



## **City of El Segundo Arts and Culture Advisory Committee**

Meeting Minutes  
for February 22, 2022 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 U.S.

### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. by Chairperson Natalie Strong.

### **B. ROLL CALL**

1. Members present: Joanne Bowe, Jane Burrell, Maureen Kingsley (arrived 5:59), Mark Knight (arrived 5:53), Michael Kreski, Joan Palmer, Chairperson Natalie Strong, Eva Sweeney (arrived 5:36), and Vice Chairperson Neal Von Flue.
2. City Council Liaisons:  
  
Councilmember Lance Giroux – not present  
Councilmember Scot Nicol – not present
3. City Staff Liaisons present: Senior Librarian Julie Todd, Cultural Arts Coordinator Sam Lee, and Senior Administrative Specialist Valeria Rendon.

### **C. PRESENTATIONS – NONE**

### **D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – NONE**

### **E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES for January 25, 2022**

1. Approval of minutes of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Meeting of January 25, 2022.

Neal Von Flue pointed out a discrepancy in the minutes. He mentioned that Natalie served as Vice Chairperson for one year, not two, as noted in the minutes, and to make sure that we respect and acknowledge Eva Sweeney's commitment during that year as Vice Chairperson.

A verbal vote was taken by Julie Todd.

MOTIONED by Neal Von Flue and SECONDED by Jane Burrell to approve the minutes pending the changes to F1 of January 25, 2022. Motion CARRIED 6-0.

## **F. SPECIAL BUSINESS – NONE**

## **G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. City Council liaisons give feedback on ACC's Big Idea List and future ACC initiatives.  
(Natalie Strong/45 minutes)

Natalie Strong reported that there are some project initiatives from the Big Idea List that the ACC would like to recommend to the City Council for funding through the Cultural Development Program for the fiscal year 2022/2023.

One ACC initiative includes the funding and artist selection process for artwork as part of the Plunge's upcoming renovations. Another initiative addresses the ACC's interest in expanding the *Art+Dine* program and hoping to activate the City Hall Plaza with family-friendly cultural experiences as part of *Art+Dine*. The ACC will also plan to support the El Segundo Art Walk 2022. Neal added that John McCullough has provided a breakdown of costs, which Neal had shared with the ACC earlier today. ESAW is seeking \$20,000 to work with Indiewalls on a mural and temporary installation; roughly \$38,000 was the project total costs of the 2022 Art Walk, a one-day event instead of three days. Another initiative on the list is the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Festival of Holidays.

The ACC hopes to receive Councilmember Lance Giroux's feedback regarding the TEDx initiative; the focus now has shifted to a city-branded event of a similar nature. Natalie asked Julie Todd or Eva Sweeney if they would like to explain the reasons for the shift to the ACC. Julie commented that they are administrative challenges. For example, the creation and operation of a non-profit are required by TED to implement a TEDx initiative. In addition to managing a 501c3 entity, the City staff would be required to oversee a TEDxEISegundo-devoted website separate from the City's website to facilitate a TEDx Talk event. Julie and Sam would have neither the time nor the resources to oversee these components in addition to their current responsibilities. Julie further explained that, at this time, doing a city-branded event similar in concept to TED would be the direction the City staff would like to explore instead. Sam Lee added that doing a city-branded event would provide a clearer picture of what it would take to implement a TEDx Talk without the commitment and ironing out the TED logistics and requirements up front. Neal also pointed out that we would need guidance from Councilmember Giroux on whether we can use the funding that was originally allocated from the City Council approved TEDx initiative from June 2021 and apply that funding towards the city-branded event in the near future. Neal shared that he and Natalie will ask Councilmembers Lance Giroux and Scot Nicol for a separate meeting later in the week for clarification.

Regarding the Poet Laureate initiative, another item for clarification is the program budget to fund public literary events and workshops. Neal clarified that the Poet Laureate position has a two-year term; the ACC had asked for a one-year allocation of \$8,000. Hope has been given a \$4,000 stipend for 2022/2023 and will be given another \$4,000 stipend for 2023/2024. There is an opportunity to put the remaining \$4,000 towards programming for this year and then ask for additional \$8,000 for next year. Neal would like to continue to ask for \$8,000 each year so that it would be favorable for a poet to be involved with the City. Sam asked if the request for additional funding should be for the next three years since the City is moving into a two-year budget cycle. Neal mentioned that he and Natalie would need to get clarification from Julie and Sam on what that would be so they can modify the funding request. Natalie confirmed that she has added this question to her list for Councilmember Giroux to clarify, in addition to the current Gateway project allocation and where it currently stands.

