

RICHMOND ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION (RACC)
Special Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 18, 2021
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Zoom Invitation

Present: Commission Chair Florene Wiley; Commissioners Lynson Beaulieu, Deb Dyer, Melissa Kirk, and Phillip Mehas

Absent: Commissioners Tom Herriman, Emily Leighton, Tom Lyons, and Council Liaison Melvin Willis

Staff Present: Arts & Culture Manager Winifred Day

I. Welcome/Call to Order/Roll Call

The RACC meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. Approve November 18, 2021 Meeting Agenda

Commissioner Mehas commented that the meeting agenda included an item for the election of a Co-Chair, although pursuant to the RACC regulations it should more accurately refer to the election of a Vice-Chair.

Chair Wiley recalled at one time there had been two Co-Chairs but since that was no longer the case, she agreed the agenda should be corrected to reflect the nomination and vote for the Vice-Chair. She also asked that the meeting agenda be amended to include RACC Liaison Assignments to the NPA Mini Grant assignees, and recommended the item be added after Item VI. a.

Arts & Culture Manager Winifred Day asked that the meeting agenda be further modified to include an item after the RACC Liaison Assignments to provide information about the Art Academy University Scholarship Program

Agenda Item VI. Information Items were modified as follows:

- a. NPA Mini Grant Summary: 13 grantees not to exceed \$65,000
- b. RACC Liaison Assignments
- c. COVID Relief Mini Grant Summary: 6 grantees not to exceed \$50,000
- d. WCCCFJC Art Rain Drain: 3 Semi-finalists not to exceed \$10,000
- e. Art Academy University Scholarship Program

Motion by Commissioner Dyer, seconded by Commissioner Mehas to approve the November 18, 2021 meeting agenda, as modified, carried unanimously by a voice vote.

III. Approve October 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Mehas, seconded by Commissioner Beaulieu to approve the October 28, 2021 meeting minutes, as submitted, carried by a Roll Call Vote with Commissioner Dyer abstaining due to absence.

IV. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

V. Action Item

a. Nominate and Vote on Vice-Chair

Commissioner Beaulieu confirmed, when asked by the Chair, that she had nominated Commissioner Kirk as the Vice-Chair during the October 28, 2021 meeting, as reflected in the meeting minutes from that date.

Commissioner Beaulieu nominated Melissa Kirk as the RACC Vice-Chair. Commissioner Mehas seconded the nomination.

The RACC discussed the terms of the Chair and Vice-Chair, to be confirmed by staff, with Commissioner Mehas recommending the Vice-Chair term from December 1, 2021 to December 1, 2022, and with staff to verify when the election of Chair and Vice-Chair must be held.

Motion by Commissioner Beaulieu, seconded by Commissioner Mehas to elect Melissa Kirk as the Vice-Chair of the RACC to serve from December 1, 2021 to December 1, 2022, carried unanimously by a voice vote.

After the action had been taken, Commissioner Dyer reported pursuant to Page 18 of the RACC regulations, the election of Chair and Vice-Chair was to occur annually with an individual not to serve more than two consecutive years, although the date of election had not been specified.

The RACC discussed whether or not the term of the Vice-Chair should start in January 2022.

Chair Wiley reported she would be absent for the December RACC meeting and a Vice-Chair was needed to Chair that meeting.

The RACC discussed whether or not to conduct the meeting scheduled for December 16, 2021. The Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) was scheduled to meet on December 9, 2021. Chair Wiley suggested the election of officers for RACC Chair and Vice-Chair should occur in January, with the newly elected Vice-Chair to serve as an Interim Vice-Chair, although it was again noted that an officer may not serve for more than two consecutive years.

Chair Wiley asked staff to confirm when she had been appointed as the Chair of the RACC to become knowledgeable of when her term would expire.

