

**RICHMOND ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION (RACC)
PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAAC)
In-Person Meeting
450 Civic Center Plaza – City Hall Building
Richmond, California
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2025
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**

Present: Chair Arleide Santos, Vice-Chair Kiara Kempfski and Commissioner Ted Bell

Absent: Commissioner Carole Porter and Council Liaison Claudia Jimenez

Staff Present: Arts & Culture Manager Winifred Day and Administrative Assistant, Arts & Culture Division Jordon Nesbitt

I. WELCOME / CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The RACC/PAAC Regular Meeting was called to order by Chair Santos at 7:02 p.m. She took the opportunity to remember September 11, 2001, with the Richmond Arts & Culture Commission (RACC) to stand in compassion with the families and communities who carried that loss 24-years ago.

Chair Santos read into the record the following Land Acknowledgement Statement:

This is an open session meeting, and before I call the meeting to order, I want to acknowledge that we are gathered on the ancestral and traditional land of the Ohlone people, who have cared for this land for generations. We stand by equity, inclusion, and justice in the arts, ensuring all voices are heard and respected. This Commission keeps Richmond residents informed, engages public participation in the arts, advises city leaders on arts policies and funding, and oversees public art projects. It works to make arts and culture more accessible and impactful for the Richmond community.

2. ACTION ITEMS

a. APPROVE September 11, 2025 RACC/PAAC Meeting Agenda

By consensus of those present the RACC approved the September 11, 2025 RACC/PAAC Meeting Agenda, as shown.

b. APPROVE August 14, 2025 RACC/PAAC Special Planning Meeting Minutes

By consensus of those present the RACC approved the August 14, 2025 RACC/PAAC Special Planning Meeting Minutes, as shown.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Cordell Hindler, Richmond, apologized for missing the August Retreat due to a scheduling conflict.

Mr. Hindler reported his attendance at a recent Youth Council meeting to encourage interested parties to fill vacancies on the RACC and he hoped appointments would be considered by the City Council prior to Thanksgiving. He planned to attend the next Youth Council meeting to again encourage filling the vacancies on the RACC. He invited the RACC to the Richmond Rotary Club weekly meeting scheduled for September 19, 2025 at the Richmond Country Club, for a fee of \$35 for lunch including drinks, with the main speaker to be City of Richmond Port Director Charles Gerard, who planned to provide a report on port activities. He also invited the RACC to the Contra Costa Mayors Conference on December 4, 2025 hosted by the City of Pinole, with more information to be provided at the November RACC meeting.

Jayson Johnson, Founder, Strike Five Films, a film production company that started in 2017 and produced nine short films, which had been in numerous festivals, reported that he was ready to produce a feature film in the City of Richmond with a producer he had met on a Netflix and ABC project, which he hoped would positively impact the City of Richmond. He was aware of the City's NPA Mini Grant applications but sought cooperation from the RACC related to permitting, connection to other artists in the City and resources, and he hoped to work with someone in the City to lend a hand at the time permitting was needed for the project.

4. MAYOR'S OFFICE – City Council Liaison Report (Tamayo)

Chair Santos reported that Tony Tamayo, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office, was not yet present and if needed the RACC would return to this item later on the agenda.

5. VOTING ITEM – Accept Art Gift Policy and Art Gift

Arts & Culture Manager Winifred Day reported she had received solicitation from artist Christopher Peterson, who had a studio located in the cities of Richmond and Berkeley, who offered the gift of a piece of artwork to the City of Richmond. The RACC was asked to accept and approve the receipt of the gift of artwork. She explained the artist had visited the Mayor's Office and noticed the artwork from local artists being displayed which had led to his request to offer a gift of artwork to the City. If the RACC approved a motion to accept the gift of artwork, the artist could proceed to the City Council who would also need to approve receipt of the artwork as a gift, which was expected to be received around December. Examples of other artwork from the artist was provided.

Vice-Chair Kempfski asked for more details of the art description and medium which had not been included in the packet of information, and Ms. Day clarified the artwork was a painting, titled, Mond-An-ex. The location for the painting would be in the Mayor's Office, with the painting to be unframed. If it were framed it could be placed in a public location, but due to the nature of the gift the Mayor's Office was the location for the painting. The painting would be part of the City's Art Inventory as a gift, valued at \$4,200 and consisting of an oil on canvas painting. A copy of the City's Arts Gifts & Loan Form was also displayed for informational purposes.

Chair Santos advised the printed form of the application had been included in the packet from the August Retreat.

Commissioner Bell clarified with Ms. Day that if the RACC did not like the artwork, it could be rejected, but he was not suggesting that it not be accepted.

