

**RICHMOND ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION (RACC)
PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAAC)
In-Person Meeting
450 Civic Center Plaza, 1st Floor Conference Room
Richmond, California
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 8, 2023
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**

Present: Chair Lynson Beaulieu, and Commissioners Ted Bell, Melody Kozma-Kennedy, Phillip Mehas, Arliede da Silva Santos, Carole Porter and Kaelen Van Cura, and Council Liaison Soheila Bana

Absent: None

Staff Present: Arts & Culture Manager Winifred Day, Administrative Analyst Shané Johnson, and Deputy Chief of Staff Mayor's Office Tony Tamayo

I. WELCOME / CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The RACC/PAAC Regular Meeting was called to order by Chair Beaulieu at 7:09 p.m.

Chair Beaulieu welcomed the members of the public present who were asked to identify themselves and their affiliation, and included:

Jenny Balisle, former member of the Richmond Arts and Culture Commission (RACC) and Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) and current Executive Founding Director of a new grass roots arts organization in Contra Costa County;

B.K Williams, Co-Chair Richmond Progressive Alliance (RPA) and former member of the RACC;

Florene Wiley, former member of the RACC;

Michelle Seville, former member of the RACC, PAAC, and former Administrative Assistant for the first Arts & Culture Manager who served as the second Arts & Culture Manager prior to Ms. Day;

George and Heidi Cherbok, Founders, Theatre in Search, a not-for-profit organization based in the City of Richmond;

James Shorter, Artist and Industrial Designer, Gallery Manager, Rich City Rides; and

Arliede Da Silva Santos, newly appointed RACC Commissioner and former employee of the City of Richmond who currently worked with Urban Tilth.

II. ACTION ITEMS

a. APPROVE June 8, 2023 RACC/PAAC Meeting Agenda

Responding to Commissioner Mehas with respect to Item V. Public Art Master Plan Update, Arts & Culture Manager Winifred Day acknowledged the number of speakers present to address the item and advised that public comment for each speaker would be limited to two minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Mehas, seconded by Commissioner Porter to approve the June 8, 2023 RACC/PAAC Meeting Agenda, as shown, carried unanimously by a show of hands.

b. APPROVE May 11, 2023 RACC Special Meeting Minutes

Chair Beaulieu clarified the agenda item should be corrected to read: *APPROVE May 11, 2023 RACC Regular Meeting Minutes.*

Motion by Commissioner Bell, seconded by Commissioner Porter to approve the May 11, 2023 RACC Regular Meeting minutes, as submitted, carried unanimously by a show of hands with the exception of Commissioner Santos who abstained.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Day read into the record the following public comment: *Cordell Hindler: Hello Winifred, I am forwarding the following comments for the record. 1) On Tuesday the City Council appointed Ms. da Silva Santos to the Arts Commission; 2) The update is that I am working on a project that's related to arts and culture. Sincerely, Cordell.*

Jenny Balisle referenced the Fence Line Art Project, which Chevron admitted to removing, although the artists had received approval for the project's placement from the City of Richmond. She asked the RACC to work on a statement or response in support of the artists since the artists had received a competitive grant from the California Art Council and the artists had worked hard on the project and were of the opinion their voices had been erased when the project had been removed.

IV. POET LAUREATE POEM READING (David Flores)

Chair Beaulieu thanked David Flores for serving as the City's Poet Laureate for the past two years and looked forward to his feedback to improve the Poet Laureate experience.

David Flores, Poet Laureate, read into the record the poem '*We Are Richmond,*' and explained as a former teacher in the City of Richmond he advocated for the arts in education and was currently working for a non-profit advocate for the arts. He provided an overview of his highlights while serving as the City's Poet Laureate, which allowed him to connect with other like-minded people on poetry as an art form, meet new people, open doors to other Poet Laureate opportunities and the ability to have the freedom to craft programs and poetry nights. He had been honored to represent the City of Richmond and would provide additional feedback to staff to allow the program to thrive.

V. PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN UPDATE (Barbara Goldstein)

Barbara Goldstein thanked the RACC for allowing her to provide the update on the Public Art Mater Plan which involved a number of people. She emphasized that Richmond had a great arts program and engaged artists. There was a need to be more transparent and user friendly and to dig deeper for funding that could be available through the City's capital construction projects and be able to responsibly begin to invest funds through the private percent through art program.

As part of the Public Art Master Plan Update, efforts had been made to review existing plans, hold one-on-one interviews with artists, community and political leaders and hold focus groups and pop-up events.

Amanda Rawson provided an overview of the focus and pop-up events that had been held as part of the Public Art Master Plan Update, and reported three pop-up events had been held and there had been a number of focus groups both in-person and virtually with the artist community. Based on those efforts, there had been feedback for more engagement on the Main Street area and revitalization of public art projects. Neighborhoods wanted to engage and apply for grants if possible and consider something different than just murals and sculptures.

Ms. Goldstein explained that based on the feedback provided, a Vision Statement had been prepared in a draft format that she read into the record. Proposed recommendations included:

- Employ the arts to illuminate Richmond's many cultures and histories
- Commissioning art that activates and connects business districts in downtown and other neighborhoods
- Support art that connects people with nature
- Prioritize support of the arts in City buildings and in public spaces
- Increase grants to arts and cultural programs
- Support artists of all ages and backgrounds
- Strengthen the Arts and Culture Division and RACC
- Maintain the City's public art
- Promote Richmond's public art
- Build partnerships with local businesses and regional entities
- Update Richmond's Cultural Plan

Ms. Goldstein commented it would take more than the private percent for art in-lieu fee to realize those recommendations and make the City of Richmond into the arts place everyone wanted to see. Based on each of the recommendations identified above, she offered the following additional recommendations:

- Employ the arts to illuminate Richmond's many cultures and histories

Recommendation: Create an artist and community residency program and require private developers to engage with surrounding communities for public art input.

- Commissioning art that activates and connects business districts in downtown and other neighborhoods

Recommendation: Consider how non-profit organizations could be involved in commissioning art, particularly art that was place-making art in the downtown business districts in a way that would drive economic development and activity and leverage City construction, and work with the Office of Economic Development, Transportation and Parks Departments to support projects already being done

- Support art that connects people with nature

Recommendation: Place art where people enjoyed nature including the Greenway Neighborhood Parks and City trails.

- Prioritize support of the arts in City buildings and in public spaces
Recommendation: Make better use of the grounds of the Civic Center and integrate art into the City's capital construction projects.
- Increase grants to arts and cultural programs
Recommendation: The Public Art fund to enhance the \$65,000 from the General Fund and if an organization obtained an NPA Mini Grant in the past and wanted to do something bigger, a category of larger grants be created that were neighborhood based.
- Support artists of all ages and backgrounds
Recommendation: Try to create counterbalance by engaging developers into thinking about how to create space for art; simplify the grant application and contracting process; webinars be created for artists that could be played at any time and a day or two be set aside when artists and art organizations may make appointments with staff to discuss how the application could be made better and more competitive.
- Strengthen the Arts and Culture Division and RACC
Recommendation: Add staff as needed and rebuild the RACC.
- Maintain the City's public art
Recommendation: Hire someone to do a conservation assessment and recommend both routine and conservation maintenance as needed and develop a system for getting that done; photograph the collection and post on the City website and hire a registrar to ensure the database was up to date with all information.
- Promote Richmond's public art
Recommendation: Hire a contract employee who was empowered to work with the City's Information Technology staff to bring the RACC website up to date.
- Build partnerships with local businesses and regional entities
Recommendation: Given limited resources, building partnerships with local businesses and regional entities was important and more staff was needed.
- Update Richmond's Cultural Plan
Recommendation: Suggested spending \$500,000 more or less of City funds to update the City of Richmond's Cultural Plan.

Ms. Goldstein welcomed input on the recommendations with the intent to present the Final Public Art Master Plan to the City Council at its July meeting.

Ms. Day explained the RACC, City staff and staff from the City Manager's Office would review the Final Draft of the Public Art Master Plan prior to City Council approval in July 2023. In the event

the City Council did not review the Draft Plan at its meeting in July and since the City Council would recess during the month of August, it was possible it would not be considered until September. Ms. Day added she and other members of staff had spent time on the City website and recognized it had some challenges.

