**SEATTLE ARTS COMMISSION**

Minutes

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Hybrid Meeting - In-Person @ King Street Station 3rd Floor Panel Room OR Zoom

**Commissioners present:** Vee Hua, Vanessa Villalobos, Kayla DeMonte, Holly Jacobson, Leslie Anderson, Dhyana Garcia, Linda Chavez-Lowry, Yolanda Spencer, Joël, Megan

**Staff in attendance**: Allie Lee, Kathy Hsieh, Allie McGehee, Ele Watts, Jenny Crooks

**Guest:** Gabriela Garza, Phil Wood-Smith, Izchel Chacon, Janelle, Olisa Enrico, Pepe Montero

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

Approval of Minutes:

* Leslie moved to approve the March commission minutes. Vanessa has edits and will email them to Allie to reflect in the March minutes; will postpone approval of March minutes to April.

Public Comment:

* No public comment.

Welcome/Land Acknowledgement/Announcements:

* Yolanda – UW Spring Powwow on 4/13-14 held at the Alaksa Airlines Arena <https://sites.uw.edu/fnuw/powwow/>
* Leslie – National Nordic Museum celebration of Sámi art and culture in Seattle <https://nordicmuseum.org/events/juoiggas>
* Holly – Potlatch Symphony is performed by Seattle Symphony and artists from Puget Sound First Nations at Benaroya Hall on 4/19 at 7:30pm <https://www.seattlesymphony.org/en/concerttickets/calendar/2023-2024/23comm3>
* Vee- Sugarcane documentary, an intergenerational healing film <https://mspfilm.org/show/sugarcane/>

**Co-Chairs Report  
Briefing: Vee Hua, Vanessa Villalobos**

* Vee – FAQ for new commissioners is coming soon.
* SAC Google Drive where shared docs, workplans, etc. live: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1B4q-DW-MdwfhOrC_-7Tl1LbgieABUp9S>

Succession planning:

* Vee - The SAC By-laws state “A Chair or Co-Chairs will be appointed annually by the commissioners in consultation with the Director. The Chair or Co-Chairs will appoint committee chairs, subject to the approval of the full Commission.” Vee and Vanessa have been serving as Co-Chairs well over a year. Would like to consider staggering these appointments and proposes two people rolling off at different times; have those who have been on SAC for a while to preferably take on these roles.
* Vanessa – Feels comfortable staying on as Co-Chair through transition; recommends self-nomination or opening this up to SAC for consideration of appointing a seasoned member with a newer member. Would like to open up for discussion to see if anyone is interested or has recommendations.
  + Leslie – Pairing an existing member with a new member for co-chair roles, as well as the extension of current co-chair terms, does not reflect what was discussed and agreed to at the SAC Execs meeting. We had agreed to accept nominations of existing members.
  + Vanessa – This was my opinion at the SAC Execs meeting. Restating here.
  + Holly – This is confusing.
* Vee – At the SAC Execs meeting most people wanted to have the Co-Chairs be seasoned/existing commissioners, and Vanessa wanted to open it up to new commissioners. Leslie had nominated Kayla and Holly.
* Holly / Kayla – It takes time to understand structure, acronyms, etc. Kayla gave an overview of the SAC and committees structure.
  + Allie will send out SAC info packet and list of all the meetings/times to new members.
* Linda – interested in attending and co-chairing FED
* Dhyana – Feeling confused
  + Leslie – May be helpful to attend all subcommittees. Please let Allie know, and she can email you the invite(s)
* Megan – would like to attend CIC
* Yolanda – Would like invites to all three committees at this time
* Vanessa – Would folks like to reflect and make a decision at the next meeting?
* Vee – In the interest of time, will summarize this in an email then folks can vote via email. Noting that there has been a nomination of Holly and Kayla for co-chairs for full SAC
* Vee – Also working on a buddy system to help answer questions about being on SAC
* Vanessa – Possible retreat in June or July (SAC meeting time)
* Vanessa and Linda will represent SAC in reviewing the anti-ageism materials from Seattle-King County Aging and Disability Services Advisory Council. Allie will connect Vanessa and Linda with Michael Adusah over email.
* Vanessa – Requests name attribution consistency in SAC meeting minutes.