By consensus of those present the RACC accepted the gift of artwork from Artist, Christopher Peterson, as presented.

6. RACC PROJECTS – (Day)

a. NPA Mini Grants and Library Public Art RFQ/RFP Update

Ms. Day reported the deadline for applications for NPA Mini Grants was October 17, 2025. There were two mandatory workshops applicants must attend; a Zoom meeting on September 17, 2025 and an in-person meeting on October 1, 2025. The total amount for the NPA Mini Grants for this fiscal year's cycle had been increased to \$110,000 to cover the amount for insurance and business licenses. A copy of the application was displayed.

Chair Santos asked whether staff had a list of all NPA Mini Grant recipients for the past 10-years.

Ms. Day confirmed a list could be prepared for the next meeting of the RACC.

Vice-Chair Kempski asked about the number of applicants so far for this year.

Administrative Assistant, Arts & Culture Division Jordon Nesbitt reported no applications had been received to date. A total of 15 people had registered for the September 17, 2025, NPA Mini Grant application Zoom workshop with registrants being collected for the October 1, 2025 NPA Mini Grant in-person meeting.

Chair Santos liked the way the two meetings had been scheduled allowing one to observe, and if there were still questions they could then attend the in-person meeting.

Ms. Day commented that after the two workshops the next step would be to invite the applicants to have one-on-one application meetings with staff and go over the scope of services and define the deliverables prior to putting a contract together. The workshops would be an hour and half sessions and she highlighted the topics to be discussed.

Commissioner Bell asked whether any of the applicants for NPA Mini Grants who had not been selected in the past had come back for a second attempt, to which Ms. Day confirmed staff had reached out to those applicants and encouraged them to reapply. She also commented on the fact the City was offering more money for the NPA Mini Grants this cycle to cover some of the challenges applicants may have experienced in the past, which should also encourage reapplications.

Vice-Chair Kempski asked whether the increase in the total amount for the NPA Mini Grants had been communicated to the applicants who had not made it all the way through due to the challenges with the insurance requirements, and was informed by staff that information was in the details of the application.

Mr. Nesbitt acknowledged there had not been any direct announcement to any particular artist to indicate there were more funds in the NPA Mini Grants, and clarified the insurance requirements had not changed from those imposed in 2024.

Chair Santos requested another email batch to remind the community to sign up again, and Ms. Day confirmed every week several hundred emails had been sent to people and this week the Richmond Chamber of Commerce (RCOC) posted information in its newsletter. While the call had been out for about a month, this was the time people were really hearing about it.

Chair Santos asked how the RACC could support the NPA Mini Grants.

Ms. Day explained the NPA Mini Grants had been a RACC initiative for years. She reiterated applications were due by October 17, 2025, with the selection panel to commence the following week to review applications. The RACC could participate by being panelists on the Selection Panel.

Chair Santos asked whether the RACC should participate in the workshops.

Ms. Day encouraged the RACC to attend the workshops. She suggested the Chair could provide the welcoming and thank-you/closing comments. She highlighted the mandatory meeting agendas that were displayed to the RACC at this time and explained that for the insurance requirements someone from Risk Management would speak and someone would go over the Request for Proposal (RFP) selection and contracting requirements. The insurance requirements would come up after an application was selected for the NPA Mini Grant and it would be helpful for RACC members to be present during the workshops to make applicants aware of what they know, and ensure everything was in line in terms of executing the contracts, and to help by being a Liaison to the artist and help support applicants through the process. Commissioners were encouraged to contact staff as soon as possible to inform staff whether they would be able to attend the workshops.

Vice-Chair Kempski and Commissioner Bell stated they would be able to attend the October 1, 2025 in-person mandatory evening workshop and Chair Santos hoped to make both workshops but if unable she would contact staff.

Ms. Day advised that RACC Commissioners could make comments on any of the agenda topics for both meetings.

As to the Library RFP/Request for Qualifications (RFQ), Ms. Day reported staff had received a total of eight candidates. The project was a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) project, involving multiple components, large scale artwork to be commissioned and mural type artworks to be placed above the book area for the children's and adult reading areas. A review session had been held recently with the artists and the eight candidates had been reduced to six semi-finalists. On September 22, 2025, the candidates would submit responses to the RFP. Staff described the candidates as a wonderful group of artists, any of whom could do the job. The artwork would be required to be timeless and last the test of time and tell stories about the thematic direction of the project. There would be two days of 15-minute interviews for the six artists.

Commissioner Bell, one of the members of the Selection Panel, liked the approach the artists had taken, liked the fact there were multiple artists doing multiple sections of the Library, with one of the areas of focus art that represented Richmond and included diversity, inclusion and children. He looked forward to the finished product.

