattero noted that in the first main stage show, “Frozen”, performed at the Firehouse Arts Center. Tickets for the show were sold out and a profit was made.

Commissioners were advised that students participating in the programs not only learn about performing, but also about other theater aspects that include choreography, breathing techniques, vocal ranges, guidance, and leadership.

Chairperson Song thanked Mr. Zavattero for his presentation and felt the programs were exciting. She was especially pleased to learn about programs for middle school students. Mr. Zavattero agreed that it was exciting to see students who start while in sixth grade continue until they graduate from high school.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight questioned if the information that the commission had reviewed was also being provided in recreational materials that are distributed to the public and whether information was being introduced into school TV programs since she had recently been discussing with students how they learn about events taking place. Mr. Zavaterro indicated agreed this was an avenue that should be considered.

Commissioner Raghaven commented on this and advised that most information being provided this way to students is about school events or local fundraisers but felt a high school music collaborative could be useful. She also noted that she had learned about the programs being discussed because of her friend's involvement.

Chairperson Song felt it would be helpful to have a connection through school TV programs and suggested a wallpaper contest as being a good project for this.

4. Public Comment from the audience regarding items not listed on the agenda.

Sally Baker – gave a shout out to Jeff Zavaterro advising her daughter was a Creatures of Impulse participant for three years. She advised she is a costumer for both Amador Valley and Foothill High Schools and wanted to provide the commission with information about a musical that will take place in March 2022 at the Amador Theater and indicated the groups were excited about the upgrades taking place at the theater.

MATTERS FOR THE COMMISSION'S REVIEW / ACTION / INFORMATION

5. Approve Funding Criteria for Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Community Grant Program – Civic Arts Category

Ms. Crose advised that in preparation for the 2022/2023 Community Grant Program the Civic Arts Commission is asked to review the previous year's funding criteria and determine if any changes should be made. She discussed with commissioners the 2021/2022 funding criteria which stated:

- In evaluating applications for this category, the Civic Arts Commission will primarily consider projects that:
 - 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.

Ms. Crose asked if they would like to retain the same criteria for the 2022/2023 Community Grant Program or make changes. She noted that the funding criteria is a guiding tool and is not intended to exclude any applicants and was something put in place when it was determined some applicants were applying for funding for the same programs each year and this would encourage them to apply for new programs.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight questioned if “new and diverse participants” was meant for different age groups. Ms. Crose advised that it was meant to be inclusive of all age groups, cultures, genders, etc.

Commissioner Giancola questioned if it would be helpful to have an official statement in place that would indicate the commission was trying to have equity, diversity and inclusion be something they would consider. Ms. Crose agreed that change could be included in the first bullet or added as an additional bullet.

Ms. Crose confirmed for Chairperson Song that funding applicants need to be from qualifying nonprofit organizations who also need to have a specific number of board members that are Pleasanton residents. All necessary qualifications need to be met by the nonprofits for their applications to be considered for funding. She noted that staff takes the grant process very seriously because it is not possible to meet all needs of the nonprofits.

Ms. Crose provided the following wording based on the commission’s request for an additional bullet to be added to the funding criteria:

- We encourage applicants to offer programs that encourage equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Ms. Crose requested Commissioners to confirm this wording and provide a motion to accept.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coleman-Knight, seconded by Commissioner Farley-Rodgers to amend the funding criteria for the 2022/2023 Community Grant Program – Civic Arts Category include an additional bullet that reads: “We encourage applicants to offer programs that support equity, diversity, and inclusion”.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Commissioners Brunner, Coleman-Knight, Farley-Rodgers, Giancola, Raghaven, and Chairperson Song.

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Biaocchi, Pellegrino, and Yee

ABSTAIN: None

6. Review and Comment on the Library and Recreation Department Quarterly Report

Ms. Bushong reviewed with commissioners the Library and Recreation Department Quarterly Report for July-September 2021 noting that comments received from commissioners after reviewing the previous report have been incorporated into this new report.

Commissioners were advised that the report provides information and key metrics for each of the divisions within the Library and Recreation Department and measures how the department is doing and what things have been accomplished as they relate to the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Bushong commented on the increase of community members served at the library from the previous report which indicates how things are changing with the department's emergence from the pandemic.

In review of Civic Arts Programs in the report Ms. Bushong discussed Contract Classes and Theater Programs and the number of participants for each. She noted that the theater is now operating at full capacity and the reopening of the gallery has seen good attendance. In addition, Ms. Bushong commented on the senior meals program, the RADD program that serves adults with disabilities, Gingerbread preschool, and educational programs that provide information on environmental and history of the Pleasanton area. She also provided information about sports programs offered that includes tennis and bocce.

Chairperson Song thanked Ms. Bushong for the report and asked about the physical checkout number reported for library. Ms. Bushong advised that the number is for individual patrons served. Chairperson Song thanked her for the clarification and felt it was a very impressive number.

Ms. Bushong informed commissioners that one of the success stories for the library was the Student Success initiative, a program for middle school and high school PUSD students that that allows them to check out items using their school ID card.