**Director’s Report  
Briefing: Allie McGehee on behalf of Gülgün Kayim, Ele Watts, Kathy Hsieh**

* ARTS Pandemic Recovery Funding Survey Presentation
  + Kathy – Through the City’s budget process last fall and information provided on the state of the arts and culture sector, City Council was most connected to the fact that recovery funding was going away in 2023/2024 - so all the extra federal funding that helped bridge the gap as orgs started to reopen was going away, and lots of arts and culture orgs are still struggling to reopen fully. So City Council approved in their budget process an additional one-time add of 650k from admissions tax to distribute to arts and culture orgs to fill that gap. We decided that if we’re going to ask them questions to figure out who is closer to needing that money based on their financial situation and the gap of recovery, we might as well gather the data to look at the sector as a whole, which is where Impact and Assessment Manager Ele Watts helped Kathy, Jenny, and leadership think through simple questions we can ask to get a picture of what was happening and from their responses distribute the $$ to our cultural partners. This presentation data shows what they responded to.
  + Ele – ARTS surveyed 240 Seattle arts and cultural organizations, all C.A.R.E. grant recipients, to understand the status of their pandemic recovery funding and current fiscal health. 173 (72%) organizations responded to the survey. An additional 12 (5%) organizations emailed ARTS to say they did not plan to submit the survey for various reasons. We assessed the survey results to inform our fund distribution strategy and to understand the collective scope of need. Of the 173 that responded, 169 (98%) reported a funding gap in their current fiscal year due to their recovering funding coming to an end. Collectively, the 173 Seattle organizations need approximately $44.2 million in additional contributed income this fiscal year to make up for the loss of recovery funding. The majority of organizations (107, or 62%) reported that they need $50,000 or less to balance their budgets this fiscal year. Seven organizations make up the lion’s share of the collective demonstrated need, reporting $31.4 million (71% ) in combined demonstrated need. Nearly all organizations that completed our survey (168 or 97%) reported that the end of their pandemic recovery funding would likely cause significant, negative impacts on their work. Examples of likely impacts include:
    - Hosting fewer programs or events throughout the year
    - Reducing program enrollments for youth
    - Inability to pay for new works, or to pay artists a living wage
    - Reduced community presence, especially in underserved communities
    - Eliminating or significantly reducing the number of sliding scale tickets for low-income audience members
    - Cutting all paid staff positions and relying exclusively on volunteer labor
    - Pivoting organizational resources toward fundraising rather than programming

Recovery funding for the majority of responding organizations (100 or 57%) has already ended. For an additional 37 organizations (21%), their funding will end within four months. For this funding opportunity, ARTS had $650,000 to distribute to the organizations that responded to our survey. This amount represents 1.5% of the demonstrated need. ARTS distributed the funds to all 169 organized that reported a budget shortfall this fiscal year, in grants ranging from $2,000 - $10,000. It’s clear that Seattle arts and cultural organizations will need additional support and resources to navigate this critical period.

Questions/Comments:

* + Vanessa – What is the breakdown of demographics of respondents? How can we be helpful in any messaging?
    - Ele – The survey went to C.A.R.E. program orgs, who are already connected with us. This was a quick way for us to get a snapshot of needs, and represents a good cross section of creative economy in Seattle.
    - Kathy - C.A.R.E. recipients do represent BIPOC and immigrant communities; ARTS does intensive outreach, and we are granting out through this program because it has great diversity. I have the demographic breakdown and can put together if needed. There were several ways in which data was analyzed so $$ would go out to diverse orgs with most need.
  + Allie M – Clarifying that the 650k was an Executive/Mayoral add. Happy to go over budget with SAC members. Would like to make sure SAC is informed prior to budget letter being written out.
    - Allie L to add budget 101 to SAC agenda for May
* ARTS Updates – Allie M
  + Gülgün is traveling and working reduced hours in April.
  + The finalist was selected for the Deputy Director position; currently in the final stage and will be announced when ready.
  + Hiring freeze – submitted second batch of exceptions - 6 positions (3 building monitors, 3 public art team staff), building monitors are moving forward and currently waiting on the public art hires.
  + ARTS Strategic Planning – First sessions held on 3/28 and 3/29, which focused on dreaming, big picture, where would you like to go, etc. Consultant Brenda Kayzar is doing key stakeholder engagement. The next sessions will be at the end of April, which will focus on goals, objectives, and prioritization of goals in a resource scarce environment.

**Committee Updates  
Briefing: Committee Co-Chairs**

* FED – Katie Sheehy from OPCD will give an overview presentation and Q&A on the City’s Comp Plan and commissioners and community advisors of all committees are invited.
  + Email/invite sent to all. 4/16 (T) 3:30-4:30pm
  + Please contact Jenny Crooks [jenny.crooks@seattle.gov](mailto:jenny.crooks@seattle.gov) regarding questions/topics on the comp plan in preparation for the 4/16 meeting.
* CIC – At the March meeting, Kristi Woo from ARTS gave a presentation on Youth Arts Grant applications and the group received status updates on CityArtist, Hope Corps, Artists at the Center, and Arts in Parks.
  + Question from Vanessa – what are the opportunities for community to be involved?
    - Kathy / Jenny - There is a process for each of the ARTS grants for community to participate on panels; each grant convenes panels in a different way; through strategic planning ARTS is trying to make panel participation more equitable and consistent throughout our programs. Project Managers can speak to the program specific panels; we also have a panel coordinator; panel processes do also overlap with public art commissions
* PAAC – The group reviewed and recommended for approval the Seattle Storm Right of Way project and possible purchase of an artwork study from the Francis Celentano Estate. The group also received an update on 2024 conservation and collections management and the public art roster. PAAC will not meet in April due to members/staff being out of office.

**Community Share Out  
Briefing: All**

* Joël – Wing Luke recently had its annual gala; summer neighborhood activation events coming up in CID; In July Wing Luke will be involved in the One Nation One Project initiative. <https://www.onenationoneproject.com/>
  + Joël would be happy to meet with folks in-person
* Linda – Cinco de Mayo celebrations at El Centro de la Raza <https://www.elcentrodelaraza.org/events/cinco-de-mayo/>
* Megan – On the Boards performance of drag queens on car lifts at an auto repair shop, almost sold out <https://www.ontheboards.org/threesome>

Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.