Administrative Analyst Shané Johnson reported that clean-up work was occurring on the City website at this time to make it more user friendly but there were some restrictions due to City policies. She reported some funds had been included in the budget for the next fiscal year to hire someone to do the work recommended for the City website.

Councilmember Bana suggested the City website needed more than a facelift and she planned to push for that effort and suggested a new website was needed.

Ms. Day stated for the benefit of the public that Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects were those projects the City funded as opposed to private developer funding. As part of the City's policies, procedures and as part of a City ordinance, 1.5 percent of CIP funds would be dedicated to public art, which had not been collected over a period of time. Staff had recently met with the Finance Director and new Director of the Public Works Department, the Department that calculated the CIP projects that were current and where the 1.5 percent would apply.

In terms of the library improvements, Ms. Day explained the project involved grant funding which included no line item for art; however, staff had provided those in charge of the project examples on how to provide public art minimally, such as how the City of Palo Alto and other cities had done. Staff planned to meet again in August to review the City's CIP projects and provide a calculation as they moved forward.

Commissioner Mehas understood a dedicated staff person was to keep track of the CIP funds and funds for the various Departments who would clarify when CIP projects came online. He asked for clarification how the CIP funds intended for public art would be recouped.

Ms. Day clarified that staff had been receiving the monthly reports on private developer contributions for public art, which had been provided to the RACC for some time. In terms of the CIP projects, she noted there were few such projects, reiterated staff had met recently and realized that the calculation for public art for CIP projects was supposed to have been done and stated that staff was working on the matter. She hoped to have a number at a later meeting that could be shared with the RACC.

Commissioner Porter commented that many jurisdictions had closed off city streets such as in San Francisco, Berkeley and Oakland and made them more amenable to communities and families. She asked if that could be an option for the City of Richmond.

Ms. Goldstein suggested whether the City of Richmond wanted to pedestrianize its streets could be an option. As an example, the City of Palo Alto closed a major street during the pandemic and in that case she had worked with the city on recommendations on how the street could be made more pedestrian friendly. The City of Palo Alto had recently decided to close the street permanently after the pandemic. If the City of Richmond decided to pedestrianize streets, it would open up a lot more opportunities for art but while that was outside the scope of the Public Art Master Plan, she suggested such improvements worked well with the concepts proposed in the Public Art Master Plan.

B.K. Williams liked the idea of re-granting prior grantees, although it would not offer a lot of equity since if an applicant had been unable to come to the table the first time the applicant may not be

eligible for larger grants. She also commented the Richmond Library was being renovated to the tune of \$15 million and she questioned why art could not be part of that project even at this point since the City Council was responsible for the budget. She liked the recommendations but questioned how many of the recommendations could be realized while also ensuring equity.

Ms. Goldstein explained in terms of the larger grants the thought was there were organizations that “would come back to the well” for smaller grants and it would be useful for them to step up and consider the larger rather than smaller grants.

Commissioner Kozma-Kennedy recommended consideration of an artist-in-residence program in the library which had similarly been done at the DeYoung Museum in the City of San Francisco during opening hours and which offered a teaching opportunity, show and tell, and process of creating art as a teaching tool not just art as a product, which was important and could be done in an activated public space. She recommended more thought on how to activate public centers and inclusion of an artist residency program could be how libraries may reinvent themselves, bring community in with activated artists and have a teaching moment.

Michelle Seville commented that one of the artists in the community from the East Bay Center had asked whether it would be possible to mention the 12th and MacDonald Avenue lots and vacant parking garage by name, the largest unoccupied area along the arts corridor along MacDonald Avenue. She reported the East Bay Center had been in touch with the City about this possible location.

Ms. Day reported a developer had been working on the project for several years and had made a commitment to keep the property from any other developer developing a project. The project was currently under consideration by the Design Review Board (DRB) and had no opportunity for public artwork. She could provide an update at the next RACC meeting.

Florene Wiley questioned whether there was no opportunity for public art as part of the library renovations.

