



## Reno Arts & Culture Commission Notice and Agenda of Meeting

Date: December 21, 2020

Time: 4:00 p.m.

*Meeting via teleconference only pursuant to  
NRS 241.023*

Commission Members
Geralda Miller, Chair
Erik Fong, Vice Chair
Eric Anderson
Debbi Engebretson
Doug Erwin
Lisa Genasci
Dana Hatjakes
Bhie-Cie Ledesma
Shaughn Richardson
Melanie Rudnick
Mark Salinas
Naomi Duerr, City Council Liaison

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### AGENDA

#### 1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 4:02 pm.

Present: Geralda Miller, Chair; Erik Fong, Vice Chair (left at 5:55pm); Eric Anderson, Debbi Engebretson, Doug Erwin (left at 5:30pm), Lisa Genasci, Dana Hatjakes, Bhie-Cie Ledesma, Shaughn Richardson, Melanie Rudnick, Mark Salinas.

Also present: Megan Berner, Acting Manager of Arts, Culture, and Events; Naomi Duerr, City Council Liaison; David Pritchett, Recreation & Parks Commission Liaison.

#### 2. Public Comment on Agenda Items or Other Matters –none

#### 3. Approval of the Minutes – November 23, 2020 Reno Arts & Culture Commission Meetings

Doug Erwin motions to approve, seconded by Debbi Engebretson. All in favor, motion passes.

#### 4. Approval of the Agenda – December 21, 2020

Lisa Genasci motions to approve, seconded by Shaughn Richardson. All in favor, motion passes.

#### 5. City Council Liaison Report – Council Member Naomi Duerr

CM Duerr gives an update/overview on the Space Whale. Recounts that the RACC made a recommendation not to move forward with the Space Whale. RACC still has funds to help with deinstall of the piece. It ended up on the RSCVA agenda and then came off. Not sure where it stands right now. The Space Whale was built by a consortium of artists—around 50. When we initially leased it each person, to our knowledge, has received around \$50. Duerr was in support of the RACC recommendation. It sounded like the RACC's position was that they want to support art and wanted to pursue a new piece for the plaza.

CM Duerr reports that she will be staying on as the liaison to the Arts & Culture Commission.

Says she's seen a huge change in the landscape of the City and credits the RACC with much of that positive influence. Other entities are getting on board in Sparks and Washoe County.

The City is looking at around a 5% overall budget cut.

#### 6. Review of Commissioner attendance and RACC attendance policy

Miller says that she wants to let everyone know where they are at since it's the beginning of the year.

Berner states that the RACC counts attendance over the course of the fiscal year. Each Commissioner is allowed three absences.

#### 7. Financial Report and Budget Update

##### a. Review and possible acceptance of the FY2019/20 Commission Budget Report

##### b. Review and possible acceptance of the FY2019/20 Public Art Budget Report

Berner states the only change to the Commission budget is the allocation for KUNR for \$2400 that was approved at last month's meeting. The public art collection management system is up for renewal so that will come out of the budget this month. Public Art budget has not changed. We are ready to move forward with Bicentennial Park and that should happen in January or February.

Dana Hatjakes moves to approve, seconded by Lisa Genasci. All in favor, motion carries.

**8. Project / Special Reports Update (For Possible Approval)**

**a. Public Art Committee Update (For Possible Action)**

- i. Discussion and possible acceptance of the PAC's recommendation of artist Kipp Kobayashi for the E. 4<sup>th</sup> St. Public Art Project for an amount not to exceed \$165,000 from the list of the following applicants in alphabetical order: DiBari & Associates, Kipp Kobayashi, and Todd Moyer**

Berner states that we had public comment on this item from Alicia Barber, who speaks in favor of the recommendation of the Public Art Committee. Letter attached below.

Fong summarizes that the PAC looked at the three finalist proposals. It was pretty unanimous that everyone wanted Kipp Kobayashi's proposal. There was interest in Todd Moyer's lighting and it was suggested that perhaps the two could collaborate on the lighting or the project. Not sure if that will be suggested to Kipp.

