

Members

Heather Conklin, *Chair*
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Keith Blocker, *City Council Liaison Alternate*
Michelle Douglas
Heide Fernandez-Llamazares
Anna Holcomb
Paula Jacobson
Johnaye Kendrick
Michael Kula
Liesl Santkuyl
James Stowe
Wanda Thompson
Paul Throne
Lynn Wilmot-Stenehjem
Sarah Woodson

Staff

Amy McBride, *Tacoma Arts Administrator*
Naomi Strom-Avila, *Cultural Arts Specialist*
Rebecca Solverson, *Public Art Specialist*
Asia Tail, *Arts Program Coordinator*

Minutes

Special Meeting

Tacoma Arts Commission

Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality

Tacoma Venues & Events

Date: March 30, 2019

Location: YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties, 4701 S. 19th Street, Advancement Center

Time: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Commission Members in Attendance:

Heather Conklin, *Chair*
Rosie Ayala, *Vice Chair*
Michelle Douglas
Heide Fernandez-Llamazares
Anna Holcomb
Michael Kula
Liesl Santkuyl
James Stowe
Wanda Thompson
Paul Throne
Lynn Wilmot-Stenehjem
Sarah Woodson

Commission Members Excused Absence:

Paula Jacobson
Johnaye Kendrick

Staff Present:

Amy McBride, Arts Administrator
Naomi Strom-Avila, Cultural Arts Specialist
Rebecca Solverson, Public Art Specialist
Asia Tail, Arts Program Coordinator

Guests Present:

Davis Freeman

1. Call to Order

10:18 am

Chair Conklin

Commissioner Wilmot-Stenehjem welcomed the group and gave an overview of arts programming at the YMCA. Chair Conklin called the meeting to order, recognizing that the meeting was held on Indigenous land: the traditional homelands of the Puyallup people.

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2. Consent Agenda**10:18 am****Vice Chair Ayala**

Commissioner Jacobson and Kendrick had an excused absence. Commissioner Douglas had a late arrival.

Vice Chair Ayala asked for a motion to accept the meeting agenda.

There was a motion: "So moved."

Motion: Paul Throne

Second: Lynn Wilmot-Stenehjem

Motion: Carried

3. Introduction**10:20 am**

Chair Conklin welcomed the group. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

4. Icebreaker**10:30 am**

Commissioners participated in an icebreaker activity to get to know each other better.

5. Action Item: Funding Allocation Update**11:06 am**

A small mistake in funding calculations resulted in an extra \$5,000 left over from allocated TAIP monies. Staff recommended that the \$5,000 be added to the \$100,000 of funding allocated for 2020.

There was a motion: "I propose that we save the bonus money to allocate in 2020."

Motion: Paul Throne

Second: Wanda Thompson

Motion: Carried

6. Action Item: 2019-21 Tacoma Poet Laureate Recommendation**11:10 am**

The Tacoma Poet Laureate selection panel recommended Abby Murray as the 2019-2021 Tacoma Poet Laureate, with Lydia Valentine as the alternate. Commissioners discussed.

The ceremony celebrating the new poet laureate will be April 24th at Tacoma Arts Live, Studio 3.

There was a motion: "I so move."

Motion: Liesl Santkuyl

Second: Wanda Thompson

Motion: Carried

Commissioner Kula recommended reviewing and adapting the position in future years, including opening it up to literary artists working outside of poetry.

7. Arts Advocacy Role Playing and Talking Points**11:20 am**

Commissioners Thompson and Santkuyl demonstrated the Council Coffee meeting format with Amy McBride. Recommendations include:

- Rely on the Year in Review document as a good source of talking points and streamlined data



- Mention your connection to the councilmember's district and arts impacts happening in their area, including past successes and future projects planned
- Know that there is not necessarily a need for immediate action, and that the meetings are more for awareness and relationship building, sometimes with specific advocacy points suggested by the commission as a whole in advanced
- Provide data on connections between economic development and the arts, and other real world impacts
- If you don't know the answer to a question, it is okay to say that you will consult with Amy and get back to the council member with an answer later
- Share process and don't presume that the councilmembers know how our programs work
- Have some questions prepared for the councilmembers too, and give them an opportunity to provide input and share community feedback they've heard
- Try to stay away from non-arts related political opinions

A sign-up sheet was passed around for council coffee meetings. Commissioners asked for specific talking points on Tacoma Creates, and expected that councilmembers would have a lot of questions about the new legislation.

8. Tacoma Arts Commission History and Primer

11:43 am

Amy McBride presented the history highlights, basic duties, functions, and projects of the Commission.

Commissioners shared their thoughts and experiences as related to these functions, and asked questions.