Ms. Goldstein reiterated the recommendation for funds from the Public Art Fund in-lieu of the CIP budget. If the RACC was of the opinion it was important public art should be included for the library some of the Public Art Funds could be dedicated while negotiating with the City whether there should be money from the CIP; however, when the grant had been written for the library improvements it had not included a line item for public art.

Ms. Seville emphasized that Richmond needed cultural activities and performance spaces desperately and she urged the Arts and Culture Division to advocate for more and better cultural spaces with City-owned property made available for renovation and dedication to cultural activities. She noted the City’s contracting requirements and permitting processes had become extremely difficult to navigate and had a chilling effect on the will of artists in the community to engage in a contract with the City. NPA Mini Grant applicants were of the same opinion. She asked for a reduction in the barriers to access and suggested the contracting process be made less challenging. She also suggested that having artists in position-making and problem-solving positions could be empowering for both the City and the community and she recommended quarterly meetings between artists and City representatives, the Arts and Culture Division and the Planning Department to discuss the issues that would create better understanding and let artists’ concerns be expressed.

Ms. Seville stressed the need for a more inclusive decision-making process regarding the allocation of public art resources, and suggested the RACC and PAAC be revitalized and the City hire more full-time staff.

Chair Beaulieu thanked everyone for their comments and encouraged any additional comments to be provided in writing to Ms. Goldstein or Ms. Day.

Ms. Goldstein further suggested that City Council meetings begin with a poem with the Youth Poet Laureate to read the poem or for others to be brought in to read the poems.

VI. FISCAL YEAR 2023/24 NPA MINI GRANT UPDATE

Commissioner Van Cura and Chair Beaulieu provided an update on the FY 2023/24 NPA Mini Grants and reported there had been around sixteen applicants who had all been very strong with the majority of the applicants found to be compelling. Not all applicants had been interviewed by the selection panel since some applications had been very clear and the selection panel had no questions. Seven applicants had been interviewed and thirteen of the applicants would receive funding. A spreadsheet had been prepared of the applications which included an average score but had not included any of the applications the selection panel decided not to fund.

Chair Beaulieu reported a wide variety of proposals had been received, the applications were strong with a lot of diversity and the grant amounts had been increased to a maximum of \$9,000 with most applicants to receive that amount. The amount requested by the applicants would be the amount funded and no grant amounts had been reduced. She clarified the Point Molate Earth Day Celebration project would be funded through the Cultural Event Fund. She also clarified the maximum funding amount of \$65,000 from the City budget in addition to an extra amount of \$25,000 from the Public Art Fund. She reiterated that every artist shown on the spreadsheet had been funded with the exception of one artist, Regina Gilligan, where funds would be taken from a different pot.

In response to Commissioner Mehas, Commissioner Van Cura and the Chair clarified the application from John Wayne Barrow involved an artist who was a mentee of Mark Anthony James, Empowering Youth through Music, who would teach children design principles and using embroidery machines to embroider their own clothes with a fashion show with Empowering Youth through Music. Also, the grant for the John Wehrle Retrospective was clarified and would help fund the retrospective at the Richmond Arts Center where the work would be exhibited. The John Wehrle Mural at the Point Richmond Tunnel remained a work in progress and staff would provide an update as part of the May Staff Report.

Councilmember Bana clarified with the Chair that the NPA Mini Grant process for Fiscal Year 2023/24 had been completed. The next round of NPA Mini Grants for Fiscal Year 2024/25 would start in September, although the mini grants would not be awarded until later in the year.

James Shorter clarified with the Chair and Ms. Day that brief descriptions for each NPA Mini Grant applicant would be made available in the future and Ms. Day described the interview and scoring process for each applicant. Once the recommendations from the selection panel had been approved by the RACC, the NPA Mini Grant applications would be forwarded to the City Council for approval, to be followed by the requirements for the applicants to go through the City's contract process.

Commissioner Kozma-Kennedy suggested a hyperlink be included with the spreadsheet that could connect to the applicant's website to allow views of the projects, but Ms. Day commented that nothing could be published until the NPA Mini Grants had been accepted as part of the City's processes. Once the processes were complete a press release could be prepared.

