

BELLEVUE ARTS COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES

February 10, 2015  
4:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Room 1E -109

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Jackson, Commissioners Lewis, Ludeña, Madan, Malkin, Manfredi, Wolfteich

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Mary Pat Byrne, Scott MacDonald, Department of Planning and Community Development

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Stokes, Ken Schiring

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:38 p.m. by Chairperson Jackson who presided. All Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Manfredi, who arrived at 4:41 p.m. and Commissioner Lewis who was excused.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

**A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Madan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wolfteich and it carried unanimously.**

B. Approval of Minutes

**A motion to approve the January 20, 2015, minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Madan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Malkin and it carried unanimously.**

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Meydenbauer Bay Beach Expansion Public Art Project

Arts Specialist Mary Pat Byrne reminded the Commissioners that planner Robin Cole had previously presented design plans for the expansion of Meydenbauer Bay Beach Park. At that time, the Commission voted to recommend the Arts Program become involved in the project as a key public art commission. With the design work moving forward, 4Culture was hired to run the artist selection process for the identified opportunities. Cath Bruner, 4Culture's public art program manager, will do the work.

Three art opportunities have been identified with a total budget of \$190,000, not including the fee for services being paid to 4Culture. Ms. Byrne shared with the Commission the draft Request for Qualifications and called particular attention to the eligibility paragraph and asked for input as to whether or not the call should be limited to artists living in the Northwest states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana.

Chair Jackson suggested artists from British Columbia should be allowed to participate given the strong artistic community there. Commissioner Madan commented that most public art calls are typically restricted to artists from the United States to promote the local art communities. Chair Jackson pointed out that British Columbians are our neighbors and there are some very good public artists living there.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Madan, Ms. Byrne said the deadline is being driven by the need to get an artist involved in time to interact with the design team in a meaningful way before the plans reach 90 percent.

Chair Jackson asked how the three project budgets were derived. Ms. Byrne said the overall amount is about 1% of the construction budget for this phase. Because of her broad experience with all types of integrated art projects, part of Ms. Bruner's scope of work was to propose how the budget should be divided among the various art opportunities. She added that for some of the opportunities construction credits will be available, and that will extend the impact of the art dollars.

Noting that two of the panelists are to be community neighborhood representatives, Commissioner Malkin asked where they will be from. Ms. Byrne said the thinking is that one should be from close to the area and the other should be from the city at large. An Arts Commissioner will also be appointed to participate.

**A motion to recommend the Arts Program proceed to issue the call to artists as presented was made by Commissioner Manfredi. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Malkin.**

**A motion to amend the motion to include artists from British Columbia was made by Chair Jackson. The motion to amend was seconded by Commissioner Manfredi.**

Commissioner Malkin asked why the call should be limited to the Northwest artists. Chair Jackson said it is less expensive to work with Northwest artists given that they are already from the area, and they are more likely to understand the local geography and Northwest culture. Commissioner

Malkin said if budget was not an issue he would strongly advocate for broadening the scope to include at least California.

Commissioner Madan argued in favor of keeping the focus on regional artists who would be far better at understanding the local culture.

**The motion to amend the motion carried 4-2, with Commissioners Manfredi and Ludeña voting no.**

**The motion as amended carried unanimously.**

B. 2015 Funding Recommendations

Commissioners Madan and Manfredi indicated they both have children who participate in Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra (BYSO), but both stated that they could remain objective.

Because of her position as BYSO executive director, Chair Jackson recused herself from participating in any vote concerning that organization.

Commissioner Malkin commented that having served on the Allocations Committee in 2014 and 2015, he saw a recurring theme regarding a lack of space for rehearsals, performances, studio work and gallery exhibits. Several performing arts groups mentioned the building excitement for the opportunities the Tateuchi Center will bring if it becomes a reality. He said it was exciting to be able to fund every applicant.