The ACC would also like to develop an artist-in-residency program as another ACC funded initiative. Natalie mentioned that Julie is also interested in creating a music series in conjunction with the Thursday's Farmers Market. Natalie also added that she and Neal will need clarification from Councilmember Giroux on the process of repurposing the surplus funds that were not used for the approved 2021 initiatives such as the Festival of Holidays and the Outdoor Dining Enhancements. Natalie asked the ACC for feedback and if anyone had any questions. Michael Kreski asked if it would be a good idea to edit the Big Idea List? Natalie mentioned that some of the items on the Big Idea List are no longer relevant or viable; the ideas that she shared with the ACC, which will be recommended to City Council, are more practical and will build upon the successes of what the ACC has done.

Jane Burrell asked if Natalie or Neal had information about the artwork for the Plunge. Natalie answered no. Neal mentioned that the current plan is to eliminate the 3-door entrance into a 2-door entrance, leaving the space between the doors for artwork, possibly a large mosaic, which will be funded by the Cultural Development Program Fund. Eva Sweeney asked if the ideas shared in today's meeting would exhaust the Fund or would there be funds available. She loved the idea of creating a mural annually that would slowly beautify the City. As it currently stands, the ACC is not sure what the budget would be because it is trying to determine how the surplus money would be allocated. Julie Todd believes that the funds not spent on approved initiatives during this fiscal year would return to the fund as unallocated. Neal added he understands that there is around \$122,000 of unallocated funds. Sam believed that there is probably \$135,000 of unallocated funds. Eva would like to create an artist-in-residency program and add that to the Big Idea List. Neal suggested creating small working groups to research and develop these ideas in anticipation of the April presentation at the City Council meeting.

Sam would also like to see an Operations Fund be created for cultural and artistic initiatives that are temporary and smaller in scope and would not require the approval of the City Council, but be overseen by the Community Services Director and City Manager. The Operations Fund could be used to implement ideas on the existing Big Idea List. Sam mentioned that he would like to plan a temporary public

art exhibition in 2023 and a music performance series during the non-Summer months and not impact the summer concerts that the Parks and Rec. Division usually implements. The Operations Budget would be used for temporary, smaller scale initiatives. Neal suggested that the ACC create an initiative to have an Operations Fund account. Julie agreed. Mark Knight added that there is a lack of mobility and flexibility in the current process, especially with low dollar initiatives that may develop throughout the year. The existing process is great for large scale, longer term, higher value initiatives. Julie suggested that the working group should be 2-3 ACC members. Eva Sweeney, Jane Burrell, and Joan Palmer are interested in the Artist-in-Residency program. Neal Von Flue, Maureen Kingsley, and Joanna Bowe are interested in developing the Operations Budget. Neal Von Flue and Natalie Strong are interested in developing the cultural enhancement City Hall Plaza. TEDx already has an existing working group, consisting of Eva Sweeney, Jane Burrell and Brian Mitchell.

## H. NEW BUSINESS

1. Vote to approve resolution for the ACC to continue meeting via Zoom Teleconferencing (Julie Todd/10 minutes)

Recommendation: Approval

A verbal vote was taken by Julie Todd.

Motion DENIED 4-3.

## I. GOVERNANCE

Sam reported to the ACC that on Tuesday, March 1, he will introduce Hope Anita Smith, as the City's inaugural Poet Laureate to Mayor Boyles and the Councilmembers. Hope plans to give a signed copy of her *Keeping the Night Watch* book of poetry and to read two of her poems to the Mayor and Councilmembers at the meeting.

Julie mentioned that the El Segundo Public Library will host a welcoming reception, which is open to everyone, for Hope on Wednesday, April 6, from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the Library's Reading Lounge. The event will include poetry reading and book signing by Hope. Julie encouraged the ACC members to attend this reception and support the initiative. Sam added that he also reached out the El Segundo High School Strings Director Rosalind Darbeau to provide music throughout the reception; he is awaiting her response.

Julie added that Hope would like to compose a poem, an Ode to El Segundo. We are encouraging everyone to email Sam or Julie with three favorite things about El Segundo. The Library also has a response sheet that one could fill out for inclusion in the poem.