Chair Beaulieu recommended any additional questions on the NPA Mini Grant applicants be discussed with Commissioners after the meeting.

Commissioner Bell concurred there were many applications that were good but had not been selected. He wanted to focus on those applicants to discuss why they had not been selected possibly as part of a workshop so as to educate applicants on making a presentation for the following year and to encourage those applicants to reapply.

Ms. Day reported a Technical Assistance Workshop would be held prior to the consideration of the next round of NPA Mini Grant applications.

Ms. Balisle asked whether the City of Richmond provided American Sign Language (ASL) and translation services for the grant process since the California Art Council and other grants included requirements for accessibility. As the City received more funding that would provide leverage for the artists to get more grants, which should be considered as the City received more funding for this program.

Ms. Day stated that could be taken under advisement as more staff became available.

Ms. Seville detailed the initial concept of the NPA Mini Grant program to lift up those artists that were just starting out and may be unfamiliar with the required criteria for grants, which was why the grants were so small so that the next time applicants applied they would be ready and more informed for the larger grants.

Ms. Johnson suggested it would be nice to see different artists and smaller organizations receive the grants since a lot of the same people were receiving the grants year after year.

Commissioner Porter recommended a workshop be considered prior to the next selection process for NPA Mini Grant applicants which would allow mentors to be present, and Chair Beaulieu confirmed a Technical Assistance Workshop had been provided prior to the current NPA Mini Grant application process. Staff was working to build capacity into the grant application process.

Mr. Shorter suggested those awardees that were consistently returning for grant consideration could be mentors for potential grant awardees, which could be an incubation system to lighten the burden on the RACC or representatives and could build that relationship outside of the RACC specifically to when the artists go out into the world that would be the start of the artists' network.

Chair Beaulieu reiterated in response to a member of the public that basically all artists who had applied had been funded with the exception of three applicants who had issues with their applications that could not be overcome.

Motion by Commissioner Bell, seconded by Commissioner Porter to approve the recommendations of the selection panel to provide NPA Mini Grants to the group for 2023/24 as shown, carried by a show of hands with the exception of Commissioner Mehas who voted no.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. FY 2022/23 NPA Mini Grant Commissioner Liaison Reports

Commissioner Mehas reported he would be sending an announcement to Commissioners regarding a presentation from NIAD [National Institute of Art and Disabilities] which was planned in July and reported that Kaiser had asked NIAD to provide a presentation on its artwork but he did not have the dates before him at this time. He would provide that information to the RACC.

Commissioner Bell reported that Mark Anthony James with Empowering Youth through Music Project, had held a Spring Music Showcase on May 20, 2023. He had attended the event which had been well received and moving.

Chair Beaulieu reminded Commissioners to have their grantees provide their final report forms and invoices.

Chair Beaulieu reported the Washington School Banner Project had been completed and the Point Richmond Tunnel Project artists were meeting in the next week to work out the City's requirement for flagmen to direct traffic during the work.

b. PAAC May Report (Chair Beaulieu)

Ms. Day provided an overview of the Shields-Reid Community Center Project for the benefit of new Commissioners. All artists were under contract and had been having conversations with the architects for the projects to ensure the conceptual designs were buildable. Once accepted the next step would be the preparation of design drawings to be approved by structural engineers.

Ms. Day also provided an overview of the Richmond Country Club/Parchester Village project and Ms. Johnson reported the artists for the project had questions about the contracts, the issue had been tied up in the legal department, with a go ahead recently provided by the attorney on the City's side.

Chair Beaulieu reported photographs of the West Contra Costa Family Justice Center (WCCFJC) Rain Drain Project had been provided to the RACC. The project had been installed but a few changes and updates were needed and would be done sometime in the summer. The contract for the Ookwe Park Signage had been amended in May and the project was awaiting fabrication and installation of the ground markers. The Osprey Bird sculpture models (miniature versions) timeline for completion of the contract and manufacture was anticipated around September. The large art sculpture would go to the City Council for approval on June 20, 2023, and the replacement of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Station mural signage should happen this month.