Berner says she can tell Kipp that this was suggested but this is not something that we would propose as a solution to this project. Kipp did express willingness in his proposal to adjust the lighting and make it more dynamic.

Mark Salinas states that he wants to let everyone know that he has been newly elected to sit on the American for the Arts Public Art Network. Kipp Kobayashi is a current member of that network. Has never had any association with Kipp except the questions he asked him during the public presentation of finalists' proposals.

Berner pulls up Kipp Kobayashi's proposal for review.

Duerr asks if it is intentional to have part of the structure showing or is the entire column supposed to be enclosed in the mesh.

Fong says he says that it was purposely left open so you can see the armature.

Berner says it could be an issue if people have access to the lighting, etc.

Duerr recommends that since this effect also happens up higher in the branches to convey the concept of natural and fabricated that the lower portion be completely covered in the mesh. Consider sturdiness, trash collecting, and vandalism. Duerr also comments on the visual pattern of the mesh. In the drawings it looks like snake skin. Doesn't prefer that texture. Something to consider. Loves the project. It's an interesting and cool choice.

Pritchett says that the current design allows for trash to be removed. Asks what the guidance about the column being used was—the column needs to be inspected. Has the transportation commission been consulted?

Berner says that the overpass belongs to the City. City engineers attended the proposal presentation and didn't have any comments at the time. Nothing is actually attached to the bridge. They do visual inspections so we will work with them to modify as needed.

Salinas says that he appreciates the history that was included in the concept and also that he would like to see Reno represented on Kipp Kobayashi's site as an accomplished artist.

Miller says that this is going to be a destination for art and is very excited for this project.

Hatjakes asks if the lighting has a dmx controller or something similar.

Berner says yes, that the proposal includes color changing LED lighting with a controller.

Doug Erwin makes a motion to recommend Kipp Kobayashi as the artist for the E. 4<sup>th</sup> St. Public Art Project, seconded by Dana Hatajakes. All in favor, motion carries.

- 9. Review of FY20/21 Arts & Culture Grant applications and possible allocation of Arts & Culture Grant funding in an amount not to exceed \$194,000 to the following organizations who applied, listed in alphabetical order: A.V.A. Ballet, Artech, Arts for All Nevada, Bruka Theatre, Classical Gala West, Foundation for the S.T.A.R.S., Good Luck Macbeth, High Desert Harmony Chorus, Holland Project, KWNK Community Radio, Laika Press, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival, Nevada Gay Men's Chorus, Nevada Humanities, Nevada Museum of Art, renew Music, Reno Chamber Orchestra, Reno Jazz Orchestra, Reno Little Theater, Reno Philharmonic Association, Reno Pops Orchestra, Sierra Association of Foster Families, Sierra Nevada Ballet, University of Nevada Reno: Lilley Art Gallery, University of Nevada Reno: School of the Arts**

Berner summarizes that the scoring was pretty even across the board. There were some large differences between high and low scores but it was consistent with how each commissioner was scoring across all of the grants.

Miller says she is excited about quite a few of these programs. Wants to know the number of grants that are geared toward youth. Seems like a larger number than normal.

Rudnick says that it seems on par with other years.

Salinas says he recuses himself from voting on the UNR School of the Arts request and did not see that application since staff did not grant access.

Richardson says he recused himself from scoring Laika Press, KWNK, and Holland Project's requests. Staff also did not grant access to those applications.

Berner says she created a spreadsheet with rankings for the grant requests. The lowest score was a 70% which is still fairly high. We only had 25 organizations apply and only allowed for one grant application, we have good funding levels. We usually have way more ask than we can fund. That ratio was a little smaller this year. Berner created suggested funding levels based on scoring and the amount of funding to be distributed. No grants stood out where the scoring seemed skewed but if anyone wants to discuss a particular grant we can do so.

