

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

Thursday, March 28, 2019

In attendance: Jenny Balisle, Rosalie Fay Barnes, Michael Cohen*, Meighann Helene, Joshua Horne, Melissa Kirk, Nava Mizrahhi, and Florene Wiley

*Arrived after Roll Call

Absent: Silvia Ledezma, Steven Robinson, and Antonio Tamayo

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

Guests: Ben Choi, City Council Liaison

I. Welcome/Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Balisle called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. and welcomed new members.

II. Approve Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Barnes, second by Commissioner Wiley and carried unanimously to approve the agenda, as submitted.

III. Approve Minutes from February 28, 2019 Meeting

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

Ayes: Balisle, Barnes, Horne, Kirk, Mizrahhi, and Wiley

Noes: None

Abstain: Helene

Absent: Cohen, Ledezma, Robinson, and Tamayo

IV. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

V. Select Cover Art for Richmond Writes! Poetry Book

Michelle Seville, Arts & Culture Manager, reported that the judges had made their selections for this year's poetry contest and the winners would be announced in a press release on March 25. She presented a copy of the 2017 Poetry Book as a reference, and explained that this was the ninth year of the poetry contest for all West Contra Costa County students, predominately Richmond students, and predominately elementary school students. The 2018 Poetry Book would be published and every student who sent in a poem would get published with a copy of the book to take home. There would be an awards ceremony on April 12 in the City Council Chambers at 6:00 P.M. She referred to the images in the agenda packet to identify the art that had been submitted from which a selection would be made for this year's book.

After considering all submitted images, the RACC made the following selection.

Motion by Commissioner Barnes, second by Commissioner Mizrahi to select the cover art submitted by Kai from the Tananbaum 5th grade at Kensington Hilltop Elementary School, which carried by the following vote:

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

VI. Discussion and Vote on RACC Meeting Dates Poll

Chair Balisle reported that the poll had produced a preference for the last Tuesday of each month as the recommended meeting date for the RACC, although it was noted that designation would conflict with Richmond City Council meetings. Further discussion identified the last Wednesday of the month as a possibility for RACC meeting dates, although given that three Commissioners were not present another poll was recommended. The item was continued to the next meeting agenda for action.

VII. Select Date for RACC/PAAC Retreat to Create Work Plan for City Manager

Ms. Seville reported that she and Katy Curl, Library and Cultural Services Director, had met with the City Manager who was interested in knowing the goals of the RACC and the PAAC. As such, she would facilitate a recommended joint retreat of the RACC and the PAAC to allow each to share their goals, consider the description of each group, and understand the accomplishments desired, after which a work plan would be identified and submitted to the City Manager for comment, to then be submitted for approval by both the RACC and PAAC, and then submitted to the City Council with a recommendation for final approval.

Commissioner Barnes verified that the meeting could be held off-site at a private home although the meeting would be published as a public meeting, which could bring in outside people. She suggested the creation of an ad hoc subcommittee to create an agenda for the RACC for the retreat, and volunteered to serve on that subcommittee.

Chair Balisle recommended that the ad hoc committee include PAAC members as well. She also noted the City Manager had recommended that the retreat be scheduled within the next 30 days, probably on a weekend.

The RACC discussed the particulars for a retreat, recommended potential meeting sites, and stated that both groups would have to work together.

Motion by Commissioner Barnes, second by Commissioner Wiley to schedule a joint RACC/PAAC retreat on Saturday, May 4, 2019 from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M., location yet to be determined, carried by the following vote:

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

VIII. Report on Arts & Culture Manager Assistant

Katy Curl explained that an Assistant to the Arts & Culture Manager had previously been discussed and she was working with the Budget Analyst to analyze the staffing for the department to see if current staff could be added to go beyond the initial discussion for a part-time position given the concern that a part-time position would not provide sufficient assistance. Options were being considered.

Chair Balisle emphasized the designated staff person would have to focus on the needs of the Arts & Culture Manager on a permanent basis to ensure the implementation and management of the Artists Roster, which was needed immediately.