Ms. Day reported after the finalist has been selected more information would be provided. The project would require approval from the RACC and the City Council.

a. Monuments & Memorials Parks and Rec Policy/Forms Update

Ms. Day reported the RACC was not the only City Commission having challenges maintaining a quorum. The Parks and Recreation Commission had not had a quorum or meeting for some time and that was the group the RACC had to work with to approve the Monuments & Memorials Policy. As such, the item was in a holding pattern. Once the Parks and Recreation Commission resumed the RACC could return to the item.

Ms. Day otherwise explained when the policies and ordinances procedures had been updated four years ago, and when she had first come on board with the City, a floating quorum had been created for times like this. The floating quorum was essentially how many members were current and what the quorum would be based on, not the total number of Commissioners on a Commission/Board.

Chair Santos verified with Ms. Day that when the Parks and Recreation Commission resumed its work, the RACC could place an item on their agenda for approval of the Monuments & Memorials Policy.

Chair Santos asked about the status of the contract for Tiny Homes, and Ms. Day reported staff was still waiting for a fully executed contract.

7. FY 2025-26 Budget Review

Ms. Day reported the RACC had been provided with public information available on the City website about the budget.

Mr. Nesbitt clarified the current fiscal year information for the Arts & Culture Division was not available on the RACC website, but all other information about the City's budget was available.

Ms. Day and Mr. Nesbitt provided a PowerPoint presentation, which included an overview of the Public Art Projects and Initiatives Recently Completed, as presented during the RACC August Retreat, including the Arts & Culture Division Activities & Initiatives and the Arts & Culture Biannual Report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024/25, which would include the Arts & Culture Division Guidelines, accomplishments from 2024, recently completed projects, developing and ongoing projects, current public art maintenance projects, Public Art Contribution & Funds and activities and initiatives, with all information to be presented to the City Council on September 23, 2025. At this time, staff answered a number of questions from the RACC about the budget presentation.

Chair Santos encouraged Commissioners to attend the September 23 City Council meeting to support the work of the RACC.

Vice-Chair Kempski wanted more information on what to look forward to in the following year as a follow up.

Mr. Nesbitt noted the City Council wanted to see the RACC activities and initiatives over the past year and what had been developed and was in place, and if the RACC had ideas where it could invest and start initiatives and programs, he asked for that feedback to be provided so it could be included in the report to the City Council.

Ms. Day agreed the RACC consider new initiatives that could be considered in the next year. As an example, a couple of years ago, \$100,000 had come out of the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) account for Kennedy Park. It may be possible in the next fiscal year for another \$100,000 that could be earmarked for another project, but the RACC would have to provide that feedback as part of a Wish List for the budget for the next year, which could be discussed now and during the October RACC meeting. She encouraged the RACC to consider initiatives that supported the activities identified and also support some of the key recommendations from the Public Art Master Plan.

Chair Santos commented the RACC had worked on a mentorship program that never moved forward but should still be considered. The RACC had also discussed creating a scholarship program that had not moved forward and had also worked on a Special Event Grant Application.

Vice-Chair Kempfski added the RACC had also worked on a RACC Newsletter, which had not moved forward as well.

Commissioner Bell reported many people were looking to have parties at community centers and their own events within the community, and one of the challenges was that people needed to be guided through the process.

Chair Santos wanted to work towards the goals now and get things done, with the observation that the community needed certain things like a Special Event Grant Application. She recalled the RACC had previously developed and voted on the application.

Vice-Chair Kempfski suggested that be reviewed in that those were the types of things that had not been included in the budget.

Commissioner Bell expressed the willingness to review the Special Event Grant Application to ensure it met the City's contracting guidelines and if there were any issues he could send it back with alterations. Once he received feedback, he could get an opinion from legal counsel and move from there.

Chair Santos wanted also to know where the funds were coming from and how much was needed.

Ms. Day stated she could provide an update at the next meeting. She added in terms of the budget Wish List that many of the wonderful suggestions being made could be accomplished by another staff person and she asked the RACC to consider creating a job description for the person it would like to see added since it would not happen right away and would take time. Based on the comments, many of the things the RACC would like to see happen required more capacity than the current staff capacity.

As a Plan B, Commissioner Bell urged consideration of an internship position.

Ms. Day confirmed that could be considered. She reported over the summer there had been an attempt for an intern but it had not worked out. It could be included on the budget Wish List for next summer.

Mr. Nesbitt suggested one of the things that would help immediately would be to get more Commissioners to join the RACC. That would help everything flow better and execute the activities of the Commission and help him so that his work would be less spread, more focused and more efficient.