Commissioner Manfredi said serving on the allocations committee is a wonderful way of finding out the breadth and depth of what is happening in the community artistically. Space clearly is the principle issue. The committee wished it had more to allocate but certainly felt strongly the need to recognize the good work done by the organizations and the Commission's desire to support them going forward. The organizations are growing and more funding is needed to provide them with the support they need.

Ms. Byrne called attention to a series of charts in the packet and noted changes and trends in the applications over the last few years. She noted that growth in applications from diverse groups over the years peaked in 2014 and leveled off for the recent round. She said the expectation is that the net number of applicants will continue to increase in the coming years.

The Bel-Red Arts District initiative has been under way for several years now. Under the initiative, organizations based in that district are given priority consideration in funding. However, except for Emerald Ballet Theater and Pacific Northwest Ballet, both of which are located in Bel-Red, no new groups have stepped forward. The initiative has not proven to be impactful in terms of encouraging activity in the district. Recently there have been talks with artists and the owners of arts-related businesses in Bel-Red to find out what they are interested in doing. It would be a good idea to invite

people, including Greg Johnson, who is the executive director of Wright Runstad, the developer of Spring District, to visit with the Commission and discuss possible strategies.

Commissioner Madan pointed out that most groups are not looking for particularly large spaces and that various organizations could form a coalition to jointly acquire space.

Commissioner Malkin said another approach would be for the City to become a landlord and rent space to artists and arts groups.

Commissioner Malkin noted that there were no individual applicants for Special Projects. Ms. Byrne added that neither of the individual artists who applied in 2014 were able to complete their projects; one of them may apply again in 2016.

Chair Jackson left the room and handed the gavel to Commissioner Manfredi.

Ms. Byrne reminded the Commissioners that the Eastside Arts Partnership is what is known as an organizational funding program. Under this program, funded organizations can expect about the same level of funding each year, which gives them more stability and better ability to plan. The levels change only if the group has experienced a significance or the funds available change. The organizations do most or all of their programming in Bellevue, and they are each evaluated based on all of the services provided in Bellevue. The groups are encouraged to submit applications based on their need, not the amount of funding available.

Ms. Byrne commented that typically about 80 percent of the available funding is earmarked for Eastside Arts Partnership and 20 percent for Special Projects. The Allocations Committee, however, has the option of moving the funds around a little bit as deemed necessary.

Commissioner Madan noted that the amounts recommended by the Allocations Committee for 2015 mirror the amounts allocated in 2014 with the exception of KidsQuest and Music Works Northwest. Ms. Byrne explained that Music Works Northwest was given a one-time \$5000 allocation in 2014 to assist with moving to a new facility.

Answering a question asked by Councilmember Stokes, Ms. Byrne explained that the total budget was made up of the \$110,000 allocation from the city plus the annual operating grant of \$13,000 from 4Culture. The budget has not changed since 2001. Several requests for an increase in allocations have been made over the years but none have been successful. The most recent request was for allocations was \$200,000. Councilmember Stokes said it does not make sense to be stuck at the 2001 funding level.

Ms. Byrne commented that the discussion around the need for additional funding generally comes up during the budget cycle, noting that it may be helpful to raise the issue with the Council during the off-cycle. Councilmember Stokes agreed and said there is a growing awareness of the arts community, particularly the struggles in the Bel-Red corridor.

**A motion to endorse the Allocations Review Panel's recommendations for 2015 Eastside Arts Partnerships funding and present the recommendations to the City Council was made by Commissioner Wolfeich. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Madan and it carried unanimously.**

Chair Jackson returned and resumed the chair.

Chair Jackson said she read in the newspaper that Stone Dance Productions faced some difficulties last fall and had to seek a last-minute grant. Ms. Byrne said Eva Stone, the artistic director for the group, lives in Snohomish County making her ineligible for 4Culture funding. Ms. Stone had to find funding to make up for the loss.

