



City of El Segundo
Arts and Culture Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
for July 28, 2020 5:30 p.m.
Zoom

Land Acknowledgement: We acknowledge that we are holding this meeting on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Tongva. We recognize the Tongva people as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (Los Angeles basin, So. Channel Islands). We also acknowledge that Los Angeles County is home to the largest Indigenous populations in the US.

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairperson Neal Von Flue.

B. ROLL CALL

1. Members present: Jeff Cason, Kristen Dorsey, Maureen Kingsley, Mark Knight, Michael Kreski (arrived at 5:38 p.m.), Brian Mitchell, Samantha Smith-Strassner, Natalie Strong, Vice Chairperson Eva Sweeney, and Chairperson Neal Von Flue
2. City Council Liaisons present: Councilmember Lance Giroux (left at 6:46 p.m.) and Councilmember Scot Nicol (left at 7:56 p.m.)
3. City Staff Liaisons present: Library Director Melissa McCollum and Senior Librarian Julie Todd

C. PRESENTATIONS

1. Advocacy and Art to Increase Equality and Diversity in El Segundo (Students for Change/15 minutes).

El Segundo High School alum Gabrielle Desch-Obi and ESHS student Emilia Thompson of El Segundo Students for Change discussed the group's ongoing efforts working with teachers and administrators to make the curriculum in El Segundo schools more reflective of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in every class.

Their goal is to help make schools safer spaces for students, including supporting social intelligence, mental intelligence, and academic intelligence. Plans include reviewing district guidelines and policies as well as working with administration to make necessary changes. Their vision is for all students to have what they need to get to where they wish to be.

Emilia Thompson shared some of her artwork as well. Gabriella Desch-Obi shared the artwork of ESHS student Suey Diet who was not able to participate in the virtual meeting.

2. Gateway Committee Updates (Jay Hoeschler and Christopher Hentzen/15 minutes)

City of El Segundo Park Maintenance Superintendent Christopher Hentzen provided background of the Gateway Committee, including how it was formed and the makeup of its members. Gateway Committee member Jay Hoeschler (El Segundo resident, former member of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, current member of the Planning Commission, and Design Director for his company Avid Trails) also contributed to the presentation.

After initially researching numerous city gateways and taking into consideration existing structures on the project site, the Gateway Committee pooled all of their research together to define the project and criteria for the Call for Artists.

Over forty submissions were received, and the Gateway Committee selected five finalists to receive a stipend to develop their proposed concepts. Four teams submitted proposals. One team dropped out. Of the four proposals, two teams really stood out. Jay Hoeschler said developing the green space along Imperial is also an opportunity for the City, so the Gateway piece may additionally serve as an entryway to the greenbelt.

MIIM Designs out of Los Angeles and Boston is one of the two remaining design teams. The team members both teach Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture at Harvard and have international public art experience. This team brought a special analysis to the process and project. Their concept plays with the concept of flight that combines the Blue Butterfly, LAX, and Aerospace and other local industry. Their design activates both sides of the intersection and introduces new ways of programming the space through seating, landscaping, and lighting.

John Clark and Looking/LA is the other remaining design team. Inspired by existing art and culture in El Segundo, they utilized large-scale Blue Butterfly conceptual shapes for entry signage.

The Gateway Committee liked elements of both presentations, and asked the teams to work together to merge their concepts. A new proposal is anticipated in September or October 2020.

3. Centennial Utility Box Project Update (Jeff Cason, Neal Von Flue, and Julie Todd/15 minutes)

Chairperson Neal Von Flue introduced the background behind the Centennial Utility Box Project to commemorate the City's Centennial. Recreation and Parks Director Meredith Petit and Jeff Cason were tasked to oversee the project selected by the Centennial Committee when the group dissolved last year. The project was inspired by the Baseball Utility Box installed in front of the Slice & Pint. A Call for

Artists and Call for Proposals were issued for both artist/designer and printer/installer in early 2020 with the help of Senior Librarian Julie Todd and ACC Chair Neal Von Flue.

The project started long before the recent cultural conversations, so the working group has taken time to review the work with new insight. Originally the project included ten El Segundo boxes with historical photographs representing the City of El Segundo's first hundred years. Two additional boxes were added that feature (1) photographs from the 2017 Centennial celebrations and (2) details from the Portals to Memory mural by artist Nanibah Chacon that is housed inside the library and features a Tongva woman, various landscapes present in Tongva territories, and strategically placed cog stones.

ACC member Michael Kreski likes the richness and elements of exploration and discovery each box has. He also recognized that not everything will please everybody and it is also important to be respectful of El Segundo's history. Natalie Strong felt the boxes would make nice landmarks on Main Street.

Kristen Dorsey asked for clarification about the map/locations of each box. Kristen also had text edits and shared Tongva artist Mercedes Dorame's concerns about the box appearing as the first in a series, misleading viewers that the Tongva were people of the past when they are actually a thriving present day community.

