



Civic Arts Commission Meeting Minutes

Zoom Webinar – Pleasanton, CA March 7, 2022 - 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: Katie Brunner, Janice Coleman-Knight, Jeanne Farley-Rodgers, Anne Giancola, and Chairperson Huling Song.
(Commissioners John Biaocchi arrived at 6:07 p.m. and Jamie Yee at 6:17 p.m.).

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Rachel Prater, Recreation Manager; Lia Bushong, Assistant Library and Recreation Director and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

Staff removed the Commission Reports due to the length of the meeting and to ensure sufficient time for staff comments. It will be moved to the April meeting.

MINUTES

1. Approve regular meeting minutes of February 7, 2022

Correction: Page 4, Item: Commissioner Reports 9a
Commissioner Coleman-Knight asked that the name of the volunteer mentioned in the first paragraph be corrected to: Kiaorong Zhang.

A motion was made by Chairperson Song, seconded by Commissioner Farley-Rodgers to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2022 meeting as corrected. **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 FOR THE COMMISSION'S REVIEW / ACTION / INFORMATION

4. Review and Allocate Community Grant Funds in the Civic Arts Category for Fiscal Year 2022/23

Chairperson Song opened the meeting for agency presentations.

Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council – “Arts Gathering and Project Support” and “Conversation Banners for Youth Engagement” - Les Duman and Kelly Cousins

Mr. Duman from the Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council (PCAC) thanked the commission for the grant they were awarded last year for a mural painting. The placement of the mural will be outdoors, and the location is yet to be determined. PCAC will need a frame to display the mural, and the piece will need to go through the commission's PASS Committee and city processes for approval. PCAC is working with metal fabricators for the framing of the piece. Mr. Duman informed the commission that the frame will be aesthetically pleasing and made of a corrosive-resistant aluminum.

Mr. Duman advised that the grants PCAC is requesting for FY 2022/23 will be used for two projects. The first being an “Arts Gathering and Project Support” program featuring one or two free events for the community with art presentations and community engagement. Their second project “Conversation Banners for Youth Engagement” will offer an outdoor youth art exhibition that will give an opportunity for youth groups in Pleasanton and the Tri-Valley to engage and offer a positive expression in a creative process.

Commissioner Farley-Rodgers questioned if local students would be involved in the banner project and Chairperson Song asked what would happen to this project if funding was not awarded. Mr. Duman advised that local students would be involved and PCAC would try to obtain funding elsewhere or would need to delve into some of the funds currently available to PCAC.

Ms. Cousins provided information about the Banners portion of the grant. She informed the commission on a recent Conversation Banners project in Livermore that was created by Livermore students and how the project was put together for display to the community and to showcase service groups. She advised that the hope is to get more visibility to youth groups about various issues and will be working with the National Institute for Mental Illness (NAMI) on mental health. Ms. Cousins noted that PCAC envisions the banners to be approximately 3' x 5' and that they will be working with the City of Pleasanton on locations that the banners will be displayed.

Chairperson Song indicated she was pleased that PCAC would be working with NAMI and students on mental health issues.

Pleasanton Community Concert Band – “Storage Cost Reduction” - Les Duman

Mr. Duman from the Pleasanton Community Concert Band (PCCB) advised that funds requested would be used to purchase a twenty-foot container for storage and transportation of band equipment, advising that the container may be stored at a PUSD or City of Pleasanton site, or at a site offered by a local business. He informed the commission that PCCB currently spends \$400/month for storing their equipment and the purchase of a container would save them \$4,800 every year. The cost of the twenty-foot container would be \$5,000, in addition to the cost of the shelving to be installed.

Chairperson Song commented that this sounded like a sound investment for storing band equipment.