In addition, the Chef's Restaurant/Warehouse developer had made a deposit; the Harbor Way Developer Initiative for the development of a warehouse building would involve two murals and a sculpture and was in the process of review by the DRB with an independent art consultant managing the project, and a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the 2023/24 Poet Laureate had been posted with applications due by June 12, 2023. Commissioners interested in being panelists to review the applicants were asked to contact staff with the request to increase the stipend for the Poet Laureate from \$1,000 to \$1,500 being taken into consideration.

Councilmember Bana recommended the consideration of Poetry Nights at Council meetings and suggested the budget for the Poet Laureate be increased to allow that to happen, and Ms. Day advised that staff would look into the process.

VIII. MAYOR MARTINEZ OFFICE STAFF REPORT (Tony Tamayo)

Deputy Chief of Staff Mayor's Office Tony Tamayo reported the Richmond Arts Center would review the new art pieces for the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) Art Show with parents and teachers to be invited for a meet and greet with the Mayor; recruitment for new RACC Commissioners continued; NIAD was going over the pricing and value of its artwork with the next step how to file a complicated insurance request; and he planned to meet with coordinators for the Fence Line Project and potentially draft a response from the Mayor's Office. Other City entities had been encouraged to provide a response as part of a united effort. In terms of the Poet Laureate, a graphic would be prepared.

In response to the Chair, Mr. Tamayo was uncertain of the condition of the Fence Line Project and hoped to learn more information when he met with the coordinators of the project.

IX. MAY STAFF REPORT (Winifred Day)

Councilmember Bana reported La Familia Center had placed fifteen female survivors of abuse with fifteen artists who asked who for a place to perform with a preference for space in the Civic Plaza during the month of October. She asked the RACC to inform artists which would make the event grander and suggested a movie screen be provided to allow people to sit down and enjoy the performances. She hoped to obtain a grant for the event as well but that may not be feasible and the Chair noted there may be funds available as part of the Cultural Art Grant.

Ms. Day reported the Fence Line Project was a Love Your Block Grant project approved by the RACC and was not controversial. She was surprised Chevron had removed some of the fencing but it was possible an encroachment issue may have occurred. She also commented on discussions in the past to differentiate between public art and beautification projects, with public art Love Your Block projects potentially requiring an additional layer of permission to avoid such occurrences.

Ms. Day reiterated a Technical Assistance Workshop would be held prior to the next round of NPA Mini Grant applications and confirmed, when asked, there could be a weekend option. She also emphasized there had been efforts to limit multiple year NPA Mini Grant awards in the past and if the RACC wanted to limit them for the next round that could be considered.

In terms of the NPA Mini Grants, Chair Beaulieu commented on the importance at times for continuity citing the Washington School Banner Project as an example, which was in its third grant cycle and which process had resulted in a change in culture for the school. She commented that sometimes one grant was not enough to make the change desired in the community. Rather than place limitations on grant applicants, she recommended different ways to help applicants get funding so they could continue the work they were doing.

Commissioner Porter suggested with the continuity of funding mentorship should also be considered to help raise someone up.

Chair Beaulieu suggested it was also important to acknowledge the RACC was also mentoring emerging artists.

Ms. Day further clarified the use of CIP dollars and commented there were some safety projects related to crosswalks that could be an example of a CIP project that would have a public art component. She also commented that Caltrans had monies as part of a beautification grant and that any artwork under bridges, as an example, was under the purview of Caltrans.

Ms. Day reported that Caltrans in partnership with the Community Services Division had committed \$300,000, a portion of which would be used to clean-up the John Wehrle tagged murals on MacDonald and San Pablo Avenues, with new murals to be created on the opposite walls which were currently blank. Given this project involved grant money, a formal City process was not required.

X. ANNOUNCEMENT: UPCOMING EVENTS

- a. Members Share Art Related Events

Councilmember Bana reported the El Sobrante Stroll would be held in September with artists encouraged to participate.

XI. ADJOURN until July 13, 2023

On motion by Commissioner Mehas, seconded by Commissioner Van Cura, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. to a Regular Meeting of the RACC/PAAC on July 13, 2023.