

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: March 10, 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.cityoftacoma.org/tacagendaminutes

Commission Members in Attendance:

Heide Fernandez-Llamazares, Chair
Jes Takla, Vice Chair
Jasmine Brown
Erica Chang
Katie Dean
Hannah-Clarke Gilmore
Sarah Jane Hoppe
Vernon Ng
Derek Nunn
Ean Olsen
Kenya Shakoor
Heidi Wygle

City Staff Present:

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

Guest Presenters:

Elisheba Johnson

Commission Members Excused Absence:

Connie Behe
Michael Kula
Jeanette Sanchez

1. Call to Order

5:03 pm (00:05)

Chair Fernandez-Llamazares called the meeting to order. Chair Fernandez-Llamazares recognized that the meeting was held on Indigenous land: the traditional homelands of the Puyallup people.

ʔukʷədiitəb ʔuhigʷətəb čəł txʷəl tiit ʔa čəł ʔal tə swatxʷixʷtxʷəd ʔə tiit 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.”

2. Consent Agenda

(1:32)

Commissioners Kula, Behe, and Sanchez had excused absences.

Vice Chair Takla asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda, which included the agenda for the March 10 meeting and minutes from the February 10 meeting.

There was a motion: "So moved."

Motion: Commissioner Ng

Seconded: Commissioner Hoppe

Carried

3. Chair's Report/Housekeeping

(02:40)

Chair Fernandez-Llamazares mentioned it was Women's History Month.

4. Public Comment on Agenda Items

(02:55)

There were no public comments on agenda items.

5. Action Items

a. E. 64th Street, Phase II Proposal Updates

(04:22)

Staff introduced Elisheba Johnson, providing a brief overview of the E. 64th Street, Phase II public art project.

Elisheba spoke about the design of her medallion projects, drawing on community engagement culture maps to inform the look and design. She provided examples of the various mosaic medallion designs, which were composed of Mexican and Japanese tiles, wax prints, and other mixed materials. The Puyallup Tribe has translated the poetry text from the first stage. There will be five poetry markers in Lushootseed. Bose Elementary students provided words to inspire a poem created by the artist. Commissioners asked questions and provided comments.

Staff asked for a motion to approve the updated artwork proposal for E. 64th Street, Phase II.

There was a motion: "I move to approve Phase II of the E. 64th Street Project."

Motion: Commissioner Ng

Seconded: Commissioner Brown

Motion: Carried

b. Tacoma Artists Initiative Program Funding Recommendations

(22:40)

Staff shared an overview of the 2025-2026 Tacoma Artists Initiative Program review process. Seventy-two eligible applications were received, and the panel recommended funding for 25 applicants at \$4,000 each, totaling \$100,000. The artists recommended for funding are: Brendan Allen, Curtis Ashby, Vaquero Azul, Tor Caspersen, Saign Charlestein, Sarah A. Chavez, Cennady Coleman, Alex Fazekas-Boone, Aaron Green, Mari Griffin, Erin Guinup, Jenny Liou, Jason Loan, Mel McCarthy, Stephanie Meredith, Julia Micke, Yaya Mulvey Moir, Teresa Owens, Allison Preisinger, Adela Ramos Marché, Saiyare Refaei, TQ Spellman, Jessica Spring, Helen Thorsen, and Kristin Tollefson.

Commissioners Dean and Ng spoke about the panelists' perspectives, evaluation criteria, and key discussion areas and noted that the selected artists represented a balanced mix of districts, artistic styles, and project types.

Staff noted that, since the City is still in a budget freeze, the Commission can move forward with approving the funding recommendations, but that funding is subject to availability. Commissioner Ng emphasized the importance of TAIP artists' work and encouraged greater recognition of their contributions. Commissioners discussed ways to connect all applicants, selected or not, through workshops, social meetups, opt-in contact lists, the Tacoma arts listserv, and other engagement opportunities.

Staff asked for a motion to approve the 2025-26 TAIP funding recommendations, pending funding availability.

There was a motion: "I move to approve the 25-26 TAIP funding recommendations pending funding availability."

Motion: Commissioner Shakoor

Seconded: Commissioner Hoppe

Motion: Carried

6. Discussion/Updates

a. Public Records Reminder (58:56)

Staff provided a reminder that documents created in relation to Commission work are part of public record and are subject to disclosure under Public Records laws. The state Attorney General's office provides consistent protocols to public records laws.

b. Impacts of Changes in Funding (1:02:54)

Vice Chair Takla invited conversation regarding any funding-related changes that are impacting the arts. Commissioners and staff discussed timelines for upcoming funding cycles.

c. Retreat Subcommittee (1:06:24)

Staff shared that there are two dates set for Commission retreat sessions: May 3, 10 am – 1 pm, and June 1, 1 – 4 pm. The next retreat planning meeting will occur on April 1. Commissioners and staff discussed potential retreat topics.

d. Revisit 2024 Council Advocacy Requests (1:11:54)

Staff shared a brief overview of the advocacy items that Commissioners took to Council during their Council Coffee meetings in 2024. Commissioners can consider these items as they lay the groundwork for further discussion at the upcoming retreat sessions and discuss 2025 Council advocacy items.

e. Council Coffee – Reminder and Sign-ups (1:16:08)

Staff remind Commissioners to sign up for Council Coffee meetings, which will be scheduled for May. Commissioners signed up for Council Coffee meetings.

f. JEDIS Subcommittee- Coffee Chat Reminder (1:18:30)

Vice Chair Takla thanked Commissioners who have already had a one-on-one meeting with the JEDIS subcommittee members. The subcommittee is looking at feedback gathered during the meetings to identify themes that can help inform a shared framework, priorities, and language.

7. Staff Check-In

(1:24:36)

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

Staff gave updates about the following items:

- City of Tacoma's budget freeze is still in place.
- Tanja Carter, the new Community & Economic Development Department Director, starts on March 24.
- Arts & Cultural Vitality Division's 2024 Annual Report is currently in design, with a goal to complete it by the end of March.
- ArtTown show with TV Tacoma is being integrated into a new program called The 253, which will cover arts, culture, environment, civic engagement, local businesses, and other topics, airing roughly quarterly.
- Public Works Artist in Residence is working on the Pride Crosswalk, storm drain murals, and a potential artistic crosswalk at Lincoln Heights Park.
- Environmental Services Artist in Residence programming including collaborations with Ground to Sound Film Festival, South Sound Sustainability Expo, and workshops at Tacoma Public Library.
- An upcoming mural for Oakland High School, in collaboration with Tacoma Public Schools.
- An open call to create designs related to the salmon life cycle.
- An assessment of some pieces in the Municipal Art Collection that are being considered for deaccession.
- Granite pavers for the Hilltop Plaque project have been delivered to Tacoma and should be installed soon.
- Tacoma Creates' Comprehensive Organizational Support applications are due March 10 and Impact Funding applications are due March 24.
- The Tacoma Creates reauthorization timeline has shifted to May-July. Council is exploring potential updates to Tacoma Creates related to capital funding, support for rental facilities, and capacity support for outdoor fairs and festivals.

8. Report Back

(1:37:19)

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:

- Programing at Real Art Tacoma on International Women's Day.
- Upcoming projects funded through Community Arts Projects and Tacoma Artists Initiative Program.

c. Future Agenda Items for Consideration

There were no items.

9. Community Comment on Arts & Culture

(1:39:00)

There were no items.

10. Adjourn

6:42 pm (1:39:25)

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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