Amador Valley Historical Society (Museum on Main) – “An Afternoon/Evening with...Series 2022-23” – Sarah Schaefer

Ms. Schaefer provided information about their funding request to continue providing the “Afternoon/Evening ...series” that is a monthly program presented by the museum at the Firehouse Arts Center to people of all ages and allows audiences to spend time with a historical character learning many factors about history. She noted that this is a rewarding program that has expanded to two shows, includes a virtual option, and is offered at a very minimal cost to attendees. Ms. Schaefer advised the commission that the series addresses several of the Cultural Arts Plan goals through arts and programming, and cultural diversity. The Museum on Main celebrates gender, ethnic and culturally diverse characters and attracts lifelong learners in their series. The grant funding will support the program, as the costs of the series has increased as they plan to bring diverse performers from further distances. Ms. Schaefer thanked the commission for their consideration.

Chairperson Song asked about the program continuing to be offered virtually. Ms. Schaefer confirmed that the program will continue to be offered online, as the virtual option allows the Museum on Main to reach those that are not comfortable returning to in-person programs, as well as reaching audiences that live out of the area.

Pacific Chamber Orchestra – “Discover Music Elementary In-School Assembly Program,”
“Holiday Concert” and “Pacific Chamber School Day Orchestra Matinee Concert” – Lawrence Kohl

Mr. Kohl from the Pacific Chamber Orchestra (PCO) provided details about the School Matinee Concert program. He noted that the concerts are now back in schools and the May 10th event is full, and thanked the commission for their support. The concerts include a Mahler symphony with a soprano solo, along with children’s poetry set to music. He noted that PCO is now able to provide the School Assembly Program in person. Mr. Kohl provided details about the Holiday Concert that PCO offered in November 2021, and the enthusiasm with which it was received. He advised that funding was being requested to again be able to offer this event in November 2022. He noted that free tickets will be provided to low-income senior citizens and a family discount will be available.

Commissioner Brunner asked Mr. Kohl a question about the location of the Holiday Concert. Mr. Kohl replied that the location of the Holiday Concert in 2021 was at the Trinity Lutheran Church the weekend following the Thanksgiving Holiday, but PCO is open to looking at other locations.

Livermore Valley Opera – “LVO Pleasanton Community Outreach 22-23” – Jim Schmidt and Liesl McPherrin.

Mr. Schmidt from Livermore Valley Opera (LVO) introduced himself and his twelve-year background with the Livermore Valley Opera. He thanked commissioners for their past support of Livermore Valley Opera and provided details about the Community Outreach program and how it benefits students and teachers, and fulfills the California State Education Standards.

Ms. McPherrin advised that LVO plans to visit Kindergarten through Fifth grade students presenting a 25-minute opera program. LVO will also visit local high schools offering master opera classes with a professional clinician for young singers getting started. She stated that the goal is to make opera accessible and continue to foster relationships with the whole community, by providing programs not just in schools but at other locations such as libraries.

Commissioner Brunner asked about the age groups for the programs and Ms. McPherrin advised that programs are available for different age groups and what is provided depends on the grades that the school principals select.

Commissioner Yee questioned which music standard the LVO program fulfills. Ms. McPherrin commented on a State of California requirement that stipulates children needing to sit through and respectfully watch live performances. She noted that the opera being planned for the fall semester is called “Impresario” which will introduce students to musical terms such as allegro, adagio, and forte and will support what music teachers are providing. She indicated that the program meets the educational Anchor Standards numbers 8,9, and 11.

Chairperson Song closed the meeting for agency presentations.

Ms. Prater commented on information in the staff report. The report provided a summary of the grant information submitted by the applicants, including an average funding calculated from commissioners' ZoomGrant recommendations, whether the applicant submitted on time, and the average cost per resident. She advised that the information in the staff report was provided for commission guidance but would not be the only determination in the commissions' final recommendation and they should keep in mind the four funding criteria they voted on. She informed the commissioners that grant candidates were present in the audience and available to answer any questions.

Additionally, Ms. Prater advised commissioners that a total \$41,000 is budgeted for Fiscal Year 2022/23 and that the eight applications received from five different agencies totaled \$57,150. She then asked commissioners to consider the applications and make their funding allocation recommendations. She indicated that Commissioner Coleman-Knight would be moving to the Zoom waiting room for the PCAC discussion and would return when complete.