VI. Information Items

a. NPA Mini Grant Summary: 13 grantees not to exceed \$65,000

Ms. Day reported there were 13 grantees, all of whom had accepted the awards and were in the process of completing all contract documents, with the awards to begin in January 2022. The awards totaled \$65,000. There were no extra funds available and no artists had declined the opportunity.

Chair Wiley asked staff to prepare a January to June calendar detailing the activities of the 13 grantees each month, and Ms. Day stated that was possible along with a scope of services. Vice-Chair Kirk expressed the willingness to provide assistance to staff on a program calendar.

b. RACC Liaison Assignments

Commissioner Mehas volunteered to be the RACC liaison to Richmond Pal.

Commissioner Dyer preferred to volunteer as the liaison for one of the murals, and while she could do both she may not be present during the month of May but could shepherd both through the month of April 2022.

Vice-Chair Kirk expressed the willingness to be a liaison, could double up as needed, had not evaluated the list and would be happy to take on whatever was available.

Commissioner Beaulieu asked to be assigned as the liaison to one assignment.

Chair Wiley volunteered to serve as the liaison to Hannah Hamilton and Deborah Burks.

Vice-Chair Kirk expressed the willingness to serve as the liaison to Steven Bruce.

On the discussion, there were many openings remaining to be assigned a RACC liaison and since not all Commissioners had the list, Ms. Day expressed the willingness to resend the assignment list to RACC Commissioners.

Chair Wiley asked that each RACC Commissioner contact staff to advise who they wanted to work with by December 1, 2021.

c. COVID Relief Mini Grant Summary: 6 grantees not to exceed \$50,000

Ms. Day reported there had been seven applicants and six grantees for a not-to-exceed \$50,000 award. Approximately \$10,000 had not been expended. There were a couple of miscellaneous items and some flexibility. Additional information could be presented to the RACC at its December meeting.

Chair Wiley understood the name of the program was to be changed to Relief Mini Grant and Ms. Day advised that the name change was to occur for the next year's budget. She added that pursuant to the Request for Proposal (RFP), all of the projects were expected to begin in January 2022. All contract documents were still being processed.

d. WCCCFJC Art Rain Drain: 3 Semi-finalists not to exceed \$10,000

Ms. Day reported that three semi-finalists would receive \$500 each to further define their design concepts. Within the next week, the contracts should be executed with a January 2022 timeframe for the approval of those projects. Staff was working with the artists to ensure that the projects did not exceed the \$10,000 threshold. The Planning Department would determine whether or not architectural drawings would be needed. Staff hoped to have additional information in the next 30 days.

Commissioner Dyer commented that she had seen the conceptual drawings. She expressed her hope that unnecessary obstacles were not being imposed on the artists.

In response to the Chair's request that all requirements be placed in the RFP, Ms. Day clarified that staff had to wait until the artist was fully engaged in a contract before they could ask for additional research. She suggested the PAAC should have discussed this issue during its meeting. She had contacted the Planning Department to inquire of its requirements and had been informed about the state standards and other technical guidelines. She had been following the Planning Department's lead. She needed more details and would get back to the RACC with more information when those details were available. She also clarified the Planning Department had provided her with the standards for construction, as outlined in the RFP, along with additional information that had come up.

Chair Wiley expressed her frustration with the City's long and complicated processes.

Commissioner Dyer agreed and was also frustrated with the time associated with the \$500 stipend.

e. Art Academy University Scholarship Program

Ms. Day explained that the Art Academy Scholarship Program was an opportunity to create long-lasting skills and special education opportunities for high school students in the City of Richmond. She had recently met preliminarily with the Art Academy University, learned over ten years ago a scholarship program had been established for ten high school students in the City of Richmond who had received a six-week summer program with free registration, supplies, free classes of their choice and participation with different art teachers of their choice who had identified different types of portfolios available for review. One of the ten students had received a full one-year scholarship to the Art Academy University, a \$40,000 value. In that case, the artist chosen had been unable to maintain the required grade point average (GPA) to maintain the scholarship. After that time, Richmond staff had elected not to continue the program.