Vice-Chair Kempfski commented the RACC had not been advocating for more staff, but she agreed the RACC needed a full team of Commissioners to start moving things forward.

Ms. Day suggested between now and the next RACC meeting, the RACC could review the forms that came out of the August Retreat, and a table that compared 2023, 2024 and 2025 into one table. She again encouraged the RACC to consider the budget Wish List items and the creation of a job description for another staff person, which could be discussed at the next RACC meeting in October.

Vice-Chair Kempinski reiterated she was not advocating for another staff person or job description, but she had no problem consolidating the table.

Ms. Day stated staff would be advocating for another staff person. She otherwise commented there were RACC Commissioners who were good at editing and assistance preparing RFPs/RFQs would be helpful.

Chair Santos clarified the Vice-Chair had agreed to combine all of the recommendations over the years, with staff to send the digital files to her, and she also clarified potential Wish List items included a Special Event Grant Application, Mentorship Program, Scholarship Program, RACC Newsletter, increasing the capacity of the Arts & Culture Department and a possible internship.

Ms. Day clarified, when asked, as part of the renovation of the Civic Center Plaza ten years ago she had a relationship with the people on the construction team who had a relationship with the people from the Art Academy University who wanted to give back to the community, which had been done in the form of scholarships to local high school students. That relationship had been maintained and the potential intern she mentioned earlier could be a good match. While the internship program had been awarded for years, she had learned last year there had been a decision not to continue the program. She would have to wait to see if the program would continue or not.

Chair Santos asked that the intern's application be shared with the RACC and when there had been a determination whether the intern program would continue the intern position could be considered next year and potentially include others. She also clarified the intern position was intended to serve the Arts & Culture Division since there was a lot of work for current staff. Now things were taking shape and she would like to see an intern provide support.

Commissioner Bell recommended consideration of two internships; one for the RACC and one for the Arts & Culture Division.

Ms. Day emphasized a job description for the intern was needed and again encouraged the RACC to consider creating a job description that could be discussed at the next RACC meeting so that by December it could be part of any recommendations to the City Council for budget consideration.

Mr. Nesbitt suggested it would be easier to secure an intern to focus on and support the RACC more than the Arts & Culture Division, and if that was the primary focus of the intent, it would be easier to get that support and would be much appreciated.

Commissioner Bell asked how often the RACC, either in the past or present, had worked with filmmakers like Mr. Johnson and in what capacity could filmmakers be supported.

Ms. Day advised there had been NPA Mini Grant recipients in the past whose projects were required to celebrate the City of Richmond.

Chair Santos reiterated that at the beginning of the meeting, she had asked staff to provide a list of past NPA Mini Grant recipients and possibly when and what they were awarded also be included so that the RACC could better understand what had occurred in the past.

Ms. Day confirmed she could capture information since she had been in the position of the Arts & Culture Manager, but anything prior to that may not be available to her.

Chair Santos would be grateful for any information that would help guide the RACC.

Vice-Chair Kempski added the Wish List items the RACC requested in 2024 had not been granted in the current budget other than a round of swag.

Chair Santos asked that those items be included in the Wish List for the upcoming year.

Vice-Chair Kempski identified the Wish List items identified in 2024 that had not been granted including a social media intern, stipends for event participation and RACC Newsletter/MailChimp.

Ms. Day asked that the RACC notify staff at least three months in advance with respect to event participation. She recommended that the Wish List items match the key recommendations and initiatives.

Vice-Chair Kempski clarified the Wish List items previously requested had been connected to the key recommendations from the Public Art Master Plan, which she again highlighted.

Chair Santos suggested Visa gift cards be considered for event participation and could involve less work, and while Ms. Day acknowledged that could be a good idea for consideration there were always things that had to be done to get money, and she asked for staff to be able to do some research and get back to the RACC in October.

Mr. Nesbitt explained that traditionally reimbursement to event participation was based on submittal of a receipt. The Visa gift card idea was a strong reach and a challenge and the easiest method would be reimbursement through receipt.

Ms. Day asked that staff be allowed to look into the Visa gift card idea to determine whether or not it was feasible.

Vice-Chair Kempski suggested the RACC consider a new priority list for 2026 and start fresh for the next year, and the Chair agreed.

8. RACC COMMUNICATION UPDATE

- a. Arts and Cultural Calendar – Spirit & Soul Festival Sept. 20, Carole/Ted Volunteers

Ms. Day thanked all Commissioners who had participated in the tabling for community events. The next event was the Spirit & Soul Festival scheduled for September 20, 2025, with Commissioners Bell and Porter having signed up for the event. She and Mr. Nesbitt would also cover the event. She hoped the RACC would attend the festival that would include local music and food. The Poet Laureate had also confirmed attendance.