In relation her *My Daddy Rules the World* poetry book, Hope is also doing a Daddy-and-Me poetry event in collaboration with the El Segundo Fire Department at Fire Station 1 on Sunday, June 12 (tentative, 10:00am). She will read from her book and lead participants in an age-appropriate poetry project. Captain Engler will also read a story. Doughnuts, milk, and coffee will be served.

## **J. ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

Joanna Bowe – had no comments.

Jane Burrell – no comments but she looks forward to the *Small Treasures* exhibition reception on Wednesday, February 23, from 5:00pm to 6:00pm.

Maureen Kingsley – mentioned that the El Segundo Concert Band has been on hiatus for a couple of years. They are under the umbrella of the South Bay Music Association. The band will return to the stage in person for a first time mid-March, playing a free concert with a focus on Earth Day and Spring on Saturday, March 19, at 7:00pm in the El Segundo High School Auditorium.

Mark Knight – mentioned that there is an exciting film festival called the Banff Mountain Film Festival, which will be screening at the Fox Event Centre in Redlands, California, on Friday and Saturday, February 25 and 26. Ticket sales support our local mountains. He had the absolute pleasure of spending time with Hope Anita Smith. We are incredibly lucky to have her, as Hope is a ray of sunshine.

Michael Kreski – looked forward to meeting everyone in person at the next ACC meeting.

Joan Palmer – hopes to see everyone also at the next ACC meeting.

Natalie Strong – shared that she will be creating a butterfly mural at Richmond Street school. She looks forward to getting some guidance from Councilmembers Lance Giroux and Scot Nicol regarding her questions mentioned this evening.

Eva Sweeney – invited everyone to the Living Library on Saturday, March 12, at ESMoA, which Julie Todd and Barbara Boehm organized. She mentioned that she saw on Instagram that Melissa McCollum has a new job working for the City of Manhattan Beach. Eva was wondering if we could do something for Melissa before her last day, which is March 1.

Neal Von Flue – had no additional comments.

## **CITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS – NONE**

Councilmember Lance Giroux – not present  
Councilmember Scot Nicol – not present

## K. CITY LIAISON UPDATES

Julie Todd thanked Eva for mentioning the Living Library and Mark for taking the amazing portraits for the promotional materials of the event. The Living Library will have a few components this year. On Wednesday, March 9, at 6:30pm, Peter Samuelson, founder and inventor of EDAR (Everyone Deserves a Roof), will talk in the Library's Reading Lounge about the history of EDAR, which is a small mobile shelter on wheels for the homeless. At ESMoA, Hope Anita Smith will lead a poetry workshop Friday, March 11, from 10:00am to 11:00am. On Saturday, March 12, from 10:00am to 11:00am, Dr. Valery Lanyi, a Holocaust survivor, will share her story as part of the Living Library at the City Hall Plaza. Julie encouraged everyone to email questions to her in advance for Dr. Lanyi. Julie added that Mark Knight and Tanya Taylor are also participating as living books for the Living Library event on March 12, 2:00pm to 5:00pm. The free Music Center music concert by Dr. Bobby Rodriguez and his Jazz band is happening on Thursday, March 3, from 4:00pm to 5:00pm. A tambourine making workshop will take place also in conjunction with this concert.

Sam shared that there is an opening reception for the *Small Treasures* exhibition on Wednesday, March 23, from 5:00pm to 6:00pm. *Small Treasures* is the first annual juried exhibition of 4"x4" canvases. The Library received 56 original entries created by community members. Sam thanked Jane Burrell and Barbara Boehm (ESMoA) for serving as jurors. At the end of the exhibition, every participant will receive someone else's art that was determined by raffle. The exhibition runs six-weeks, from February 14 to March 26, 2022. For the month of April, Sam shared that the City staff is organizing a Friday night poetry activation on the 200 block of Richmond Street, and at Tapizôn. Two poets will create poetry with typewriters on the spot from 7:00pm to 9:00pm the first three Fridays of April. Sam thanked Neal for being so clear and eloquent in the synthesis of the issues and discussions and Natalie (Neal included) for her commitment to meeting with Sam and Julie for governance.

## L. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 6:53 PM.

NEXT MEETING: on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 5:30 pm, will be hybrid; in-person in the library's Community Room and via Zoom.

Posted by: Sam Lee

Date & Time: