

## SEATTLE ARTS COMMISSION

Minutes

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, July 12, 2022

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

**Commissioners present:** Chieko Phillips, Vanessa Villalobos, Kayla DeMonte, Rick Araluce, Jessica Caudle, James Miles, Yeggy Michael, Ebony Arunga, Mikhael Mei Williams

**Staff in attendance:** Erika Lindsay, Allie Lee, Kathy Hsieh, Jenny Crooks

**Guests:** New commissioners pending Council confirmation - Olisa Enrico, Danielle McClune, Ricky Graboski, Leslie Anderson

### **Call to Order, Introduction, Land Acknowledgement (4:07)**

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

Kayla moved to approve the commission minutes from May\*. Rick seconded. Approved.

(\*there was no meeting in June)

#### **Public Comment:**

Cyrus Khambatta, Artistic Director of Seattle International Dance Festival, provided public comment.

#### **Icebreaker:**

Round robin introductions and share out of how art that we enjoy makes us feel.

### **SAC Work Plan - Committee Updates**

#### **Briefing: Committee Chairs**

- **Public Art Advisory Committee** (Vee not in attendance to present) – Vanessa will ask Vee to send over some notes.
- **Cultural Investments Committee** (Kayla) – CIC recently updated their purpose statement and there are two main focus areas: 1) *Providing guidance and feedback on ARTS' racially equitable grant processes & investment strategies*; 2) *Advocating for equitable, accessible, and inclusive cultural investments in support of the Seattle ARTS Office and the arts sector in our city and region*. The group is currently in the process of solidifying what this is in terms of action. CIC welcomes new commissioners to join.
- **Facilities and Equitable Development Committee** (Chieko) – FED advises the work of ARTS on issues of cultural space and impacts on equitable development. The 2022 goals for FED are: 1) *Advocate for BIPOC cultural space support*; 2) *Forging relationships with native communities to build more equitably*; 3) *Continue to support the Cultural Space Agency*. The group is currently working through action items for each goal. The next FED meeting (7/19) will take place at Daybreak Star. Ebony and Chieko are willing to meet with new SAC members who want to learn more about the work of FED.

## Co-Chairs Report

### **Briefing: Vanessa Villalobos**

- **Commissioner outreach to community / coordinated outreach** – SAC needs to have higher level advocacy, a strategy for tactical engagement. We should consider a buddy system for conversations with Council members or have a “meet a commissioner” event. We need a stronger presence in community, and we need to feel like we are more accessible to community.
  - Ebony – One strategy to push is for more people to come to our public comment. We want to market that we have this opportunity and that people can come speak to us; we need more voices of the people as we do our work. We had also previously discussed the idea to find out what events Councilmembers are going to and engage in conversations with them.
- **Council engagement** – Coordinate a buddy system to have scheduled time with Councilmembers – this would be an opportunity to advocate for more funding – an arts integrated plan with dedicated funding that goes past a year.
  - Need to figure out what events are important for SAC to have a presence at, and it’d be great if Councilmembers are there too.
  - Historically SAC took a month off in August, but given the advocacy needs, what if SAC makes an effort to organize something during this time? Who has bandwidth to attend an event with a fellow commissioner, or organize a gathering?
    - Rick – not available
    - Chieko – available
      - Also suggested a happy hour for late August
    - Holly – available and interested in the happy hour idea.
      - Also suggested to create a document of all the events, since it is hard to know what we are all agreeing to.
    - Ebony – available and interested in the happy hour idea. Can commit to attending 1-2 events.
    - James – available
    - Kathy – Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute (LHPAI) 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event is taking place on 9/10. This could be a great opportunity for SAC to be at or find a way for community to part of.
- **Questions or any items for future agenda?**
  - Chieko – Commissioners haven’t started to sign up for Councilmember engagement yet. Can we recirculate the Council information spreadsheet to the group?
    - Allie will recirculate in follow up email.
  - Kayla – Thinking about our talking points with Councilmembers; each year we write a budget priorities letter, and it would be good reference for new Commissioners.
    - Allie will recirculate in follow up email.

## Director’s Report

### **Briefing: Erika Lindsay**

- **ARTS Updates**
  - **Hope Corps** – Applications closed. We received over 300 applications. Funding is \$1M and we are working through the selection panel now, and will have selections in August.
  - **ARPA recovery grants** – Decision letters went out to over 200 orgs. Federal funding of \$1.6M will be distributed, and there are a lot of different requirements for reporting that staff have been navigating.
  - **ARTS at King Street Station** – Hanako O’Leary: Izanami and Yomi” and “Molly Vaughan: Her Body and After Boucher” has closed. Starting 7/28 through September, there will be a new exhibition up by Saira Barbaric.
  - **Staff Updates** –
    - Mike Davis is no longer with ARTS and has taken a new position at KUOW as their new arts reporter; ARTS is excited for Mike and his new role.
    - Jason Huff is the current out of class Acting Chief of Public Art. The permanent position was posted and closed on Monday.
    - Lovell Davis is the current out of class Acting Facilities Manager.
    - Allie McGehee is the current out of class Finance Manager. The permanent position is now posted.
    - Final round of interviews are now taking place for the hiring of ARTS Sr. Panel Coordinator & Data Liaison
- **Questions and Comments from SAC**
  - Chieko – Congratulations to Jenny Crooks and the recovery team on getting notifications out.
  - Vanessa – Is there a way to share the data on the grant programs mentioned?
    - Erika / Kathy – Since the recovery notification letters are still provisional, there isn’t anything that can be shared out. For Hope Corps, sharing would happen after the panel process; program managers pull together a basic report that is shared with CIC, and CIC would then uplift anything important to the larger SAC.
  - Chieko – re: staff movement/transitions, is there anything that SAC can do in terms of advocacy?
    - Erika – The reason we have people in the out of class roles is because we want to make sure we keep the positions. Leadership are moving with a sense of urgency so we don’t lose any positions. Will relay to leadership in case there are any needs.
    - Vanessa – Can SAC work directly with HR for advocacy?
      - Erika – No, it would make more sense to talk to City Council for advocacy, so the focus is on community. Also since SAC members are not City employees, communication with HR would not be relevant.

**Commission Temperature Check**

**Briefing: Vanessa Villalobos**

**Prompt Question: Are you still excited to be part of this group? What do we need, and what can we improve?**

- Commissioners expressed current challenges and how they would like to move forward. There was a general sentiment that there have been many ARTS and SAC transitions that have impacted the energy of the group and the working relationship between ARTS and SAC. There were also comments about bringing back the Zoom chat function and providing full caption accessibility.
- Action: Vanessa moved to add full captions to Zoom, and to add the chat function for at least the next meeting while the group decides on virtual meeting protocol. James seconded the motion. Approved.
  - *Allie to share meeting minutes from fall 2020 in a follow up email that show the previous Co-Chairs' decision to disable the Zoom chat function.*

**Other**

**Briefing: All**

- Ebony – The Cultural Space Agency is hiring their first permanent staff positions – Executive Director, Director of Real Estate, and Director of Fund Development – job descriptions will be going out to community and will be shared with SAC. Please spread the word.
- Kathy – Shared [Centering Art & Racial Equity \(C.A.R.E.\) grant](#) application reminder
  - Allie will send out info in follow up email.

Meeting adjourned at 5:33pm.