- b. Hilltop Mixer – Community Engagement

Ms. Day thanked the Chair and Vice-Chair for attending the Hilltop Mixer.

Chair Santos and Vice-Chair Kempski reported the Hilltop Plaza developers sought feedback on tenants and what the community wanted to see for Hilltop Plaza, with a lot of great suggestions and feedback provided to the developers. The event included a lot of familiar faces and it was great to see that feedback from the community on the desired vision for the property.

Ms. Day reported if she received future invitations to similar events she would share them with the RACC, and the Chair thanked staff for the inclusion.

c. Website Updates

Mr. Nesbitt reported in the next week he planned to spend more time on the Arts & Culture Division and RACC webpages, with a lot of information required to be updated to be more comprehensive and include documents and information on projects. He hoped to start with the website overhaul in the next week and welcomed any feedback on content for the RACC website. He acknowledged the City website was a challenge to manipulate and asked everyone to be patient with him. He again welcomed any feedback via email or telephone.

Vice-Chair Kempfski wanted to see an Arts and Culture Calendar with updates in the future so that there was an aggregate place where the community could see what was happening in Richmond. She understood a calendar on Google Drive had been started, but it had not been kept up.

Mr. Nesbitt suggested the RACC could help by listing things, reminding him via email and help to figure out how to integrate Google Calendar on the City website. He commented on the amount of microtasks required, some of which the RACC could help staff to maintain.

Vice-Chair Kempfski expressed the willingness to help with a list of events.

Chair Santos appreciated Mr. Nesbitt's efforts and support of the RACC.

Ms. Day commented in terms of City information there was a weekly newsletter from the City Manager's Office that was available on the City website where one could subscribe to receive weekly notices. Calendar items were due the Wednesday before the Friday of each week, and staff needed that information typically the Monday before in order to allow staff to review information prior to posting.

Chair Santos reported the Park and Recreation Division also had newsletters that promoted only City of Richmond events. The vision of the RACC was to connect to community events, not just City of Richmond events.

Ms. Day suggested that staff be notified when Commissioners learned of events. She reported the Richmond Arts Center had recently held an open studio reception which included over 90 Richmond artists featured in the open studio, and in the afternoon work was displayed in the courtyard at Richmond NIAD.

Mr. Nesbitt provided an update on the Arts Corridor project, with Richmond Renaissance having been contracted to provide a strategic plan to develop an Arts Corridor in the City of Richmond from MacDonald Avenue to 23rd Street. Richmond Renaissance was also partnering with the City of Richmond's Planning Division and Richmond Main Street for the California State Cultural Grant Program, a two-year, \$10,000 grant to support the branding of a cultural corridor. The City hoped to secure the grant, which would also designate the corridor as a State Cultural Corridor where it would be positioned to receive greater funding in the near future, as the City of Emeryville had enjoyed when that community had received over a quarter million dollars for public art development. A walking tour would be held on September 12, 2025 to look at potential art sites, developing artwork, cultural significance, current resources and the like. The grant was separate from the Arts Corridor effort, but could impact the development of the Arts Corridor.

Ms. Day advised that the Chair, as the RACC Liaison to the Arts Corridor, would be kept apprised of the status of the efforts.

At this time Ms. Day took the opportunity to introduce Kelly Robinson a potential new RACC Commissioner who was present to view the meeting and determine whether or not she wanted to actually be considered to join the RACC.

Kelly Robinson introduced herself as a homeowner in the City of Hercules for the last 26-years, who worked in the City of Richmond as a waiter and small business owner for nonprofits in the City, a mother of three children all involved in the arts, who encouraged her children to be artists as their careers and not just their hobbies. She was also a long-term career employee in contracting and had experience in community engagement, vendor relations and development and was presently working in health care operations and working with a portfolio of nonprofit substance abuse providers in the County. She was familiar with the mechanisms, policies and actions the RACC had discussed during the meeting and she was interested in the RACC to represent a personal love for art, particularly at this time in the world and in the community, where it was important to use art as a way to come together and build community. She thanked the RACC for allowing her to observe the meeting. She added she was a close friend of Commissioner Porter for years.

The RACC welcomed Ms. Robinson and looked forward to her possibly joining the RACC.

Ms. Day thanked Ms. Robinson for sharing her background and noted her skill set would complement the RACC. She encouraged Commissioners to invite others to consider filling the vacancies on the RACC.

9. ADJOURNMENT until October 9, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m. to the October 9, 2025 Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m.