

SEATTLE ARTS COMMISSION
Minutes
Special Meeting
Tuesday, September 29th, 2021
Remote – Zoom Conference

Commissioners present: Cassie Chinn, Steve Galatro, Yeggy Michael, Rick Araluce, Holly Jacobson, Vivian Hua, Vanessa Villalobos, Mikhael Mei Williams, Kayla DeMonte, James Miles

Staff in attendance: royal alley-barnes, Calandra Childers, Allie Lee, Ashraf Hasham, Erika Lindsay

Call to Order, Introduction, Land Acknowledgement (4:05)

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Introductions and welcome to new Acting Director royal alley-barnes

Co-Chairs Transition

Briefing: Cassie Chinn

We appreciate Quinton and Sarah's leadership, demonstrating art's central role in city and their advocacy with ARPA funds. After Quinton and Sarah's resignation from the commission, the Executive Committee met to discuss succession planning for the vacant co-chairs seats. Feeling the need to have continuity from the Executive Committee, initial asks were made to James and Chieko (Cassie, Steve, and Dawn are terming out at the end of 2021). Since Chieko will need to lead the FED after Cassie leaves, the Executive Committee additionally nominated Vivian Hua. Cassie moved to have an open discussion on James Miles and Vivian Hua being nominated as interim co-chairs noting that we would revisit the process for permanent co-chairs in 2022. Discussion:

- The Commission feels James and Vivian have been highly involved in the work of the Commission and have strong advocacy/leadership roles in both the Commission and their respective organizations. They would be great as interim co-chairs.
- The Commission would like to know if James and Vivian are willing to step into the roles.
 - James and Vivian responded that they are happy to work with each other and guide the Commission into 2022 as long as everyone else feels good about it. They would like this to be a communal decision.
- The Commission asked what the process and term of executive roles are.
 - They are calendar year basis. We generally confirm/reconfirm the term of chairs in January through verbal consensus. We can do this in January 2022, when we will potentially also have new commissioners appointed.
- The Commission asked if there is anyone else who is passionate about or willing to be a co-chair.
 - No response.

Cassie moved to approve James and Vivian as interim co-chairs of SAC. Steve seconded. All approved.

SAC Open Recruitment Process

Briefing: Cassie Chinn

The Commission has been discussing for a while to have a more public process for recruitment. ARTS staff drafted a process for this which we'd like to share:

- **Open nomination process:** The Commission, in consultation with the Mayor's Office and/or the City Council if requested, will publicly solicit nominations to fill vacant positions, review applicants' credentials, and make recommendations. Applicants should be committed to programs and objectives of the Office of Arts & Culture. – *Article 1, Section 2, Seattle Arts Commission by-laws, approved January 2021 by the Seattle Arts Commission*
- Open positions to recruit: 3 City Council, 1 Mayor, 1 Commission
 - Commissioners serve 2-year terms. (can serve up to 3 consecutive terms with reappointment)
- **Draft Process and Timeline:**
 - Late Oct./early Nov 2021
 - Create nomination application (platform options submittable, survey monkey, Microsoft forms)
 - Open nomination application, open late Oct./early Nov, open for 4 weeks
 - Early Dec. 2021
 - Ad Hoc SAC committee will select up to 2 top candidates for recommendation for each open position for Mayor/Council
 - Mayor/Council final approval
 - January 2022
 - Send nominees to Council for approval
- **Draft Criteria:** Membership as a whole should represent, as much as is possible, the diversity of Seattle's cultural community and the city's demographics. Membership may include, but is not limited to professional artists, arts educators, art administrators, and arts advocates. Individuals will be selected to serve on one of our committees (FED, CIC, PAAC).

SAC Questions/Comments:

- The Commission thinks it would be helpful to have a description of committees when making selections, so it is clear who we need to have on which committees.
- The Commission asked – didn't we contribute to compiling a list of nominees previously?
 - Yes, but now with this open nomination process it would be helpful if commissioners can make asks and invite people to apply. From a racial equity perspective, it would be helpful to make extra invitations out to Black and Indigenous communities. We should also keep our matrix (information of current commissioners' demographics and background) in mind to know where gaps are.
 - Vanessa requested to have the Commission matrix link resent. Allie will follow up.

- The Commission discussed whether folks should self-nominate as opposed to being nominated by others and decided it would be best to make both options available, since some people might not easily hear about the opportunity.
- The Commission would like to give enough time for the public to learn about the Commission before they get involved. Potentially an info session or “meet the commissioners” session would be helpful.
- The Commission would like to see better graphics that are visually appealing to the public.
- The Commission suggested creating an onboarding team for new commissioners where existing commissioners can share priorities and go over the work of the committees.
- The Commission would like transparency on this process and would like to create a specific timeline.

Budget Update

Briefing: Calandra Childers

- In 2022, ARTS will shift to concurrent year Admission Tax funding, meaning the budget supported by the Arts and Culture fund will operate using same-year projected revenue. Previously, ARTS developed its budget using revenue collected from two years prior. However, keeping that funding structure would have meant ARTS would face 2020’s COVID-induced revenue shortfall in 2022, resulting in drastic cuts. Switching to concurrent year funding allows ARTS to avoid such a scenario. In addition, to provide some financial cushion if revenue actuals come in lower than projected, ARTS will have a sizeable operating reserve to rely on. The 2021 Adopted Budget included legislation to revise the Arts and Culture Fund financial policies to set the operating reserve at 20% of its operating budget.
- Equitable Communities Initiative - The task force recommendations, released in June 2021, included \$6 million for an Equity and Cultural Education Fund. The 2022 Proposed Budget includes ongoing funding of \$6 million for the Equity and Cultural Education Fund, including \$2 million to be targeted to cultural education. The appropriation for the fund is split between the Department of Education and Early Learning (\$4 million) and ARTS (\$2 million). The two departments will jointly run a competitive process to award the funding to community organizations. A small portion of the funding will support administrative and programmatic costs for the City departments.
- Federal Funding Support - The City of Seattle is receiving federal Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CLFR), which will be awarded in two tranches. The first tranche, appropriated in 2021 through Ordinance 126371, included an allocation of \$3.375 million to Arts to provide COVID-related relief to arts and cultural organizations. The 2022 Proposed Budget allocates \$1.5 million of General Fund funds enabled by Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery (CLFR) funds to Arts as part of Seattle Rescue Plan 3 (SRP3). This funding will provide financial and workforce development support to artists and creative workers who have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (Hope Corps).

SAC Questions/Comments:

- The Commission asked if there is new funding going towards existing programs at ARTS.

- Two new funding sources are the ECI funding and the federal funding for Hope Corps. We'll be significantly expanding on the Hope Corps work and pilots from this past year with the federal funding, and we will be working collaboratively with DEEL to build off existing arts education programs with the ECI funding.
- The Commission is interested in seeing funding also go to existing programs at ARTS that have been working well, especially for BIPOC artists. Would like that to be considered going forward.
- The Commission asked about next steps for the Commission with the proposed budget.
 - Within 15 days of the Mayor's presentation of the proposed budget, the Commission should submit a letter to City Council on the proposed ARTS budget, including how the proposed budget reflects the funding priorities set forth in the budget priorities letter to the Mayor.
 - The Commission will collectively write this response.

Executive Session

Briefing: Steve Galatro

Steve on behalf of the Executive Committee announced that the Arts Commission goes to Executive Session for the remaining duration of the meeting to evaluate complaints brought against the Mayor as presented in the open resignation letter from the Commission's two previous Co-Chairs, Dr. Quinton Morris and Sarah Wilke. All attendees on the call, except for the Arts Commissioners were asked to exit the meeting.