Commissioner Brunner commented on an error in the staff report. She noted that the staff comments for the PCAC Arts Gathering & Project Support project were a duplication of the staff comments shown for PCCB Storage Cost Reduction project. Ms. Bushong apologized for the error. She indicated the average amounts in the spreadsheet shown were correct.

Ms. Bushong reviewed with commissioners the spreadsheet outlining Average and Olympic Average, noting she would update the spreadsheet shown as commissioners changed funding recommendations throughout the discussion.

Chairperson Song suggested commissioners review each of the grant funding requests, consider the Average and Olympic Average, and provide their comments and recommendations. It was noted that Commissioners Giancola and Coleman-Knight would be recused from discussions on Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council projects and Commissioner Giancola would not be voting on any projects. At this time both commissioners were placed in the waiting room.

Chairperson Song suggested that commissioners consider the funding amounts for Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council requests. Commissioner Yee commented on the fact that everyone had voted to award funds to all the funding requested and asked for confirmation that what commissioners were now doing was making recommendations on the funding amounts. Chairperson Song confirmed that was correct and it was also time for commissioners to share comments on the requests.

Ms. Prater advised Commissioner Yee that the funding amounts provided in the staff report are the starting point for commissioners to discuss and help them make their final recommendations. She indicated that the commission would go through each of the projects and discuss and adjust the funding. Ms. Bushong noted that applicants in the meeting were available to answer any questions that commissioners may have to help them in their decision making.

Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council – Arts Gathering and Project Support.

No comments. It was agreed to retain the recommended Olympic Average amount.

Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council – Conversation Banners for Youth Engagement.

Chairperson Song asked for comments on both PCAC grant applications and there were no comments so it was indicated they would retain the Olympic Average amount. Chairperson Song asked to bring Commissioner Coleman-Knight back into to the meeting after the PCAC discussion.

Amador Valley Historical Society – An Afternoon/Evening with ...Series 2022/23.

Chairperson Song asked for comments on the Amador Historical Society grant application and there were no comments. It was agreed to retain the Olympic Average amount.

Livermore Valley Opera – LVO Pleasanton Community Outreach 22-23.

Chairperson Song asked for comments on the Livermore Valley Opera grant application and there were no comments. It was agreed to retain the Olympic Average amount.

Pacific Chamber Orchestra – Discover Music Elementary In-School Assembly Program.

Chairperson Song asked for comments on both PCAC grant applications and there were no comments It was agreed to retain the Olympic Average amount.

Pacific Chamber Orchestra – Holiday Concert

Commissioner Brunner commented on the extremely low Olympic Average number for this project and was unsure if the agency would be able to provide the concert with such low funding. Chairperson Song requested Mr. Kohl from PCO come back to the meeting for questions. Commissioner Biaocchi indicated he was concerned about the low funding amount being recommended for this agency and asked about the Olympic Average. Ms. Prater provided details on how information is gathered and what commissioners had indicated in their ZoomGrant reviews. She noted that only two commissioners had voted to approve funding this project, so the initial vote is a starting point, but the commission decision is still open to discussion.

Commissioner Biaocchi was advised by Mr. Kohl that PCO would not be able to provide the program without receiving funding. He suggested that certain funds being allocated for PCO programs could be moved around but that funding of at least \$5,000 would be needed for them to provide both the School Assembly and Holiday Concert programs and at least \$4,000 for the Discover Music Assembly program. The expenses for the concert programs cover the price of the orchestra, four soloists and a chorus, and the ticket sales cover only 30% of the expenses. Chairperson Song recommended that funding could be moved from the Discover Music program to the concerts.

Ms. Bushong requested that the commission discuss movement of funding once the grant candidates are no longer in the meeting for comment.

Commissioner Yee asked Mr. Kohl a question on the topic of outreach and how the program addresses equity gaps and if they had surveyed community members, as one of the grant

criteria addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion. Mr. Kohl discussed the success of the previous Holiday Concert, how there is a similar concert at the Bankhead in Livermore, and why they were hoping to receive funds to provide such a concert again to help reach the community. He discussed the diversity of performers and board members in terms of gender orientation, ethnicity, and background. He also provided details about their other program called Dream American for young and diverse composers, a new program they have started in Livermore and would like to bring to Pleasanton.

Commissioner Yee felt Pleasanton was extremely fortunate to have organizations such as PCO providing school programs. She asked about the grade levels served by the program. Mr. Kohl indicated the programs were open to all the Pleasanton elementary schools and are reserved on a first-come-first served basis and assemblies rotate each year throughout PUSD. Chairperson Song commented on the benefit of these programs rotating through Pleasanton schools. Mr. Kohl indicated the cost is \$1,000 per assembly, and PCO typically does two assemblies in the school.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight questioned if the Holiday Concert could be provided virtually, similar to other successful virtual performances in the area. Mr. Kohl indicated that they considered this option but decided that people would be disconnected from the performance and PCO opted not to. With no further questions from the commission, Mr. Kohl left the meeting to return to the audience.

Commissioner Brunner recommended moving funds from the Discover Music program, which was more flexible in funding, to the Holiday Concert. As a musician, she commented on the benefit of providing a live concert instead of one done virtually. She discussed that virtual performances are complex and expensive in setup. Commissioner Yee concurred that a live performance is preferable. Ms. Bushong mentioned that there is a delta of \$4,754 in funding which the commission could shift to fund the Holiday Concert or the commission could elect not to fund. Chairperson Song suggested taking \$3,856 from this amount and adding it to the \$517 indicated as the Olympic Average for the Holiday Concert. Chairperson Song asked commissioners if they had further comment and they did not.

Pleasanton Community Concert Band – Storage Cost Reduction

Chairperson Song indicated that the Olympic average of \$5,238 for PCCB could remain unless commissioners had further comment. Commissioner Brunner raised the question of whether the amount would cover the fixed costs since the current recommendation was less than the \$6,100 requested.

Mr. Duman from PCCB was asked to return to the meeting for commissioner questions. Commissioner Brunner discussed with Mr. Duman the possibility that PCCB would be able to purchase a container with an amount of \$5,000. He indicated that people selling containers may provide a reduced price and there is a possibility the organization could use some reserve funds. Mr. Duman shared the importance of PCCB and its role in engaging young children in the arts early, so they can enjoy more professional performances in the future. Mr. Duman moved from the meeting to the audience.

Livermore Valley Opera – LVO Pleasanton Community Outreach 22-23.

Chairperson Song indicated the Livermore Valley Opera funding was low and recommended that \$897 in excess funds be shifted to increase.

Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council – Conversation Banners for Youth Engagement.

Commissioner Brunner commented on the full amount of funding being recommended for PCAC's Conversation Banners program and questioned if they could make the program work if they received less funding.

Commissioner Coleman-Knight recused herself from the meeting for the PCAC discussion. Chairperson Song indicated that Commissioner Song and Commissioner Giancola were not in the discussion process due to conflict of interest.

Commissioner Farley-Rodgers provided information on why she had recommended full funding for this program, as she indicated that the program met the funding criteria that the commission had established.

Livermore Valley Opera – LVO Pleasanton Community Outreach 22-23.

Commissioner Brunner requested to bring back LVO to ask questions if the funding was scalable to cover their fees. Ms. McPherrin advised the commission that with less funding LVO would need to adjust and lower the number of performances they could provide, but could not reduce artist fees. The school outreach performance includes two performers and a pianist.

Commissioner Yee asked a question to Ms. McPherrin on how the scheduling with the schools works. She discussed with Commissioner Yee how LVO collaborates with school principals to schedule and arrange live performances. She indicated that the assemblies are large, and they may be testing an outdoor show this year. They have done shows with both Pleasanton and Livermore's elementary, middle, and high schools.

General Discussion

Commissioner Song called for further commissioner comments on the grant funding.

