

Members

Heide Fernandez-Llamazares, Chair
Jes Takla, Vice Chair
Connie Behe
Jasmine Brown
Erica Chang
Katie Dean
Hannah-Clarke Gilmore
Sarah Jane Hoppe
Michael Kula
Vernon Ng
Derek Nunn
Ean Olsen
Jeanette Sanchez
Kenya Shakoor
Heidi Wygle
Jamika Scott, City Council Liaison
Olgy Diaz, City Council Liaison Alternate

Staff

Daniel Garcia, Community Programs Specialist
Marissa Laubscher, Public Art Program Manager
Rebecca Solverson, Division Manager
Naomi Strom-Avila, Funding & Cultural Programs Manager

Summary Minutes

Tacoma Arts Commission

Arts & Cultural Vitality Division

Community & Economic Development Dept.



Date: April 14, 2025

Time: 5:00 pm

Location: Virtual and in-person

These minutes accompany the recorded meeting of the Tacoma Arts Commission, which is available at

www.tacoma.gov/tacomaartscommission

Commission Members in Attendance:

Heide Fernandez-Llamazares, Chair
Jes Takla, Vice Chair
Connie Behe
Jasmine Brown
Erica Chang
Hannah-Clarke Gilmore
Sarah Jane Hoppe
Michael Kula
Vernon Ng
Derek Nunn
Ean Olsen
Jeanette Sanchez
Heidi Wygle

City Staff Present:

Daniel Garcia
Marissa Laubscher
Rebecca Solverson
Naomi Strom-Avila
Lisa Jaret

Guest Presenters:

Tanja Carter

Commission Members Excused Absence:

Katie Dean

Commission Members Unexcused Absence:

Kenya Shakoor

1. Call to Order

5:10pm (00:00)

Vice Chair Takla called the meeting to order and recognized that the meeting was held on Indigenous land: the traditional homelands of the Puyallup people.

ʔuk'wədiitəb ʔuhigwətəb čəł txwəl tiif ʔa čəł ʔal tə swatxwixwtxwəd ʔə tiif puyaləpabš dxwəstəłlils gwəl ʔutxwəlšucidəbs həlgwəʔ.

"We gratefully acknowledge that we rest on the traditional lands of the Puyallup People where they make their home and speak the Lushootseed language."

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2. Consent Agenda

(00:33)

Commissioner Dean had an excused absence.

Vice Chair Takla asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda, which included the agenda for the April 14 meeting as well as the minutes from the March 10 meeting.

Agenda correction noted: the Council Liaison Check-In agenda item with Councilmember Scott will be moved to the May meeting agenda.

There was a motion: "I move that accept the consent agenda with the changes and mention of Councilmember Scott."

Motion: Commissioner Behe

Seconded: Commissioner Nunn

Carried

3. Public Comment on Agenda or Arts & Culture Items

(02:46)

Vice Chair Takla mentioned merging the comments on arts and culture items section of the agenda with the public comments section of the agenda.

There were no public comments.

4. Chair's Report/Housekeeping

(04:44)

Tanja Carter was introduced as the City of Tacoma's new Director of Community and Economic Development. She spoke about her multicultural background, experience in Oakland, love for the arts, musical background as a violinist, and commitment to cultural vitality. Commissioners introduced themselves and welcomed her.

5. Council Coffee Role Playing

(14:46)

Staff gave an overview of the annual Council Coffee meetings. Commissioner Behe and Vice Chair Takla demonstrated a mock Council Coffee meeting with Lisa Jaret, who roleplayed as a council member. Staff asked Commissioners to sign-up for Council Coffee meetings.

6. Presentations

a. Tacoma Creates

(43:49)

Lisa Jaret shared about the Tacoma Creates reauthorization process, which must be completed by November 2025. Council has been supportive of a Councilmanic vote to reauthorize and there have been a series of meetings with Council sponsors to consider the following proposed updates to the Tacoma Municipal Code as proposed by staff and the Tacoma Creates Advisory Board:

- Revising some Tacoma Creates Advisory Board seats
- Updating expense allocations with more funding for capacity building and administration/program management
- Clarifying eligibility definitions

Potential updates to the Tacoma Municipal Code as proposed by Council members include:

- Clarifying support for operational expenses
- Allowing capital expenses
- Considering a change to the maximum funding amount
- Support for physical assets for fairs and festivals
- Support for space rentals, including City-owned theatres

- Support for Summer Late Nights

Staff shared an update about the increased number of applications received for the 2025-26 funding cycle.

7. Discussion/Updates

a. Revisiting Arts Commission Priorities

(58:37)

Rebecca Solverson shared updated draft language from last year's advocacy document for commissioners to consider and refine. Tacoma Creates reauthorization is critical due to the time sensitive nature of the program; the Commission had a historic role in advocating for the original ballot measure. Other ongoing advocacy items to keep visible for Council, even without immediate action, can include staffing for public art, maintaining the arts funding budget, and pursuing Tacoma Public Utilities' participation in the 1% for public art program.

Commissioners discussed, asked questions, and provided comments.

b. Retreat Subcommittee

(01:13:44)

Vice Chair Takla presented a draft agenda for the May 3 Commission retreat meeting. Daniel Garcia provided a review of the 2024 Commission retreat exercise.

c. Tacoma Arts Month Check-In

(01:25:46)

Daniel Garcia asked for volunteers to serve on the AMOCAT Arts Awards subcommittee and the Tacoma Studio Tour/Arts at the Armory subcommittee.

d. 2024 ACV Annual Report Overview

(01:31:37)

Daniel Garcia presented an overview of the Arts & Cultural Vitality Division's 2024 Annual Report with visuals and a summary of its themes, emphasizing the impact of arts funding and programming across Tacoma. Naomi Strom-Avila provided a preview of the report's structure.

Commissioners asked questions and provided comments.

8. Staff Check-In

(01:44:10)

a. Staff Projects Overview and Updates – Funding, Community Programming, Public Art, Tacoma Creates

Staff gave updates about the following items:

- The City's General Fund budget is still frozen
- Reminder to vote in the April 22 election
- TAIP contracting is still on hold with the budget freeze
- Commissioners were asked to sign up for TAIP mid-project meetings
- Booking arts and culture content for The253 show with TV Tacoma
- Selection of Nathan Burnham-Bradley for the Oakland High School public art project
- Selection of an artist for the Salmon Life Cycle public art project
- Upcoming mural presentation by Chief Leschi School
- Selection of the Environmental Services Artist in Residence program for WSRA's 'Recycler of the Year' award
- Upcoming public programming with Environmental Services Artist in Residence Teruko Nimura
- Planting Day at the McKinley Overlook with Liz Morrow
- Installation of first round of Hilltop plaques

9. Report Back

(01:50:00)

a. Advocacy Reports

There were no items.

b. Funded Project Updates/Upcoming Arts Events/Arts Events Attended

Commissioners shared about events they have attended or been involved with including:

- Hiring of an Arts at the Armory artist to paint a theater set
- Kai's Room immersive experience at Freighthouse Square
- One Table Show at the Tacoma Armory on April 18 – Commissioners Nunn and Shakoor are involved in the production of the event
- Dedication of murals, including Commissioner Brown's mural, at the Redmond/Marymoor light rail station on May 10
- Upcoming projects funded through Community Arts Projects and Tacoma Artists Initiative Program

c. Future Agenda Items for Consideration

There were no items.

10. Adjourn

7:04 pm (01:55:03)

MEETING FREQUENCY

Meetings are held on the second Monday of every month at 5:00 pm. All meetings of the Tacoma Arts Commission are open to the public.



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