Commissioner Malkin said the Eastside Jazz Club lost its facility when the Marriot raised the rent to an unaffordable level. The organization is looking for a new home.

Commissioner Madan asked if the City's community centers could be used by organizations looking for space. Ms. Byrne explained that the main problem is the community centers are heavily programmed and there are few opportunities for arts groups to use the venues.

Commissioner Ludeña asked if there is a limit to the amount of money Special Projects can request. Ms. Byrne said the guidelines state that groups generally receive between \$500 and \$2000, but the Commission has the option to recommend more or less. Groups are encouraged to ask for what they need.

Commissioner Ludeña said the problem for many groups is that they need the funding up front, especially the smaller organizations. The application process is difficult as well. Ms. Byrne said Seattle has created a program to deal with such situations and she offered to research how they do it.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Wolfeich, Ms. Byrne said everyone who applied for 2015 was approved for some level of funding.

Commissioner Madan noted that the Lake Washington Symphony would be putting on a single performance while the Village Theatre would be performing at 15 schools. In terms of the number of people impacted, the latter is considerably more but is marked down for less funding.

Commissioner Manfredi said there was a clear desire on the part of the Allocations Committee to see a professional grade orchestra return to Bellevue and saw the application as an opportunity for a longer-term impact.

Commissioner Madan pointed out that many of the projects requested funding for venue rental. Ms. Byrne commented that paying rent is a fact of life for any arts group and this is a legitimate way for the city to support their work.

**A motion to endorse the Allocations Review Panel's recommendations for 2015 Special Projects funding and present these recommendations to the City Council was made by Commissioner Madan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Malkin and it carried unanimously.**

Chair Jackson returned and resumed the chair.

Chair Jackson asked if consideration should be given to using some of the 4Culture funding for Eastside Arts Partnership rather than special projects. Ms. Byrne said in working through its deliberations the Allocations Committee concluded it should maintain Eastside Arts Partnership and use the 4Culture funding to address the requests coming in for Special Projects. Commissioner Malkin pointed out that even with the \$13,000 from 4Culture the available funding was only about half of the requested amount.

**A motion to endorse the Allocations Review Panel's recommendation to use all of the \$13,000 of 4Culture Sustained Support funding for Special Projects funding was made by Commissioner Manfredi. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Malkin.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

C. Cultural Access Fund

Ms. Byrne explained that Cultural Access Washington is a proposal for state legislation that would allow counties to tax themselves and use the funds to provide ongoing support for arts and cultural organizations. She noted that the city is in the process of putting together its legislative agenda which makes it the right time for the Commission to take a look at the Cultural Access Fund issue and make a determination as to whether or not a recommendation to support it should be carried forward to the Council. She stressed that while the Commission is charged with advocating for the arts, the Commission is limited to advocating for issues the Council has approved, particularly legislative issues.

Commissioner Malkin voiced his support for the legislation because it would increase the flow of funding to the arts and cultural in King County. The estimate is that King County would receive as much as \$46 million.

Chair Jackson clarified that if approved by the legislature, King County would still have to have a vote before the tax could be imposed. She added that it could be either a sales tax or a property tax and the legislature has yet to decide which it should be.

Ms. Byrne stated that a reasonable amount of the revenue stream would be used for administration. About ten percent would be used for public school access, with the remaining funding supporting large regional cultural organizations, and to a smaller extent, funds would be distributed through an application process to community based organizations. The large organizations locally that would benefit would be Music Works Northwest, Bellevue Arts

Museum, Village Theatre, and potentially the Tateuchi Center. The smaller groups could benefit by being awarded funds through an application process. Collectively, the positive impact could be substantial.

Councilmember Stokes said the Council has not taken a close look at the legislation yet. He agreed the first step would be for the Commission to recommend it to the Council for inclusion on the city's legislative agenda.