Commissioner Yee requested that in the future the commission would have an opportunity to provide more input about grant application questions. She also recommended that the City of Pleasanton conduct a survey to determine more about programs and services since the community is changing and growing, so commissioners are able to make the best possible recommendations pertaining to funding allocations. Commissioner Yee thought it would also be helpful to get a presentation from a school district representative to learn about the needs and gaps in the arts. She suggested having a representative from the school district attend a commission meeting before the end of the school year so the commission can better understand school standard requirements. Commissioner Farley-Rodgers suggested a subcommittee to discuss the grant process.

Ms. Bushong advised that the fall commission meeting where the commission discusses grant funding criteria would be the best time for the commission to discuss the Civic Arts grant process. She also indicated that many of the agencies submitting grants may do their own

surveys and the commission could build that into their annual funding criteria. She also indicated that the commission could request a presentation from the school district, and they could be invited to a future commission meeting as a guest presenter.

Commissioner Biaocchi commented that it was important to determine what the needs were within the community when asked to make recommendations on allocating funds. He also felt that since agencies had stepped forward requesting the funds that the commission should consider reaching out to find more funds in the future. Commissioner Yee also discussed the importance of advertising the grant program and suggested this also be something that the commission discuss in the fall meeting, which happens in October or November each year.

A motion was made by Commissioner Yee, seconded by Commissioner Farley-Rodgers, recommending City Council allocate the following funding recommendations in the Civic Arts Category for fiscal year 2022/23:

\$ 6,237.00	-	Amador Valley Historical Society – An Afternoon/Evening...Series 2022/23
4,391.34	-	Livermore Valley Opera – LVO Pleasanton Community Outreach 22-23
4,000.00	-	Pacific Chamber Orchestra – Discover Music Elementary In-School Assembly
5,000.00	-	Pacific Chamber Orchestra – Holiday Concert
4,960.33	-	Pacific Chamber Orchestra – Pacific Chamber School Day Orchestra Matinee
5,238.00	-	Pleasanton Community Concert Band -Storage Cost Reduction
4,933.33	-	Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council – Arts Gathering and Project Support
<u>6,150.00</u>	-	Pleasanton Cultural Arts Council – Conversation Banners for Youth Engagement
\$41,000.00		TOTAL FUNDING RECOMMENDED

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Giancola

ABSTAIN: None

5. Review Civic Arts Project Status Report

Ms. Prater reviewed with commissioners the Civic Arts Project Status Report commenting on the recent installation of the “Evantide” mountain lion art piece at the Alviso Adobe, the Amador and Foothill 2022 spring musical “Seussical the Musical” at the Amador Theater, and nearly sold-out “Real Irish Comedy” event at the Firehouse Arts Center.

Chairperson Song asked about distancing requirements for indoor shows and was informed by Ms. Prater that no distance requirements are in place.

6. Review and Comment on the 2021 Library and Recreation Department Annual Report

Ms. Bushong reviewed the 2021 Library and Recreation Department Annual Report with commissioners. She noted that in 2021 a total of 1,907 visits had been made to the Harrington Art Gallery. Attendance for youth theatre events was also high even with limited attendance availability, both good indicators of the resilience of arts and its supporters

Additionally, in the Human Services section of the report, Ms. Bushong commented on the achievement made by the City of Pleasanton in finding permanent housing for nineteen individuals who were previously homeless. Chairperson Song felt this was a wonderful achievement and great that these people now have safe places to stay and thanked staff for putting together a great report.

COMMISSION REPORTS

7. Committee Meetings

a. Public Art Website Subcommittee

Report will be provided at the April commission meeting.

b. Mobile Wallpaper and Virtual Background Art subcommittee

Report will be provided at the April commission meeting.

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

Commissioner Giancola provided information on her volunteering to be a judge for an Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer nature photography contest. She advised that she would be able to report on this at the next meeting but there will be three categories that she will be judging 1) water, 2) parks, and 3) wildlife.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

9. Virtual Programming

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 4, 2022