Erwin says that he always has a slight issue with the way the funds get distributed. If an organization puts in a request for an amount that is more realistic—less than the full request amount—they get penalized. We should figure a different way to do this mathematically--if people put more realistic numbers in rather than asking for the full amount.

Miller suggests that we should look at anything lower than \$5,000 and look at their scoring and see where they rank. Agrees with Erwin that it is a good point.

The only group that asked for something that low was reNEW music and they are still receiving a high percentage of their request.

Eric Andersen also agrees with Erwin that there may be a better way to figure out the funding levels.

Salinas says that he likes the score percentage as a percentage of the request awarded for a first pass. Says that he's seen many different models. Remainder could be poured in at the top to fill in until the money runs out.

Erwin says he likes the idea of creating tiers so certain ranges are funded at certain levels. That way some of the lower scores drop off.

Miller asks if we want any groups to drop off.

Berner says that we have done it like that in the past and commissioners weren't entirely happy with that system either. We usually drop applications off is they score below 65%.

Engelbritson says she thinks the way that it has been presented by staff seems like a very equitable and fair way to do this. The scores reflect the funding level and then everyone has been given an additional 3% across the board.

Richardson says that given the circumstances and shortened timeline that this seems like a pretty fair process. All orgs are getting pretty high funding compared to what has been seen in the past.

Genasci says she agrees with Richardson. Arts are struggling so much this year.

Erwin says he agrees with what was said but thinks we should establish tiers going forward to be clear.

Berner suggests that if there is desire for this, we can certainly discuss it for our next round of grants.

Salinas makes an overall comment that he did see patterns in these applications. Some of them were in accessibility. The fulfillment of arts accessibility was usually through partnerships with Title 1 schools, low-cost tickets, or open to the public. Salinas feels that these approaches could use an added step. Was surprised that none of them were seeking parent evaluation. And not to confuse being economically challenged as all being minorities. Low cost tickets don't communicate the details of the event and usher in the underrepresented populations. Suggests that orgs partner with local organizations to help with this. Open to the public also does not address the demographics of the city.

Richardson says that he felt that these were generic responses to meeting diversity requirements and was reflected in his scoring.

Richardson moves to approve the funding levels presented by staff and make a recommendation to the City Council, seconded by Rudnick. All in favor, motion carries.

Doug Erwin left meeting at 5:30pm.

**10. Discussion and possible appointments of Commissioners to the Public Art Committee and the Community Engagement Committee from the list of the following Commissioners:** Eric Anderson, Debbi Engebritson, Doug Erwin, Erik Fong, Lisa Genasci, Dana Hatjakes, Bhie-Cie Ledesma, Geralda Miller, Shaughn Richardson, Melanie Rudnick, Mark Salinas

Miller states that we have a vacancy on the Public Art Committee and nominates Mark Salinas as an addition to the PAC. Miller asks who is chair of the Community Engagement Committee.

Berner says that Hatajakes was the chair but has termed off of the Community Engagement Committee. Debbi Engebritson is on the committee and so is Lisa Genasci.

Lisa Genasci nominates Debbi Engebritson as the chair for the CEC. Genasci will be vice chair.

Genasci makes a motion to put Mark Salinas and Dana Hatajakes on the Public Art Committee, seconded by Richardson. All in favor, motion carries.

Hatajakes makes a motion to approve appointments of Debbi Engebritson as chair and Lisa Genasci as vice chair of the Community Engagement Committee, seconded by Andersen. All in favor, motion carries.

Engebritson makes a motion to appoint Salinas as vice chair of the Public Art Committee, seconded by Genasci. All in favor, motion carries.

**11. Review, discussion and possible recommended edits to the Reno Arts & Culture Commission bylaws.**

The RACC reviewed the bylaws line by line with recommended revisions from staff, RACC Chair, and council liaison.

Hatjakes asks to add in "and culture" after art in Article 1, bullet 4. Keep it consistent.