Ms. Day stated she had reached out to the Art Academy University to determine whether there was any interest in a similar opportunity, and the University had suggested ten students was not sufficient and preferred to offer the opportunity to about 50 students, with a change in the terms but including free registration to any student interested in art education and subject to other criteria. Given the change in the number of students, staff was unable to handle the volume and would partner with Richmond Promise which was in the business of offering student scholarships to ensure a successful experience. She was also reaching out to McDonalds and BART, which had provided incentives/assistance in the past to determine whether there was still an interest. Also, laptops may be donated by Dell Computers and potentially other supplies from other companies. The Art Academy University was excited about this opportunity and if a member of the RACC wanted to provide support to staff on this effort it would be appreciated.

Vice-Chair Kirk expressed the willingness to work with staff on this project and Chair Wiley recommended a press release announcing the partnership between the Art Academy University, the City of Richmond, and Richmond Promise.

In response to the Chair and given the interest from the Vice-Chair, Ms. Day suggested the RACC could claim this project as a RACC initiative. She added that over the next week, meetings would be held with teachers first to provide information and on January 15, 2022, a meeting with the parents of the students would be held.

Commissioner Mehas suggested the project should be the Arts & Culture Manager's initiative, and Ms. Day reiterated a program with 50 students was more than staff could handle, which was why partnership with Richmond Promise had been sought.

Chair Wiley commended staff, RACC Commissioners and all those involved for getting through the last round of NPA Mini Grants. She appreciated everything that had been done to improve the process. She added that she had neglected to add an item to the agenda under Committee Reports for a report on the Richmond Arts Salon.

Ms. Day advised that she had planned to provide general information which could be done as Item VIII. d, Richmond Arts Salon.

VII. Discussion: 2 Year Budget Planning Items

Tony Tamayo reported there were some broken links on the City of Richmond's website related to the RACC. He recommended a budget item for a web person to repair the links or a RACC Commissioner to work with the web person to manage the website, estimated to cost between \$500 and \$1,000.

Ms. Day advised a list would need to be created to prepare a scope of services to address the issues with the website. She confirmed a contract would be required along with three bids.

When asked by the Chair, Mr. Tamayo confirmed he was interested in bidding on the work.

Chair Wiley suggested that staff discuss the issues Mr. Tamayo had identified with Commissioner Leighton and Vice-Chair Kirk to learn of the required next steps.

Chair Wiley advised the RACC had discussed at its October 28 meeting budget items including recruitment, social media, sponsorship and Youth and Poet Laureates. She was to have done some research on what other cities had funded and how they had managed their Poets Laureate. She apologized that she did not have that information at this time. She also outlined the tasks each RACC Commissioner was to have done after the October 28 RACC meeting, with a written report to have been provided.

Commissioner Mehas provided an overview of his recommendations for RACC-sponsored events including Cinco de Mayo, Juneteenth, Women in Solidarity, Pride, Native American Pow Wow, Blues in the Park, and San Francisco Mime Troupe and the potential costs, some of which may involve partnerships with other groups.

Commissioner Dyer commented in the past the City had funded some of the events identified.

Chair Wiley asked Commissioner Mehas to look into whether any of the items on his list were line items in the City's budget. She suggested rather than considering co-sponsorships as a budget item, the RACC should look into opportunities to be community partners. In response to a recommendation to use the one percent for public art, she suggested such discussion be held at the PAAC level with the PAAC to provide a recommendation to the RACC. She also asked about the December 2021 RACC meeting, recommended that "sponsorships" be changed to *community partners*, and asked Commissioner Mehas to come back with a list of community partners, when the community cultural events were to take place, and a dollar figure for each. She further suggested it was no longer a budget item but a community outreach item, and while not all RACC Commissioners agreed, she suggested it could be a budget item until she convinced Commissioners otherwise.