IX. NPA Business License Update and Next Steps

Ms. Seville thanked Councilmember Choi for putting the item on the City Council agenda, which had resolved the issue of the business license requirement for Neighborhood Public Art (NPA) grant recipients this year.

Councilmember Choi recommended that a business license be built into the NPA process next year and suggested a non-profit act as a fiscal sponsor or NPA recipients foster relationships in the non-profit community to alleviate the economic harm created this year by the requirement to have a business license.

Ms. Seville referred to City Attorney Everett Jenkins' suggestion to change the Richmond Municipal Code so that in the instances of NPR grants a business license would not be required. She emphasized that NPR recipients were emerging artists, members of the community who had never had a grant before, and to add another layer of requirement for getting under the umbrella of a non-profit would be cumbersome and onerous to those recipients.

The RACC supported the option of modifying the Municipal Code, and Councilmember Choi stated he would speak to Mr. Jenkins to discuss that possibility.

Given the complications that the requirement for a business license had imposed on the NPR grantees this year, it was recommended that the grant deadline be extended to allow the projects to be completed, with those extensions to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Chair Balisle took this opportunity to thank former RACC Members Kate Sibley and Michelle Baker and Jessica Yaras who had attended the City Council meeting and waited for hours to express their support for the removal of the business license requirement for NPR recipients.

X. NPA Reports

For the benefit of the new members, Ms. Seville highlighted the NPR Mini Grants where a total of \$65,000 was available to be awarded annually to emerging artists who made application, satisfied requirements, and provided presentations to the RACC, which voted to award funds. She added that each member of the RACC was assigned as a liaison to each year's grantees.

Chair Balisle provided an update on "One Richmond Unifying Community Mural" by Alfonzo Leon at Richmond High School, who could now move forward with his project given the resolution of the business license requirement.

Commissioner Barnes highlighted the status of Tracey Mitchell's project "Money Speaks," stated he had found a sponsor to pay for his business license, and his work would be featured at Rigger's Wine Loft as part of the Richmond Arts Salon on April 14 from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. His project, producing a play about non-violent mediation between gang members involved working with gang members from north and south Richmond and former gang members from Los Angeles. She encouraged RACC members to attend the event to show their support.

Commissioner Kirk described her meeting with Tania Pulido and her assistance in helping Ms. Pulido get her kids book "Richmond Purple Tree Collard" published. She reported the project was on track to integrate arts and culture in the community and tell stories about the purple tree collards.

Commissioner Mizrahi presented the status of her grantees' mural project at Verde Elementary for "Bridging the Gap" to, in the words of Anna Scalano, "bridge the gap between what our families receive and what they deserve, and between what this community is capable of achieving and the hand that has been dealt."

Commissioner Wiley explained that she had nothing new to report on Tamara Shiloh's project "Just Imagine KidZ Book Basket." She described the idea which had started in the east, had expanded elsewhere, and had become very popular and successful.

For the benefit of new RACC members, Ms. Seville described the Just Imagine KidZ project to take books into barber shops, and while waiting for haircuts young readers would be encouraged to read and improve their lives through books.

Ms. Seville explained that the RYSE Center, which had done extraordinary theater and plays over the years, had an approved project "Lead with Love II," as had Antu Antinao, a musician teaching and performing Son Jarocho music at community centers and schools. Both would need RACC liaisons and the new members would be paired with those two projects.

XI. Social Media Committee Update

Chair Balisle reported that the RACC was currently on Twitter facilitated by Commissioner Kirk, on Instagram and YouTube facilitated by Commissioner Tamayo, and she facilitated Facebook, using social media to promote the artists and the ongoing artist programs. Next steps would be for the full RACC to organize a calendar.

Commissioner Helene volunteered to serve on the Social Media Committee.

