

Richmond Arts & Culture Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
450 Civic Center Plaza
Richmond Conference Room
Richmond

Thursday, September 24, 2019

In attendance: Jenny Balisle, Rosalie Fay Barnes, Michael Cohen, Meighann Helene, Joshua Horne, Nava Mizrahi, and Florene Wiley

Absent: Melissa Kirk

Staff: Michele Seville, Arts & Culture Manager
Katy Curl, Library & Cultural Services Director

Guests: Jordan Green, and Cordell Hindler

I. Welcome/Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Balisle called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

II. Approve Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Mizrahi, second by Commissioner Wiley to approve the agenda, as shown, carried by the following vote.

Ayes: Balisle, Barnes, Cohen, Helene, Horne, Mizrahi, Wiley
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Kirk

III. Approve Minutes from August 27, 2019 Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Wiley, second by Commissioner Mizrahi to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2019 meeting, as submitted, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Balisle, Barnes, Cohen, Helene, Horne, Mizrahi, Wiley
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Kirk

IV. Public Comment

JORDAN GREEN, the new Communications Manager at the Richmond Art Center, introduced himself to the RACC.

V. Discussion and Review of NPA Applications and Scoring Process

Michele Seville, Arts & Culture Manager, explained that the Voting Guidelines for the Neighborhood Public Art (NPA) Mini-Grants included in the meeting packets would be helpful to the new Commissioners to evaluate this year's twenty NPA application presentations scheduled for October 3 and October 10, 2019. The project budgets, score comparison and final determination would be made at the October 22, 2019 meeting.

A straw poll found that there would be no quorum for either the October 3 or October 10 scheduled meetings. The RACC determined to meet on October 15 at 5:00 P.M. to consider most of the presentations, and meet again on its regular date on October 22 at 5:00 P.M. to hear the remaining presentations and to make its final determination. It was clarified that a meeting location would have to be verified for each meeting.

The RACC discussed the issues that had arisen with last year's NPA process, discussed ways to address those issues as part of the NPA contract, and offered the following suggestions:

- Include a standard question to NPA applicants as to how the RACC would be recognized for awarding the NPA grant.
- Award only a percentage of the grant in the beginning and/or request a return of funds for incomplete grant projects.
- Consider a post-award process to close the loopholes that had caused problems in the past.
- Consider ways to better enforce NPA contracts.

The RACC decided that:

- An IT staffer should be present to help set up the presentations.
- Each presentation to be limited to five minutes with five minutes for questions and answers, and with five minutes between each presentation.
- The RACC to be involved in any new process.
- A Google calendar to be created to identify and schedule meetings, and Commissioner Horne volunteered to work on a Google calendar.
- A RACC Commissioner to be involved in the review of NPA applications, and Chair Balisle volunteered to be present during this year's review scheduled for September 25 at 2:30 P.M.
- Commissioners to serve as compliance managers to NPA recipients, which could be done this year without requiring a change to the contract.

Chair Balisle advised there would be an agenda item in the next few months to further address the issues discussed.

It was emphasized that with the hundreds of grants that had been awarded over the years there had been few situations that called for the need to ensure compliance, which Ms. Seville suggested had to do with the RACC mentors.

VI. Work Plan Next Steps

Ms. Seville reported that she had met with City Attorney Everett Jenkins who had written a draft of an amendment to the City Ordinance that required business licenses for grantees. She explained that Mr. Jenkins was aware the RACC had strongly recommended that the requirement be waived for NPA grantees and he was working to draft an amendment to that effect. He would be meeting with the Recreation Director given similar situations in that department, and the matter would be submitted to the City Council for consideration. She added that Mr. Jenkins was also working on the Policies & Procedures (P&Ps) using the Palo Alto plan in that process, as well as working to create the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) as a defined entity.

Chair Balisle stated that she had not heard anything about a meeting with the Interim City Manager but would continue pursuing that possibility.

As to the request for an assistant, Katy Curl, Library & Cultural Services Director explained that the position had not been budgeted but she was trying to look for another way to provide that assistance, potentially through an intern or other arrangement.

Ms. Seville stated she had received two applications for the Poet Laureates. The review panel for hearing the presentations by the Poet Laureates was being finalized and would be scheduled in the next couple of weeks.