As to the expenses related to social media efforts, Ms. Day commented on the costs for ads on Facebook and the like and asked the Vice-Chair to provide information on social media costs.

Vice-Chair Kirk suggested that specific goals on ads should be discussed. She could prepare a proposal for a RACC Mission Statement and RACC goals.

Chair Wiley wanted social media to address recruitment of RACC Commissioners, people to work on committees and audience development, and encouraging people to see the programs the RACC and the City had funded.

Ms. Day also suggested that contingency funds, funds that were not specific, would be helpful and could be made available for future items.

Chair Wiley suggested whatever was identified as the social media budget, 10 percent should be dedicated to a contingency fund. In response to whether a budget committee was needed, given the limited number of RACC Commissioners she was uncertain that would be feasible.

Ms. Day commented that the Youth Poet Laureate could be considered an annual budget item for 2023 as part of the 2-year budget cycle. The Arts & Culture budget included \$65,000 for the NPA Mini Grant, her salary, and maintenance items for the maintenance of the Archie Hill Sculpture in the amount of \$10,000, the mural restoration for the Senior Center at \$19,000 (which cost had been identified in the budget at \$15,000), and the WCCCFJC project in the amount of \$10,000. The intent was to always maintain \$200,000 in the budget. Given the need for accuracy and given there were questions on what had or had not been included in the budget, she wanted to conduct the proper research and get back to the RACC with a proper account.

Commissioner Dyer sought budget funds for artist training and RACC training to assist with strategic planning and a facilitator with the knowledge of the restrictions for the use of public art funds. She emphasized the need to build in community relations and suggested the COVID Relief Mini Grant should be renamed Relief Grant, and more money should be spent to conduct infill where there was no public art in the city. She suggested that \$5,000 should be added to the budget for community skill building each year and for the RACC to actually conduct some planning.

Chair Wiley recommended \$5,000 be added to the budget for a strategic planning facilitator. She also recommended consideration of technical assistance workshops or grants for things outside of the regular project spending which would draw artists to the City. She sought an arts in education component and a technical workshop on arts education.

Ms. Day reported she had been approached by an artist desirous to teach drawing classes, a Bay area muralist who did a special type of painting and who wanted to offer long-term skills to children who may otherwise not have the opportunity. She asked whether that could be from the public art fund.

Commissioner Dyer suggested it would not, and commented on the criteria that would be required working with minors and those with developmental disabilities.

Chair Wiley liked the idea and suggested that someone who wanted to teach drawing was actually part of the NPA Mini Grant program. She suggested that artist should participate in the NPA Mini Grant process and may find a community partner as a result. She asked that Ms. Day return to the RACC with some departmental budget numbers and add to the budget consideration of \$5,000 for a strategic planning facilitator and deciding how to handle technical assistance for artists, whether via workshops, development of their skill sets or offering a stipend for certain kinds of technical assistance.

Ms. Day suggested this dialogue continue during the December RACC meeting to allow for recommendations at the January 2022 meeting. As to the RACC meeting minutes, she noted that the City paid a transcription service for the preparation of the meeting minutes and a line item needed to be included in the budget for both the RACC and PAAC meetings moving forward, with the cost to be verified based on the number of meetings per year. More information would be provided at the December meeting.

VIII. Committee Reports

a. Poet Laureate Co Biz Open Mic November 19, 2021 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Commissioners Dyer and Mehas, Vice-Chair Kirk and Chair Wiley planned to attend the Poet Laureate Co Biz Open Mic scheduled for November 19, 2021. Chair Wiley described the event and the introduction process for each Poet Laureate as part of the open mic event.

Chair Wiley recommended that \$10,000 be budgeted for the Poet Laureate and Youth Poet Laureate programs.