Vice Chairperson Eva Sweeney wanted to make sure that artist Nanibah Chacon was aware of the use of her mural and approved the final box design. Julie Todd shared that Nanibah was happy that her mural would be used on the box as it will help promote the interior mural. Julie confirmed that she will share the final design with Nanibah Chacon. Kristen Dorsey asked that it also be shared with Mercedes Dorame.

Maureen Kingsley wanted to know if the committee would have a chance to review the text on each box and Chairperson Neal Von Flue mentioned it is still in development. Julie Todd explained that the text is basic text that just describes the theme of each box, but the storytelling/narrative is in the photographs. Chairperson Neal Von Flue expressed to Maureen that the project is the Centennial Committee's project and that final approval of text was not guaranteed to ACC members. Mark Knight mentioned that he feels the use of different fonts is a bit much and would rather see consistency. Maureen Kingsley appreciated the variety in font choice that reflected the themes of each box. Natalie Strong felt the fonts fit well with the stories being told and therefore liked the choices.

Deputy City Manager Barbara Voss questioned the use of the Centennial logo on all boxes and suggested only using it on the 2017 Centennial box. Barbara also mentioned that she really likes the box series and did not have issues with the variety of font styles used.

D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Di Xu, El Segundo resident, shared her comments and suggestions regarding the Centennial Utility Box project and suggested the project represent more diversity to give people of color a feeling of being welcomed. A few goals Di felt the boxes should achieve: beautify El Segundo, represent diversity, and give underrepresented artists a chance to showcase their work.

Chairperson Neal Von Flue requested that Di send him her slide presentation to share with the ACC group for further review.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES for June 23, 2020

1. Approval of minutes of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Meeting of June 23, 2020.

MOTIONED by Mark Knight and SECONDED by Brian Mitchell to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2020 meeting as presented. Motion CARRIED 10-0.

F. SPECIAL BUSINESS - NONE

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Cultural Development Fund Budget Recommendations for FY 2020-2021 – Follow-up discussion as fund has increased to \$481,000 from \$25,850 (Cultural Development Program Subcommittee/20 minutes)

Attached Supporting Document: Budget Recommendations approved June 23, 2020

Jeff Cason presented the CDF budget recommendations for FY 2020-2021. Listed projects have been given levels of priority and appear on the list in that order. The budget model will allow the CDF to always be at or under budget for individual projects. The budget also covers the first 3 quarters as the upcoming fiscal year is a special 9-month budget. This budget is also representative of a partnership model; the ACC partnering with the City, non-profits, and community creatives to execute projects within a budget cycle.

Jeff said if the ACC approves the draft budget as presented, it will then go to Council for their consideration and approval. The draft budget will be shared with Council at their budget session on August 5. The City's budget will be approved in September with funds available on October 1 – the start of the next fiscal year.

Barbara Voss asked about line item grants for urban place making and street side parklets, and mentioned that with the current situation regarding COVID this line item may be a higher priority.

Jeff Cason explained each of the line items and opened up the meeting for questions. Kristen Dorsey asked for clarification on cultural institutions that would be included in non-profit community grants. Jeff Cason mentioned that cultural

institutions were not identified yet as the intent is for an inclusive grant process for applicants with 501 c3 status. Kristen Dorsey also asked about supporting individual artists who may be out of work due to COVID. Jeff referenced line item four, Grants to Support Artistic Programming in the Community.

Mark Knight addressed the committee's discussion about whether or not the ACC should provide emergency grants and due to time restrictions, they decided it was better to create a structure that would allow for individuals to apply with also having approved projects directly benefit the community. Kristen Dorsey still believes it is important to be able to support individuals in dire need of emergency funding. Melissa McCollum reminded the committee that due to the intent of the program and the way the ordinance is written, the fund does have to be spent for providing public art or artistic and cultural services in El Segundo. Jeff Cason thought that it would be best to consider this an opportunity for artists to bring proposals to the ACC that would generate income for those proposals selected.

Kristen Dorsey thought that there should be more funding allocated towards the Grants to Support Artistic Programming in the Community and proposed adjusting funding from the Gateway Project line item to do so. Melissa McCollum reminded the group that the Gateway Project is a top priority of the Council and City Manager and they do have a greater plan to develop art at the other entries to the city. Melissa also mentioned that Sam Lee, Director of Planning and Building Safety, shared that there is a lot of new development in town which will bring additional opportunities for either onsite public art or funds paid into the Cultural Development Fund.

Brian Mitchell asked if the Gateway Project needed the funding support from the ACC in the upcoming fiscal year, or would it be able to be allocated over two budgets due to the City's special nine-month budget. Melissa replied that the funding would need to be available and ready to go at any given time and the two major public art projects this year are Gateway and Library Park Activation.

Getting back to the parklets, Barbara Voss mentioned the reasoning for the orange barricades was due to efforts to extend dining space as soon as possible for the restaurants. This pilot program runs through Labor Day weekend, but if it the parklets remain beyond Labor Day, there were thoughts of offering grants to the restaurants to have more permanent parklets in place and be able to beautify them.