Ms. Bushong asked commissioners to let staff know of any metrics they do not see in the report that they would like to see included in future reports. She also noted that a one-year report will provide more detail.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight indicated she liked the report format and felt it was something people would enjoy reading.

7. Review Civic Arts Projects Status Report

Ms. Crose advised that things are moving along with the "Evantide" public art piece, and a template has been done for the plaque that has been reviewed with the Harringtons, who are the primary donors of the piece, and additional details were provided by them. Once this step has been completed, City staff will initiate a search for a rock on which the piece will be installed and a meeting with the landscape architect will be scheduled at the site to discuss the installation. Commissioners were advised that plaques usually take several weeks to be completed.

Additionally, Ms. Crose advised the commission that project paint box is still on hold pending the completion of existing public art installations and repairs of other City public art pieces. She shared that one of the pieces in the collection had been damaged over time and staff is looking at possible solutions.

Ms. Bushong provided a report on the "Back to Broadway" show presented October 23, 2021, and the "All That Jazz" compilation that will take place November 6, 2021. There are several other planned events for the Firehouse Arts Center throughout the end of the year.

Commissioner Giancola provided information about a Tri-Valley Artists Studio Tour event with venues in Pleasanton, Dublin, Livermore, and Danville and noted that the Firehouse Arts Center would be hosting nine artists.

MATTERS INITIATED BY COMMISSION

Commissioner Brunner questioned if the commission would be receiving an update on workshops that the Teen Poet Laureate was conducting with elementary students. Ms. Bushong indicated she would follow-up on this and report back to the commission.

COMMISSION REPORTS

8. Review Civic Arts Project Status Report **a. Public Art Website subcommittee**

Commissioner Coleman-Knight provided an update on the public art website noting that members of the subcommittee had taken a detailed look at websites of three other cities and how these cities present public art on their websites. She indicated they were impressed with the San Leandro website because of the navigation bar that was easy to follow, and San Mateo and Palo Alto had different approaches.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight commented on public art in these cities being supported by corporations and stated the subcommittee was looking at what could be done in Pleasanton to get corporate money, the staff limitations in place for managing such a program, and the issue with locating public art information on the city's website. She discussed the possibility of looking at the City Explorer app used in San Francisco that allows for accessing self-guided walking tours. Commissioner Coleman-Knight also provided information about a Google map system she has been checking on.

Commissioners were advised by Commissioner Coleman-Knight that the subcommittee is aware that there is work needed and their intent is to create excitement in the community around public art.

a. Mobile Wallpaper and Virtual Background Art subcommittee

Commissioner Giancola advised that the Mobile Wallpaper and Virtual Background Art subcommittee met to discuss the idea of the City of Pleasanton having a virtual background and thought that it would be a good idea to turn this into a contest among Pleasanton residents of all ages and get some public interaction. She noted that the subcommittee was trying to formulate several aspects required from participants to provide a virtual background and has been gathering information on how to put details on the website. They discussed how the wallpaper and virtual background would be used and whether it was something all residents would be able to download or something that would only be used by the city.

Commissioners were informed by Commissioner Giancola that the subcommittee was still searching for information and formulating exactly what needed to be done but was going to put a

call out for artists with an incentive for people to submit. A decision still needs to be made about when and where the contest should take place so school-aged children could also participate.

9. Other brief reports on any meetings, conferences, and/or seminars attended by the Commission members.

Chairperson Song provided a report on recent events she had attended including the Livermore Art Walk, the “Back to Broadway” show and the Alex Ramon “Real Magic” show.

Commissioner Giancola shared information on discussions she has had with collaborators in Livermore pertaining to a project the Tri-Valley Citizens Climate Lobby is working on and involves the Livermore Poet Laureate. She also commented on the Science Center and a temporary public art display that will interest people in climate issues and solutions to problems.

Chairperson Song provided information about a recent Museum on Main event that specifically focused on climate change.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

- **Amador Theater**
- **Assessment of Virtual Programs**
- **Review of FY 2019/2020 Civic Arts Grants – Mid-Term Performance Reports**
- **Harrington Gallery Presentation**

Ms. Bushong noted that Future Agenda Topics is driven by items that the commission has requested be placed on an agenda so they can receive information and discuss. She discussed work recently completed at the Amador Theater that the commission can share with the public at a meeting and the commissions desire to learn more about virtual programs.

Ms. Bushong asked commissioners to contact staff and provide them details on any other items they would like to see added to the list of Future Agenda Topics.

Ms. Crose noted that the commission would be reviewing the mid-term performance reports from the FY 2019/2020 Civic Arts Grants and the March 2022 meeting would be dedicated to the review of applications for the 2021/2022 Community Grants Program – Civic Arts Category.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight provided details on a Golden Eagle sculpture with a sound piece that is being installed in Sunol near the San Francisco Water Tower and thought it was something the commission may enjoy learning more about. Ms. Bushong asked that Commissioner Coleman-Knight forward the information about this to her and Ms. Crose.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.