



Harini Krishnan, District 1
Stephen Seymour, District 1
Kimberly Gordon, District 2
Elizabeth Stone, District 2
Laura McHugh, District 3
Richard Rojo, District 3
Jeanne Heise, District 4
Edward Sweeney, District 4
Pauline Fong, District 5
Samaruddin Stewart, Dist. 5

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REGULAR MEETING OF THE ARTS COMMISSION
Wednesday, June 3, 2020 — 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. – via ZOOM

MINUTES

1. Roll Call –

Present: Commissioners Sam Stewart, Harini Krishnan, Kimberly Gordon, Elizabeth Stone, Edward Sweeney, Jeanne Heise, Laura McHugh, Pauline Fong. Staff: Director Robin Rodricks, Chief Legislative Aid Juda Tolmasoff.

Absent: Commissioners Rich Rojo and Stephen Seymour

2. Reading by San Mateo County Poet Laureate

County Poet Laureate read a poem on American Asian Pacific Islander Month celebration in honor of Commissioner Pauline Fong, as this is Commissioner Fong's last meeting. She is relocating outside of the County.

3. Agenda Amendments – NONE.

4. Consideration of Minutes of April 17, 2020 meeting.

Commissioner Sweeney moved to approve the minutes of the April 17 meeting; Commissioner Krishnan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Reports

A. Staff Reports

Juda Tolmasoff reported that the Supervisors will be voting on the first draft of the County Budget on June 23 at their regular meeting. She reminds everyone to please share US Census information with their networks to encourage Census participation.

Robin Rodricks reported that the COVID Relief Grants cycle is complete; Commissioners Heise and Harini will give a report under Discussion Items. She advised of an opportunity from the California Arts Council (CAC) to apply for a Fellow of Color funded by the CAC; the Commission can use the Fellow, should it be awarded to us, to outreach and connect with populations of color, and help launch work on strategic plan directed at these populations of color.

B. Commissioner Reports: Commissioners may provide a report and/or announcements, **up to 2 minutes**, of activities since last Commission meeting.

- Commissioner Sweeney reports that Music at Menlo has cancelled its programming, but is partially paying artists. The program is receiving good community support.
- Commissioner Heise reported attending the Thrive Arts & culture Action Group meeting which offered a presentation on how arts/culture nonprofits can take action to move forward through the COVID crisis. She also served on the Commission's COVID-19 Relief Grants panel.
- Commissioner Krishnan reports she participated in the Commission's COVID-19 Relief Grants Panel.
- Commissioner Stone was hired by a corporation to produced 12 evenings of Zoom live storytelling for families.

6. **Action Item**

A. Commissioner Pauline Fong nominated Sam Stewart as Chair, and Harini Krishnan as Vice Chair. Commissioner Heise seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote.

7 **Discussion Item**

A. Recap of COVID-19 Relief Grants issuance

The Director reported that, as voted upon by the Commissioners at the April 17 meeting:

- The 18 2019 grantees were notified via commongrantapplication.com (the Commission's online grant platform) of the opportunity to be granted a one year extension and receive a 2020 grant by signing a renewal agreement wherein they continue adherence to the same terms and conditions as outlined in their 2019 grant. The Director reported that all 18 grantees opted in for the grant extension and signed the agreement.
- Director then opened up a COVID-19 Relief Grant cycle for the County's arts/culture nonprofits in CommonGrantApplication.com, and publicly announced the grant opportunity via County Communications department, 3 e-blasts to the Commission's e-list, and the Commission's Facebook page. The Director thanked the Commissioners for sharing the grant opportunity with their networks.
- In line with Commission's regular and grantmaking-best practices, the Director convened the Peer Review Grants Panel on May 12. As discussed and agreed by the Commission at the April 17 meeting, the panel consisted of Commissioners Heise and Krishnan, the Director, and Mara Grimes of San Mateo, an arts management professional with 20+ years' experience.

Commissioners Heise and Krishnan reported on their service on the panel and results of the COVID-19 Relief Grants: they shared that a total of 20 applications were received from new organizations and/or returning grantees. The panel carefully reviewed the applications with a view to how the applicant served underserved populations, and their presence and engagement throughout the county, and their plan for use of the grant funds. 14 applicants were awarded a grant. The list of the 14 grants was then shared via email with the Commission for final review and opportunity for input/comment by May. The Director advised that the Finance has begun issuing the checks.

B. Open discussion of next steps for Commissioners in their Strategic Plan Initiative.

Commissioner Fong presented a PowerPoint outlining potential marketing strategies for the Commission to pursue when launching the new strategic plan.

Commissioner Stone presented a project in line with her Initiative task. In brief, the project is for members from arts/culture nonprofit organizations to create projects or programs re: the impacts of race. The program has two parts: first, the members visit the south and learn firsthand about the history and current impact of race relations; upon return, the second part involves the nonprofits developing programs and/or projects – potentially collaboratively – on this issue for our County. Commissioner Stone asked for feedback from the Commissioners, and she will draft a budget.

As the time for adjournment approached, the director asked that the other Commissioners be allotted time to share their thoughts and any plans for the initiative on which they are lead.

8. **Adjournment:** The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:05p.m.

Date of next meeting to be determined.