

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

**Thursday, April 25, 2019**

In attendance: Jenny Balisle, Michael Cohen, Meighann Helene, Melissa Kirk,  
Nava Mizrahhi, and Florene Wiley

Absent: Rosalie Fay Barnes, Joshua Horne, and Silvia Ledezma

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

Guests: Marva Reed

I. Welcome/Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Balisle called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

II. Approve Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Wiley, second by Commissioner Mizrahhi to approve the agenda, as submitted.

On the motion, Michele Seville, Arts & Culture Manager, reported that the presentation by the Richmond Poets Laureate, which had been scheduled for this meeting, had been continued to the next meeting in May.

Motion by Commissioner Mizrahhi, second by Commissioner Wiley to approve the agenda, as modified to remove Agenda Item V, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Balisle, Cohen, Helene, Kirk, Mizrahhi, and Wiley  
Noes: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Barnes, Horne, and Ledezma

III. Approve Minutes from March 28, 2019 Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Mizrahhi, second by Commissioner Kirk to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2019 meeting, as submitted, carried by the following vote:

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

IV. Public Comment

Marva Reed, an Artist, Chair of the Committee of the Art of Living Black, and a volunteer at the Richmond Arts Center, introduced herself to the RACC.

V. Presentation by Richmond Poets Laureate and Discussion

The item had been removed from the agenda given that the presentation would not occur until the meeting scheduled for May.

VI. Solution for 2019 Richmond Writes! Poetry Omissions

Ms. Seville reported that a teacher from Washington Elementary had sent an e-mail to advise that poems for Richmond Writes! had been sent from two classes to [RichmondWrites!@gmail.com](mailto:RichmondWrites!@gmail.com), an address she had never had access to, and the students had been heartbroken to learn that their poems had not been in the published book, had not been read, and had not been judged. She noted the teacher was the only one out of all 13 schools who had used that email address. She had conveyed her apologies and stated the RACC would be advised of the omission and a discussion would occur.

On the discussion, the RACC suggested that a separate book for the affected classes could be published, a presentation by the affected parties to the RACC could be considered, or an invitation to and recognition at the Music at Point Richmond event could be considered, potentially with all participants to be invited to the July outdoor Richmond Arts Salon; however, it was determined it would not fair to do more than had been done for those who had followed the protocol.

To avoid the same issue in the future, Ms. Seville explained that she would make sure that the gmail address had not been included in the application. She also clarified that a reprint would not be possible given that this year's Richmond Writes! Book, which was the largest ever at 492 poems, had already been published. She suggested the poems in question could be sent to the judges under the same process, with a printing of those poems in an addendum using the same cover, or that certificates of participation could be considered.

By consensus, the RACC urged verification whether the gmail address had been included in the application; the judges be asked to review the additional poems, and if not the RACC would read the poems; with the poems to be published through an addendum to the Richmond Writes! Book, and after judging if there was something that stood out worthy of special mention that could also be done.

Given that the school year would end in the next month, the RACC emphasized the need for expediency.

Motion by Commissioner Mizrahi, second by Commissioner Wiley to check the Richmond Writes! application; ask the judges to review the poems, and if not the RACC would read the poems; with the poems to be published; and with the issuance of certificates of participation, carried by the following vote:

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

VII. Discussion and Vote on RACC Meeting Dates Poll

Chair Balisle reported that the poll for RACC meeting dates had identified a preference for the fourth Tuesday of each month, even though it would be in conflict with City Council meetings.

Motion by Commissioner Wiley, second by Commissioner Mizrahi to accept the results of the poll for the RACC to meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month, beginning with the May 2019 meeting, carried by the following vote:

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

VIII. Review Retreat Topics for RACC/PAAC Work Plan

Ms. Seville explained that the agenda had been included to identify what was to be discussed at the joint retreat, which would be the first between the Richmond Arts & Culture Commission (RACC) and the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC). She stated the City Manager had asked for an Action Plan from each body with the development of a Work Plan for City Manager review.

Chair Balisle reported that she had worked with Rosalie Fay Barnes from the RACC and Linda Kalin from the PAAC. She would facilitate the retreat starting at 10:30 A.M. on May 4 in the Richmond Conference Room with a break at 12:30 P.M. for lunch, and Rosalie Fay Barnes would facilitate from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M.

Chair Balisle highlighted the agenda for the retreat and reported that out of the process a RACC and PAAC needs list would be developed to be able to identify the separate RACC and PAAC goals to be able to produce a final Work Plan / Action Plan in an open and transparent process.

The directive from the City Manager was discussed with a clarification that there was no model as to how the Work Plan could be prepared. A needs list from both bodies had been proposed that would morph into a Work Plan proposal subject to the available resources. There was a desire that the retreat be very clear and focused as to what needed to be accomplished. It was also clarified that the proposed mission statement offered a statement of purpose, would advise the new members of the framework of the process, and would help to focus the discussion.

IX. Report on Arts & Culture Manager Assistant

Ms. Seville explained that budget hearings were in process.