**A motion to advise the City Council support the Cultural Access Washington bill was made by Commissioner Malkin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Manfredi and it carried unanimously.**

5. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS

Ms. Byrne reminded the Commissioners about the joint boards and commissions meeting on February 25 regarding the Comprehensive Plan update.

6. REPORTS

A. Commissioners' Committee and Lead Reports

i. Presentation to Downtown Residents Association

Commissioner Wolfeich said he made a presentation regarding the Tateuchi Center to Downtown residents at the library. There were 34 residents in attendance. The president of the Downtown Residents Association observed that about two-thirds of the members are enthusiastically for the Center, and the other third are leaning that way but remain somewhat uncertain. The group asked if lower cost programs or scholarships will be available for the educational program to appeal to all income levels. Questions were also asked about parking and potential traffic impacts.

Ms. Byrne said the project itself will be adding no more than 250 parking stalls, which is less than would normally be required. The bulk of the parking stalls will be associated with other buildings and will be used by people going to restaurants and the like, and during the day the spaces will be occupied by people working in the various towers. The leadership of the Downtown Residents Association asked to see the traffic impact study the Tateuchi Center had to do in order to get its building permits. The traffic engineer who reviewed the plans will also visit with the group to talk about how the calculations are made.

B. Project Updates from Staff

i. Monthly Update Report On All Projects

PACE. Ms. Byrne updated the Commission on a report presented to Council on February 9<sup>th</sup> in which results from a feasibility study were presented. She briefly described PACE's history which began in 2002. In 2013 PACE representatives requested a substantial investment by the City in order to help reach their funding goal and to stimulate more private contributions. Stating in a resolution that the City sees the future Tateuchi Center as an asset to the community, Council directed staff to develop a memorandum of understanding between the City and PACE. Each party agreed to complete certain tasks to accomplish three things: provide the due diligence research Council would need in order to decide whether to invest, increase public awareness of the project and the benefits it would bring to the community, and reinvigorate the PACE board with new membership and a rejuvenated fundraising campaign. PACE also agreed to provide whatever assistance the City would need in its due diligence research.

On February 9 a milestone presentation was made to the Council regarding the findings of the feasibility study. The consultant-led study looked at the operating pro forma in terms of revenues and expenses, the programming, the demand for the space, and the key factors to success. The consultant worked with John Haynes to develop a feasible budget that is close to what was already in hand but which is organized in differently. The projection shows a first-year revenue shortfall of \$750,000 that would have to be dealt with, but in the following years the shortfall would decrease to \$250,000 annually. The study found that the demographics in Bellevue and the Eastside are excellent for cultural attendance given the high educational levels and general affluence. A moderate demand to rent the venue was identified.

The key challenge highlighted by the consultant will be for PACE to raise the needed capital funding. Working with Mr. Haynes, the consultant calculated that the remaining fundraising requirement is \$138.4 Million which the consultant said should be raised by September of 2016. It was further concluded that the funds need to be raised by the fall of 2016. Should ground be broken in that year, the Center would be ready to open in the fall of 2019.

Councilmember Stokes said he was appointed by Mayor Balducci to serve as liaison to the project. Part of the reason behind a public investment in the project is the desire to have some control over the programming, making it available to everyone. He said the work of the Commission has been crucial in helping to move the project forward.

Ms. Byrne described the concept for an Education Center to replace the planned cabaret. It may be less expensive to construct an education center, it would contribute to the Center's bottom line, and it would provide even greater access to the community. The flexible space could be configured as a studio theater, or with a flat floor suitable to conducting master classes.

Councilmember Stokes concluded that the desire is for the Center to increase participation in the arts and encourage contributions from funders in the community for a variety of organizations and programs.

- ii. Arts Day in Olympia

Chair Jackson encouraged the Commissioners to participate in Arts Day on March 4.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, INFORMATION

A. Written Correspondence - As Noted

B. Information - As Noted

- i. Future Agenda Items

- ii. Committees

- iii. Public Art Program Funds

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.