Finance Director Joe Lillio mentioned that the adopted City budget is for a full fiscal year, so that impacts the suggestion of splitting the ACC Gateway Funding over two fiscal years. He also clarified contracts would need to reflect the total cost.

Line item adjustment discussions took place with Finance Director Joe Lillio agreeing that a midyear budget adjustment is possible with City Council's approval. The City looks at both revenues and expenditures when taking budget adjustments into consideration. Joe said as long as there is revenue to offset the appropriations, adjustments should be fine.

Melissa McCollum added that next year's budget will need to include support for Cultural Development Program administration, including project management for ACC public art and programming projects. Joe Lillio used the Senior Housing Fund as an example of administrative fees that cost just under \$10,000 per year.

MOTIONED by Natalie Strong and SECONDED by Mark Knight to approve the Draft Cultural Development Fund Budget for FY 2020-2021 with an additional \$15,000 allocated for Grants to support Artistic Programming and Projects in the community. Motion CARRIED 10-0.

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. Gateway Committee Assignment, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Outreach Assignment, and Lead for Anti-Racism Through an Intersectional Lens ACC Subcommittee.

Chairperson Neal Von Flue led discussion on the Gateway Committee Assignment. Michael Kreski expressed interest in joining the Gateway Committee as ACC representative. All ACC members voted in favor of Michael Kreski taking the Gateway representative assignment. Passed 10 to 0.

Melissa McCollum explained that the DEI Outreach lead would be similar to the existing CCB leads in monitoring agendas and attending meetings if relevant to look for collaboration opportunities and report back to ACC members as needed. Kristen Dorsey expressed interest in taking the lead as DEI Committee Outreach. Samantha Smith-Strassner volunteered as alternate.

ACC members voted in favor of Kristen Dorsey taking the lead as DEI Committee outreach lead and Samantha Smith-Strassner as alternate. Passed 10 to 0.

I. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

1. Anti-Racism Through an Intersectional Lens – Kristen Dorsey explained the subcommittee is interested in opening up membership to community members not currently on the ACC. Melissa McCollum said the City Attorney's Office confirmed it was technically possible, but recommended that Chairperson Neal Von Flue, Vice Chairperson Eva Sweeney, the subcommittee lead, and Melissa discuss options before the ACC is asked to approve the subcommittee's membership plans.

Current subcommittee members include Kristen Dorsey, Samantha Smith-Strassner, and Jeff Cason. Kristen Dorsey volunteered to take the lead as Anti-Racism Subcommittee. ACC members voted 10 to 0 to assign Kristen the lead. Kristen Dorsey shared that the members met and discussed the possibilities and advantages of bringing outside representation to this subcommittee. They also met with Holly Crawford from ESMoA who led them through an exercise that helped examine white privilege, race, and identity. Next they would like to establish a mission statement and discuss how they could best collaborate with the City's new DEI Committee. They also discussed the need for DEI and anti-racism education.

Mark Knight mentioned that the interviews to appoint DEI Committee members are going to be public and encouraged members of the subcommittee to attend.

2. Cultural Development Program – no new additions to what was discussed earlier
3. Events/Marketing – none
4. Grants – Vice Chairperson Eva Sweeney mentioned that Eva, Natalie, Maureen, and Jeff have been busy working on the NEA Our Town Grant.
5. Projects – none

J. GOVERNANCE

Melissa McCollum mentioned that the ACC vacancies will most likely not be filled until at least September due to the City Council's emphasis on interviewing and making appointments to the DEI Committee. July 31st is the deadline for submitting applications for the DEI Committee.

Deputy City Manager Barbara Voss added that the City is looking to hire a DEI consultant to be involved in the interview process for forming the DEI Committee as well as help facilitate meetings. Barbara Voss will provide a description of what they are looking for in a consultant in case any ACC members have recommendations.

K. ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Chairperson Neal Von Flue – none

Vice Chairperson Eva Sweeney – wished everyone well

Jeff Cason – none

Kristen Dorsey – none

Maureen Kingsley – none

Mark Knight – none

Michael Kreski – none

Brian Mitchell – none

Samantha Smith-Strassner – none

Natalie Strong – Mentioned the Book to Action program taking place at the Library through Zoom on Friday, July 31st, 5:30PM, based on the book What We Keep. The program will feature a grown-up show and tell and ACC members Natalie Strong and Chairperson Neal Von Flue will be participating.

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS

Councilmember Lance Giroux – not present at this time (left at 6:46PM)

Councilmember Scot Nicol – not present at this time (left at 7:56PM)

L. CITY LIAISON UPDATES - NONE

M. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:14PM.

NEXT MEETING: on Tuesday, August 25, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., held virtually on Zoom.

Posted by: Julie Todd

Date & Time: 8/20/20, 6PM