Commissioners reviewed current ways the Tacoma Arts Commission is currently addressing Equity, Accesses, and Inclusion in public art processes, and asked for additional recommendations. Commissioners suggested the following:

- Reviewing data and collecting more data, including who is served and information beyond race/ethnicity including age, etc.
- Removing barriers, being really specific about opportunities designed for people of color
- Appreciate having the Indigenous Land and Equity Statements read during meetings
- Further developing panel policies, including people implementing DEI strategies and equity experts on panels
- Making access to feedback less scary, being more proactive in the initial application process to encourage emerging artists to get feedback – who knows to ask for feedback is an equity issue too
- Providing mentorship and assistance in the application process, especially for emerging artists or first time applicants
- We have equity statements, but no clear formalized way that we are acting on those statements when reviewing applications, or in how we expect applicants to be embodying/acting on those values
- TAC has a responsibility to train applicants on what we expect in terms of equity practices, and requiring applicants to collect data and demographics, including investing funds in training for small budget organizations currently struggling to allocate budget to consultants, and requiring more action from big budget organizations who aren't showing real change despite budget allocations



9. Lunch**12:50 pm****10. Synergistic Alignment Between Work of Arts Commission and Tacoma Creates 1:10 pm**

Amy McBride gave an overview of ArtFull Tacoma and Tacoma Creates, and asked commissioners for input on how to implement it effectively.

Needs NOT Covered by Tacoma Creates:

- Individual Artist Funding
- Public Art
- City events like Tacoma Arts Month, Poet Laureate, etc.
- New groups and organizations under 2 years old, pipeline funding
- Organizations that are not formal, LLCs, grassroots community groups, non-501c3
- Emerging artists and working artists
- Training and cohort outreach – public art affiliated

Possible Overlap with Tacoma Creates:

- Training
- Equity and geographic distribution of funds
- Arts and community health focus
- Equity index

Commissioners broke into small groups and brainstormed what Arts Commission programming could be in 6 focus areas:

Public Art:

- All parts of Tacoma
- Beautiful art + active art + solving a need
- Social conscious-raising art – art activism
- Interactive/conversational arts – capturing voices
- Temporary art
- Wayfinding / district place-making
- Permitting to allow temporary / community projects
- Artist boot camps (for emerging / undiscovered artists)
- Non-traditional public engagement
- Free walls

Funding:

- Emerging artist / arts organization specific money opportunities
- Individuals and organizations, pairing / mentoring (repeat funders and or opt-in)
- Emergency gap funding
- Multiple levels of funding for emerging / established

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- Higher risk tolerance
- Partner with non-Tacoma Creates organizations to leverage opportunities (create / formalize partnerships)
- Organizations who are doing the work but don't qualify for "arts" funding
- Artists who do work that doesn't have a "community" component and they are ineligible for funding
- Start up and growth initiative funding
- Look for the natural partners

Programming:

- Startup arts projects (intentional invitation to emerging artists)
- Consulting implementation team + Tacoma Creates
- Schematic timeline / visual connection aids
- Do arts community meetings "on the road" around Tacoma
- Common metrics – training, tools, impact, analysis, support
- Create and facilitate events to promote collaborations in specific arts areas (un-meeting, non-Tacoma Creates organizations)
- Community conversations
- More outreach and promotion of youth voices include youth commission
- Literary laureate (not just poetry)

Policy:

- On funding panels: policy to ensure that group is diverse representative, includes POC
- Evaluation + impact (i.e. Tacoma Creates but also Tacoma Arts Commission)
- Work on current demographics to better understand community identities (age, specific groups like military), official expectation of training, outreach, promotion / apps / awards
- Gray areas, statute, rules, some areas (Tacoma Creates) need to make clear
- Ballot initiative
- Emphasize social justice in program policy

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion:

- Possible steps / \$ - Inclusion statement, board training, staff training, community asking
- Intentional demographic targets and information collection in data and specific programming – age: youth and seniors, health and wellness, LGBTQ / identity, maybe overlaps – partnerships with schools, opportunities for collaboration with Tacoma Creates between students and community artists, internships, co-production of works, income level of artists during formative years/youth (how can we measure and evaluate this?), how do we integrate artful diversity in all facets of city government
- Continuous training
- Translation services



Creative Economy:

- Social outreach – marketing City opportunities, professional communities, coordination of events/opportunities, social meetings
- Teaching opportunities – how to's, City requirements, expansion of existing opportunities, Spaceworks, students/young artists
- Social media exposure – easier access to community
- Can we track/study longitudinal impact of grant monies over time (impact of \$ and impact on participants)

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm

