

Ad Hoc Arts Council Steering Committee for Contra Costa County



Record of Action

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

1:00 PM-3:00PM (PST)

County Administration Building
1025 Escobar Street, Martinez CA, Room 110A

Or

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

<https://ccccounty-us.zoom.us/j/89087979270>

Or Telephone:

1-888-278-0254 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 219464

Commissioners Present:

District 1: Najari Smith

District 2: Janet Berckefeldt

District 3: Germaine McCoy

District 4: Arlene Kikkawa-Nielsen

District 5: Ben Miyaji

Non-Profit Foundation: Nilofar Gardezi

Non-Profit Foundation: Margot Melcon

Staff and Consultants Present:

Senior Deputy County Administrator, County Administrator's Office: Lara DeLaney

Richard Stein: President & CEO, Arts Orange County

Roger Renn, *Local Arts Specialist*

Tracy Hudak, Facilitator on the ArtsOC team

Other Attendees:

Jenny Balisle

Leo Ding

Lawrence Kohl

Sage Loring

1. Welcome/Call to Order/Roll Call

Staff to the committee welcomed all, took roll call, and noted that committee member Najari Smith would be arriving late.

2. Introductory Remarks and Review of Committee Operating Rules (Lara DeLaney)

Staff to the committee briefly discussed project background and discussed the Brown Act, Better Government Ordinance, and Ethics training requirements.

3. Self-Introductions by Steering Committee Members

Committee members and public in attendance provided self-introductions and discussed their interest in supporting the arts and culture in their community.

4. Presentation of Project Components and Timeline by Project Consultant (Rick Stein)

Project consultant, Rick Stein, introduced himself and his team members. He provided a PowerPoint presentation of the project goals, to establish an arts council for Contra Costa and develop a Strategic Plan for arts and culture. He briefly discussed the purpose of arts councils and their functions. The elements of the project, including steering committee input, community visioning sessions, stakeholder interviews, and inventories of arts organizations and public arts, were presented to the committee. Committee members provided input on the value of arts councils to improve the visibility and funding of arts and culture in the community. Questions were asked about how to increase exposure/funding. Input was requested on the inventories.

5. Steering Committee Meeting Schedule Discussion

Committee members and staff discussed potential meeting dates. The consensus of the committee was to maintain a committee meeting schedule of the second Wednesday of the month from 1:00 to 3:00. Committee member Berckefeldt noted a conflict she would have for the February meeting only. Staff noted they would reserve the room and send out calendar invitations via email.

6. Commissioner Announcements

Committee member Gardezi announced the Newsmaker Speaker Series at the Leshner Center. Staff announced the "Art of the African Diaspora" on display in the County Administration Building through March.

7. Visioning Session

Tracy Hudak conducted a Visioning Session with the Committee members and public in attendance. Inquiries included what they would like to see happen in five years; the assets in the community, the challenges to overcome, the strengths and opportunities. Committee members expressed an interest in seeing a "Sausalito Arts Festival" equivalent in each area of the county, theater, live music, and public art, murals, arts in public infrastructure, arts buildings/spaces/campus for communal art, shared organization space and back-office support, re-opening closed facilities, parades, celebrations of landmarks, intergenerational involvement, experiential art/culture, a greater connection between arts and the local economies, art walks, a strong network of arts organizations. Assets included our diverse residents and artists, parks and gathering spaces. Challenges included geography, transit/traffic, lack of media coverage, insufficient arts in schools, inequality of resources/fundraising. (Consultant to provide detailed recap in March 2023)

8. Public Comment

Individuals who would like to address the Arts Council Steering Committee on relevant matters not listed on the agenda may do so under Public Comment. Public comments cannot result in discussion/action at this meeting.

Leo Ding provided public comments (see attached) encouraging youth involvement and representation. Jenny Balisle acknowledged the passing of an artist.

9. Adjourn

From: [Leo Ding](#)
To: [Lara DeLaney](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Item 8
Date: Monday, January 16, 2023 1:52:56 PM

Public Comment for Arts Council Steering Committee Meeting #1-- Wednesday, Jan 18th. Comment pasted below:

Hello everyone, my name is Leo Ding. I'm a Junior at Miramonte High School in Orinda, and I'm here today because of my passion in the arts and that I wish to provide my own input to the Committee.

First of all, I'd like to thank those who were involved in selecting this wonderful Committee, a committee so important for the arts in Contra Costa County.

Although I was an applicant myself, and ended up not being selected, I'm happy that I was given thorough consideration. However, I still hope to be involved in any capacity with this committee, with my belief that youth representation and input is crucial in ensuring true equity and inclusion in the arts community.

In my opinion, this starts from the schools, ensuring that all students, regardless of background or ability, are encouraged to be involved in the arts. According to the National Endowment for the Arts through a study done in the US on students of low socioeconomic status, 71 percent of students with arts-rich experiences attended some sort of college after high school, and only 48 percent of students with little to no arts experience attended any sort of college. And it is because of the impact the arts can have and the wide disparity in arts funding across schools, this Steering Committee needs to consider strategies in and outside of schools to encourage more youth arts participation in the community. For that to be executed in the best interests of the youth, I think there should be significant input from someone representing that population on this Committee, or at least working closely with it.

I hope this Committee finds ways to involve passionate youth like myself and others in helping all youth in this County. Thank you.