Katy Curl, Library and Cultural Services Director, outlined the proposal she had made to the Finance Department for a new position for an Administrative Services Analyst who would work Department wide to offer strong administrative support, which had been presented along with a proposal for other clerical support. She clarified the two-prong approach to request positions that were flexible enough to provide the Arts & Culture Manager position hours when needed. While the results of the proposal and the amount of time that could be dedicated to the Arts & Culture Manager position was unknown at this time, given the limited resources it was not expected that either position would be full-time.

X. Arts, Culture, and Transportation (ACT) Fellowship

Ms. Seville reported on the receipt of an email from Creative Placemaking for an Arts, Culture, and Transportation (ACT) Fellowship. She referred to the Creative Placemaking website for more information and explained that other grant opportunities were available, although very labor intensive.

Commissioners Wiley and Kirk expressed an interest in serving on any grant or fundraising subcommittee from the perspective of grant writing.

RACC members supported the establishment of a subcommittee for fundraising and grant writing given the loss of grants in the past and to take advantage of the several grant writers in the RACC/PAAC, and encouraged that topic as one to be discussed at the retreat, and to be incorporated into an Assistant to the Arts & Culture Manager position.

XI. NPA Reports

Commissioner Mizrahi advised that she had participated in the community painting for "Bridging the Gap" Mosaic Mural and Benches at Verde Elementary School by Seneca Family Agencies/Anna Scaiano, reported there would be a celebration on May 25, everyone would be invited, and it was her hope to advise the community that the RACC had supported the project.

Commissioner Wiley reported that the “Just Imagine KidZ Book Basket” project by Tamara Shiloh had been progressing well.

Commissioner Helene explained that while she had not been assigned a project, she had connected with Commissioner Barnes for the “Money Speaks” Play by Tracey Mitchell until she could be assigned a project in the next round.

Commissioner Kirk had no update to the “Richmond Purple Tree Collard” project by Tania Pulido.

Chair Balisle reported that the “One Richmond Unifying Community Mural” by Alfonzo Leon had been delayed due to the situation with the business license, and an extension might have to be considered to complete the project, which was not expected to occur before the end of the school year.

Commissioner Cohen stated he had visited the RYSE Center, noted that the center had been doing incredible things educationally and artistically, and progress was being made for the “Lead with Love II” project by Ciera-Jevae Gordon of RYSE, with performances scheduled for May 25 at 12:00 P.M. and 3:00 P.M.

Given that Anthony Tamayo was no longer a member of the RACC, his project “Cops & Kids Mural” By Dr. Shantina Jackson was recommended to be assigned to Commissioner Helene if she had time given that she would not be available in May and June.

## XII. Social Media Committee Update

Chair Balisle reported that with the loss of Commissioner Tamayo, who had been supervising Instagram and YouTube, the social media team assignments would have to be reevaluated.

## XIII. Richmond Arts Salon Update

Commissioner Wiley reported that the last Richmond Arts Salon had been the best with the most attendees, and the first live component with the best response from those who had attended. An outdoor location had been identified for the July event with more details to be available at the May meeting. She was very pleased with the RSVP component at this time and would continue using that component.

Chair Balisle emphasized the importance of having food at the events, and on the subsequent discussion, outreach to community restaurants, catering companies, Costco or other companies was recommended for donations to the Arts Salon events. Postcards, printed by the city, were also recommended to be available at the events.

#### XIV. Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) Report

Chair Balisle highlighted the last meeting of the PAAC when the membership had met at John Toki's studio for a site tour and an update on the sculpture for the Family Justice Center, after which the RACC had returned to the Civic Center to complete the remainder of the agenda.

Ms. Seville described the sculpture with a water element and explained that John Toki was a local artist who made his own tools, glazes, and clay. She reported that Mr. Toki had done a lot of public art in the Bay Area and beyond.

Ms. Seville added that a presentation had been made at that PAAC meeting from Winifred Day, the project manager of a private development firm, which had proposed a public art project at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Macdonald. A more detailed presentation would be made at the PAAC's May meeting.

#### XV. Staff Report

Ms. Seville reported on her attendance at a Planning Committee meeting at Contra Costa County's Arts & Culture Commission (AC5) on April 16, with a presentation for a County Cultural Plan. She noted that the City of Richmond's Cultural Plan had last been updated in 2002.

Ms. Seville reported that the Port Sculpture was in process and would likely be installed in June; the Mayor had a reception for the National Institute of Art & Disabilities (NIAD) artists; the Officer Bradley A. Moody Underpass was moving forward as was the Community Conversations Grant, and she spoke again to the success of Richmond Writes! 2019.

#### XVI. Announcements

On the question related to warehouses in Richmond that could host a taiko drum troupe, the PAAC identified a number of possibilities.

Ms. Seville announced an event at Bridge for the "Bay Area Instrument Makers Spirit of Invention," a gallery exhibit and live performances scheduled for May 10, May 18, June 1, June 14, and June 29.

#### XVII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 P.M. to the next meeting on May 28, 2019.