Ms. Day reported that Channel 2 had recently featured the City of Richmond Youth Poet Laureate and she would research whether the tape was available or a link could be included on the RACC website. She confirmed, when asked, that she had reached out to past Poets Laureate and had learned most had moved out of the area.

Chair Wiley recommended some sort of continuous plaque be considered to name past Poets Laureate.

b. Public Art Advisory Committee

Commissioner Dyer confirmed with the Chair the minutes from the PAAC meeting would suffice for the report and a written report from the PAAC was not needed, with the exception of action items that required a RACC decision.

As to the Love Your Block Grant, Ms. Day clarified if no funds were involved it would not have to come before the RACC. She added the PAAC had met last week but the meeting minutes were not available for this meeting.

c. Public Art Financial Summary

No report.

d. Richmond Arts Salon

Chair Wiley reported she had met with several representatives from Richmond Arts Salon and it had been decided to hold a show curated by Aaron Wheeler with windows curated by El Comolito Collective from Vallejo for Saturday, April 9, 2022 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., or May 14, 2022 as part of Richmond Main Street Art in Windows. The event would include a disc jockey with food and drink and a photographer, Poets Laureate including the Richmond Youth Poet Laureate. RSVP's would be sought with a live music option. She would be meeting representatives on November 30 to identify the date of the event and asked the RACC to provide its input. She hoped a contribution could be made to the host site to reduce costs.

By consensus, the RACC suggested the event be held on Saturday, April 9, 2022.

Chair Wiley asked Ms. Day to touch base with her on the timeline when the grantees were making presentations to avoid any interference with that process.

Vice-Chair Kirk also asked for a calendar of all events and agreed with the Chair it should be included on the new and improved website.

Chair Wiley suggested a calendar of events be included on the scope of work to be developed for the website.

Ms. Day reported that the Recreation and Parks Department had reached out to her about the Yellow Brick Road Project, which would highlight those who had made major contributions to the City of Richmond in different ways and based on certain criteria, with the thought an artist would design the plaque or item that would highlight those people chosen. She had explained to the Recreation and Parks Department staff that the budget would not be just \$500 and if a professional artist was desired, a professional rate must be paid. She understood there was some grant money available but more information was needed. She had been asked to attend the latest meeting of the Recreation and Parks Commission and an Ad Hoc Committee meeting for the project. There had been a presentation on Ookwe Park and a discussion of the Native American effort to reclaim their land, with a request for an opportunity for stewardship of the park by the Ohlone family. If that were to occur, regular City maintenance such as mowing and removal of trash would not occur and that was not something she would be comfortable supporting. She raised this issue with the RACC to keep the RACC informed.

Chair Wiley asked whether the plaque would be placed on the ground or elsewhere and Ms. Day understood the decision for the details of the plaque had not yet been determined. She also provided an update on Ookwe Park, with the signage not yet installed, and with the PAAC having selected a graphic artist for the project.

Ms. Day also reported she and RACC Commissioner Tom Herriman had met at the Osprey Bird project and that the contract had been executed. She and Mr. Herriman had met with the artist at the site and had viewed where the artwork would be placed. Based on the scale, the sculpture was too small and the artist would be preparing a mock-up in the next two weeks to show what it would look like if scaled larger, and provide information on the additional budget that would be required. It was possible more funds may be required beyond the \$65,000 budgeted for the project in addition to the developer's contribution. More information would be provided at the next RACC meeting.

Chair Wiley emphasized that RACC Commissioners provide their liaison choices to staff by December 1 and she asked that at least two choices be selected.

Commissioner Mehas understood the Design Review Board (DRB) had created a subcommittee to deal with art, and Ms. Day clarified a subcommittee of the DRB had been created for the construction elements of the Nevin Plaza Project, not for art.

Chair Wiley encouraged everyone to read a recent article in the [San Jose Mercury News](#) about the leadership in the City of Richmond.

IX. Adjourn until December 16, 2021

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. to a Regular Meeting of the RACC on December 16, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.