Commissioner Barnes recommended that all the grant recipients be encouraged to document and share their particular projects on video, and in the discussion, the issue of permission or opt out releases for children in those programs was noted as an issue to potentially be discussed at the RACC/PAAC retreat.

XII. Richmond Arts Salon Update

Commissioner Wiley reported that Commissioner Kirk had provided a piece of art for the flyer for the next Richmond Arts Salon.

Commissioner Barnes reiterated that the Richmond Arts Salon would feature Tracey Mitchell's work. The event was free at Rigger's. She encouraged RACC members to attend the event to show their support. RSVP's were recommended for future events. The next Richmond Arts Salon would be in July, outdoors, when families would be encouraged to attend.

For the benefit of the new members, it was clarified that the Richmond Arts Salon had been conceived as a regularly scheduled gathering for Richmond artists to get to know one another, share information, share resources, and build community among artists, and to travel around Richmond to different venues so that the art and business community could continue to live in partnership. Promotion for the Arts Salon was through the social media outlets and emails sent out by Ms. Seville.

Councilmember Choi recommended that Arts Salon events be submitted to the City Manager's office to be included in the City Manager's report.

XIII. Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) Report

Chair Balisle presented the last minutes of the PAAC which met on the second Tuesday of each month, and which focused on the policy of public art and implemented the percent for art development. She reported the PAAC had been working on the Artists Roster and had completed the Public Art Brochure that had now been printed and placed in the Planning Department for distribution. The PAAC had also recommended the hiring of a consultant to complete the update of the PAAC's Policies & Procedures (P&Ps).

Commissioner Wiley recommended that the Public Art Brochure also be provided at the new Downtown Visitors' Center, Richmond Main Street's new office.

Ms. Seville explained with respect to the hiring of a consultant for the P&Ps that given budget constraints, the most time and cost-effective way to proceed would be to use a comparable city's procedures as a model for the PAAC, particularly given that the current rewrite process had been ongoing for almost 15 years.

Chair Balisle referred to the PAAC's prior research of other cities and reported that the P&Ps of the City of Palo Alto was the preferred model.

XIV. Staff Report

Ms. Seville highlighted her staff report and reported that the port public art sculpture was in full swing, although given complications out of the artist's control, the project was \$400,000 over budget. While the artists were absorbing \$300,000 of that overage, the remaining \$100,000 would be covered by the Arts & Culture Department budget. In addition, the preliminary design proposal had been submitted by Masayuki Nagase for the Officer Bradley A. Moody Underpass based on his meetings with Ohlone tribal members; and the Community Conversations mural would be located on Nevin Avenue next to the Hacienda Grill based on the community conversations that had occurred on two separate events and included stories, places, and people that had come out of those conversations.

Commissioner Barnes explained that the community conversations grant had been received in partnership with UC Berkeley consistent with similar partnerships in the past, and there had been discussions of producing one to three evenings, curated conversations in the format of stories from Richmond artists, activists, leaders and Berkeley researchers to focus on the arts in Richmond. She urged RACC Members to recommend people from the Richmond community who would be great storytellers.

Ms. Michelle described the John Toki sculpture and reported that it would be installed at the Family Justice Center in the near future.

XV. Announcements

Commissioner Mizrahi thanked those who had attended the Sisters of Solidarity event, the City's 12th annual celebration of International Woman's Day.

Commissioner Barnes advised that she had been working with the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts to create a map of Richmond where the community would nominate sights and places of beauty in Richmond. An NPA mini-grant past recipient Rebecca Garcia Gonzales had been selected to create the maps for the 50th anniversary of the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts on May 11; a launch event for the map would probably be scheduled in late June.

Councilmember Choi asked if there had been any discussions for a living wall in relation to the percent for public art process, and on the discussion that suggestion was to be included on the list of items to discuss at the RACC/PAAC retreat.

Commissioner Barnes noted that the Richmond Youth Council had been reinstated and she would like the RACC to consider how to connect to youth and youth visioning around art in Richmond.

XVI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 P.M. to the next meeting on April 25, 2019.