

BELLEVUE ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

March 7, 2023
4:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Lau Hui, Commissioners Aldredge, Enomoto, Gowdy, Martinez

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE: Commissioners Bhargava, Gulati

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Manette Stamm, Lorie Hoffman, Jesse Canedo, Department of Planning and Community Development

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Stokes

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. by Chair Lau Hui who presided. All Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Martinez, who arrived at 4:34 p.m., and Commissioner Enomoto, who arrived at 4:37 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Aldredge. The motion was seconded was by Commissioner Gowdy and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the February 7, 2023, minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Gowdy. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gulati and the motion carried unanimously.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. ACTION, DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Arts Commission Bylaws

Arts Program Analyst Manette Stamm reminded the Commissioners of the staff-recommended edit to Article 5 of the bylaws amending the Commission's monthly meeting date. The Commission had previously agreed to meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m.

A motion to amend Article 5, Item A of the bylaws to reflect a new meeting time of the first Wednesday of every month at 4:30 p.m. was made by Commissioner Aldredge. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Martinez and the motion carried unanimously.

B. One-Time Grant Funding

Manette Stamm noted that \$85,000 of converted CIP funds, combined with \$15,000 from NEA grant funds, gave the allocations committee \$100,000 to grant out. The committee met during the month of February and developed a recommendation to fund 32 of the 35 applications. The application requests totaled \$227,000, and the individual requests were for \$3000, \$5000 or \$7000. The committee did not recommend funding any of the \$7000 requests, but did recommend funding two of the \$5000 requests, specifically the Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Pacific Ukrainian Society. In all, 30 applications were funded at \$3000 each. The committee recommended against funding three of the applications for various reasons.

Commissioner Aldredge explained all three of the applications the committee recommended against funding had very vague project descriptions, and no specific dates or venues. Several of them had received significant funding from the Commission in recent allocation rounds.

Commissioner Bhargava agreed that the culinary arts is a good idea, but the focus on just Louisiana cuisine seemed too narrow.

Chair Lau Hui asked if any first-time organizations applied for funding. Manette Stamm said there were six new applicants, only one of which was not recommended for funding. Some applicants that did not receive allocations through the regular funding process were recommended for some of the one-time funding.

With regard to the Seattle Chinese Cultural Theater, which the committee recommended should be funded, Commissioner Aldredge voiced reservations about the fact that their performances are not in English and offer no translation. The whole point is to connect with other cultures and with each other. While it is true that not every performance is translated into other languages, English is the common language for many cultures. The performances should not be required to be in English, but there should be translated scripts or something similar.

Manette Stamm said that the same could apply to the deaf community and others.

Commissioner Martinez said one could say that programming held all in a non-English format could be said to exclude others. However, connecting within cultures is just as important as connecting interculturally. It may not be the Commission's place to tell the funded cultural organizations that they must offer programming in English.

Commissioner Aldredge commented that visual arts or music performances certainly do not need to be translated. Theater performances, however, should be. Language matters in that it is how one understands what is happening.

Commissioner Enomoto suggested that programs funded by the city specifically to open access to other cultures, it would make sense to require or at least strongly recommend a bilingual approach. That may only require including a summary of what each theatrical act is about. Operas are often in German or Italian, but the program generally provides some background information.

Arts Community Manager Lorie Hoffman said as configured, grant dollars could be used for translation services. Recommending translations is one thing and requiring translations could be another. The latter could trigger the need to provide translation services in the six languages that in Bellevue meet the threshold, and that could be very expensive.

Councilmember Stokes suggested talking with Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer Dr. Linda Whitehead about what the requirements are from the city's standpoint. The city generally at least offers translation services. Having programs translated could open them to wider audiences.

Commissioner Martinez suggested organizations that provide a translation into all six languages could perhaps be offered an extra stipend.

Chair Lau Hui asked if translation services are something the city could support. Lorie Hoffman said translations are funded by individual departments. The translations done for the arts grants are paid for from the arts budget. It comes down to how the budget should be spent. Encouraging organizations to provide translations could certainly be done.

Commissioner Aldredge proposed adding extra weight in the review process to applications that include translations.

Commissioner Enomoto suggested that there could be something in the application, a question about how the applicant intends to market the program outside of its direct community. Lorie Hoffman said that would get to the core issue without being too prescriptive.

A motion to endorse the allocation committee's 2023 funding recommendations for one-time project grants was made by Commissioner Gowdy. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Martinez and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS

A. Remote Participation for April 5

Chair Lau Hui and Commissioners Gulati and Bhargava requested to be allowed to participate remotely on April 5.

A motion to approve the requests was made by Commissioner Aldredge. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gulati and the motion carried unanimously.

6. REPORTS

A. Project Updates

Lorie Hoffman said the arts and economic prosperity study is continuing to move forward. To date, 550 of the projected 800 surveys have been collected. The survey collection deadline is May 31 so confidence is high that the goal will be met. There are a couple of big shows coming up at which collection efforts will be in place. At least 25 percent of the 800 completed surveys must be from BIPOC-led organizations.

The City Council received an update regarding the BelRed Arts District on February 13, and the Planning Commission received an update on February 22.

The 121st and Spring artwork has a new location at NE 12th and Spring and will be referred to as such in all future updates.

The Downtown Park art project is currently under construction and is almost a third completed. The completion date will likely be April.

There are 137 applications for the Eastside Arts Roster. Of those, 111 are still in progress.

Manette Stamm said the repair work to *Longboat* has been done and it is once again working on a timer from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. daily.

Commissioner Gowdy noted having read periodically about the development of the airfield park and asked if it will include any public art. Councilmember Stokes said the planning work is in the early stages, but art has been considered. The project is on track.

Commissioner Aldredge asked how a budget for any art in that park would be determined. Lorie Hoffman said it is in the public art budget. Councilmember Stokes added that the levy funds could be used in part for public art in the park. The Commission will be kept updated as the process moves forward.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Written Communications

The attention of the Commissioners was drawn to the two written communications that had been included in the Commission packets.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lau Hui adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.