Article 2: Duerr comments that updating the language to allow commissioners to reapply after a 3 year hiatus is interesting and keeps it open. Miller opposes this language and likes the term limit so that we can bring on new, diverse and fresh voices. Would encourage this not to happen. Hatjakes says that it's nice to have folks with history who can tell us why things are the way they are. Miller says that hopefully staff can fill that role and have already proven valuable in providing that information for us. Duerr says that it is just a suggestion and may help with the challenge of filling the specific seats that are called out in the bylaws. Salinas recommends that we look at other city boards to see how they deal with this.

Section on member terms is being revised for clarification. Clarification on terms (no partial terms) and member reappointments. Hatjakes suggests adding a specific time limit in. Duerr suggests 45 days instead of "in a timely manner".

New section to address ex-officio members, allowing for creation of an ex-officio position for someone in the business community. Conversation around whether EDawn should be named specifically or not and same for the Rec. & Parks Commission position. Both are worded to leave room for other groups to have representatives.

Article 3: Salinas suggests changing number of members from 2 to 4 to be able to call a meeting.

Article 4: change June to December

Article 5: Recording Secretary: add "notify Chair of resignations"

Article 6: E. Standing Committees—members shall be appointed for 3 year terms  
F. Ad Hoc Committees—1-year terms

Article 7: 5—Revise to say "for that agenda item"

Article 8: change to “Media Releases”

Hatjakes asks how this is even related to the RACC. Berner says that it doesn’t make sense and since we are a body of the City we should go through the City’s communications department.

Bylaws will be brought back in January.

**12. Parks and Recreation Liaison update**

David Pritchett says thanks for adding the Recreation & Parks Commission liaison to the bylaws. The Rec. & Parks Commission has not met but has a meeting scheduled for January. Asks about the renaming policy that was circulating and was wondering where they were.

Berner says that the various commissions involved will all review the policy. There was expression that it may not be relevant to the RACC. It will come to this body in January to decide if they want to be involved and give input.

**13. Updates on ongoing projects**

- a. Midtown Public Art –benches and bike racks are installed
- b. Seasonal Storefronts—almost all are up. Most are seasonal/winter themed and can stay up for a while.

**14. Announcements not anticipated at notice date**

None

**15. Set date, time and agenda for the next meeting**

January 25, 2021 at 4:00 pm

Miller asks if we can look at our strategic goals at the next meeting.

**16. General Public Comment** – Salinas says he is grateful and excited to be a part of this body and eager to offer up all of his networking resources and whatever he can to make Reno as great as it can be.

**17. Adjournment**

Hatjakes makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Engebritson. All in favor, motion carries. Meeting adjourned at 6:36 pm.

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Questions & Comments: December 21, 2020  
Agenda item 8.a.1

Dear members of the Reno Arts & Culture Commission,

I was delighted to view the finalists' presentations for the East 4th Street Public Art project. As the director of RTC Washoe's East 4th Street history project, I've been involved with improvements to this corridor for nearly ten years and have collaborated on many elements of the streetscape, including the eight historically-themed bus shelters that line East 4th Street and Prater Way.

While I think all of the proposals had wonderful elements, I was most excited by the presentation from Kipp Kobayashi. What made Mr. Kobayashi's project stand out for me was how he so gracefully translated his inspiration from the surrounding lumber mills that once lined East 4th Street (one of those buildings still stands adjacent to the Wells Avenue overpass) into a beautiful and striking artistic form.

The trees that appear to support the overpass without actually touching it are visually stunning and their story is deeply interwoven with the history of the street without being a literal representation. The exposed metal harkens back to the street's industrial heritage, while the natural form connects the structure to the environmental resources that made up the original economic underpinnings of this neighborhood--returning the district, literally, to its roots.

As an added benefit, Mr. Kobayashi's design also seems the best suited for this site, in terms of its durability. It is beautiful, practical, evocative, and meaningful. Reno would be extremely fortunate to host such an inspired and inspiring work of art.

I therefore agree with the recommendation from the Public Art Committee, and hope you will, too.

Best wishes,

Alicia Barber

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