Commissioner Barnes recommended the creation of ad hoc subcommittee comprised of RACC and PAAC members to create a 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, although Ms. Curl suggested it might be premature at this point but could be revisited after the first of the year.

VII. RACC NPA Project Statement Update

Chair Balisle presented a response statement related to the NPA grant for *Inside Out*, and Ms. Seville offered the status of the situation, which was that the Mayor's office wanted to drop it and the City Attorney's office only wanted to respond to the letter from the National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) that had been sent to her and copied to Commissioners. She clarified that any response would have to come from the City.

The RACC discussed the statement and the situation that had triggered the need for a statement and RACC members expressed concern that a response would suggest an admission of censorship, which had not occurred. The RACC strongly objected to the implication that it had not followed proper procedures since it had followed the proper procedures by initially referring the matter to the City Attorney's office. There was concern that without a statement and the details in that statement, the issue and the RACC's role in that issue would not be clarified and might proceed to another level.

Ms. Seville commented on the likelihood that Mr. Jenkins might include a portion of the statement in his response to the NCAC. She advised that she would follow up with Mr. Jenkins.

VIII. NPA Reports

Ms. Seville reported that almost all NPA projects had been completed. She had attended the *Cops & Kids Mural* dedication ceremony, stated the project had been well done, and commended the artist Rebeca Garcia-Gonzalez, who she characterized as the perfect artist to work with the community.

Ms. Seville also reported that Tamara Shiloh was still working on *Just Imagine KidZ Book Basket*, Tania Pulido was working on *Richmond Purple Tree Collard*, Tracey Mitchell was doing his play *Money Speaks*, and Alfonzo Leon was completing *One Richmond Unifying Community Mural*. All those contracts had been extended. She also noted that Antu Antinao's project *San Jarocho for Richmond* had been so well received that Mr. Antinao had been offered a job by one of the organizations where he had done a workshop.

IX. Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) Report

Chair Balisle updated the last meeting of the PAAC, noted that the terms of two members would end next month, and the terms of another two members, including her term, would end in February 2020. If the ordinance did not go through four members would be lost by February. She asked about applications for the PAAC and Ms. Seville stated she would send out an announcement of the need for new people.

It was clarified that term limits were one of the issues being addressed by Mr. Jenkins.

X. Staff Report

Ms. Seville reported that a new contract for John Toki for the Family Justice Center sculpture was being submitted to the City Council; and there would be a dedication ceremony for the Port Sculpture at Pt. Sheridan on October 5 from 6:00 to 7:30 P.M., to include a light show on all of the sculptures.

In addition, Ms. Seville reported that more photographs had been received from Yuki Nagase who was carving the stone for the Officer Bradley A. Moody Underpass; the two artists working on the Community Conversations grant were completing the majority of the work; the Richmond Writes! 2020 poetry contest material for "What Makes you Laugh?" had been distributed to the schools; and the Richmond Writes! 2019 addendum process had been completed.

Ms. Seville added that there were no CIP projects. With respect to private development public art allocations, she had met with Tom Herriman and had talked to one of the marijuana dispensaries next to what used to be the glass blowers at Cutting and 31st. She noted the potential in this case for consolidation to allow appropriate funding for an art project.

XI. Announcements

CORDELL HINDLER, Richmond, commented that the recent City Council meeting had noted the vacancies on the RACC, which were hopefully being fast tracked to address the urgency to fill those vacancies. He announced that there was a new show at the Contra Costa Civic Theatre, Bright Star by Steve Martin and Edie Brickell.

Ms. Seville identified the exhibition at Bridge Storage and ArtSpace by Steve Hurst and Sean Papillon on October 27 from 2:00 to 7:00 P.M.

Commissioner Mizrahi invited members to the LGBT Film Festival, also at Bridge Storage and ArtSpace, on October 12 starting at 5:30 P.M. The RACC was a community partner to that event.

Commissioner Helene requested that RACC members forward top priority events to the Social Media Committee.

Commissioner Wiley verified that the November Richmond Arts Salon would introduce the NPA grantees, and recommended that a Meet the Commissioners segment be included. The date of the event would be identified at a later date.

Chair Balisle reminded members of the Pot Luck for Michele Seville scheduled for November 3 at Bridge Storage and ArtSpace from 5:00 to 7:30 P.M.

XII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 P.M. to the next meeting on October 15, 2019.