

Members

Traci Kelly, *Chair*
J.D. Elquist, *Vice Chair*
David Boe, *City Council Liaison*
Marty Campbell, *City Council Liaison Alternate*
Jan Brazzell
Rachel Cardwell
Robin Echte
Matt Hudgins
Donald Lacky
Dane Meyer
Scott Ramsey
Catherine Stegeman
Mike Sweney
Wanda Thompson
Jana Wennstrom

Minutes

Tacoma Arts Commission

Community & Economic Development

Staff

Amy McBride, *Tacoma Arts Administrator*
Naomi Strom-Avila, *Cultural Arts Specialist*

Date: March 15, 2014

Location: Franke Tobey Jones, 5340 N. Bristol, MJ Wicks Family Wellness Center

Time: 10:00 am - 2:30 pm

Commission Members in Attendance:

Traci Kelly, Chair
J.D. Elquist, Vice Chair
Jan Brazzell
Matt Hudgins
Don Lacky
Dane Meyer
Scott Ramsey
Catherine Stegeman
Mike Sweney
Wanda Thompson

Commission Members Excused Absence:

Rachel Cardwell
Jana Wennstrom

Commission Members Unexcused Absence:

Robin Echte

Staff Present:

Amy McBride, Tacoma Arts Administrator
Naomi Strom-Avila, Cultural Arts Specialist

1. Call to Order

10:20 am

Chair Kelly

2. Excuse Member Absences

10:20 am

Vice Chair Elquist

Commissioners Cardwell and Wennstrom had an excused absence.

3. Approval of Agenda

10:20 am

Vice Chair Elquist

Motion: Mike Sweney
Second: Dane Meyer
Motion: Carried

4. Welcome & Introduction

10:21 am

Chair Kelly

Chair Kelly welcomed Commissioners to the retreat.

5. Warm-Up Exercise

10:22 am

Commissioners participated in two exercises focused on helping them get to know each other and work together.



6. Arts Commission Purpose/What We Do 11:07 am

Commissioners reviewed the Powers and Duties of the Commission from the Tacoma Municipal Code 1.28A.070. Commissioners asked clarifying questions related to their duties.

Commissioners reviewed the Tacoma Arts Commission - Declaration of Purpose from the Tacoma Municipal Code 1.28A.030. Commissioners worked together to identify the following ways the Commission is currently working to fulfill its purpose:

- A. Promote the arts as vital tools in building Tacoma's community and economy for the benefit of all its citizens.
 - Arts & Economic Prosperity IV study
 - Tacoma Arts Month, including the Tacoma Studio Tour
 - Arts Anchor Fund
 - Spaceworks Tacoma
- B. Promote and support a diversity of arts and cultural opportunities for our citizens to experience.
 - Arts Anchor Fund organizations
 - Arts Projects programming
 - TAIP artist projects
 - AMOCAT Arts Awards
 - Tacoma Murals Project
 - Current work to establish a graffiti free wall
- C. Act as a catalyst to bring government, arts and culture, and private sectors together for public benefit.
 - Arts WA
 - Cultural Access WA
 - Council Coffee meetings
 - National Arts Program
 - Spaceworks Tacoma through Chamber of Commerce
 - TV Tacoma
 - Artist live/work space with Artspace
 - Sound Transit
 - Metro Parks Tacoma
 - WSDOT
 - Neighborhood Councils
- D. Encourage strategic investments in arts organizations that increase public connection with the arts.
 - Tacoma Murals Project
 - Arts EnviroChallenger
 - PC ACE arts marketing initiative
 - PA:ID training program
 - Tacoma Studio Tour
 - Prairie Line Trail
 - Pacific Avenue Streetscape
 - Old Town Dock
- E. Create a unique identity and sense of place through the development and stewardship of public art.
 - 1% for art program
 - Partnership with Sound Transit



- Tacoma Murals Project
 - Community input, including panel processes
 - PA:ID training program
 - Assessing what Tacoma has that is unique and what we can do with it (e.g. Warhol on Tacoma Dome)
- F. Fund programs that encourage artistic excellence and expand exposure to a wide variety of art forms.
- Workshops & technical assistance (e.g. PA:ID)
 - Arts EnviroChallenger
 - Arts Anchor Fund
 - Arts Projects
 - TAIP
 - Poet Laureate
- G. Foster the development of the local arts community, encouraging an environment for the success of working individual artists.
- Spaceworks Tacoma
 - PA:ID training program
 - Tacoma Murals Project
 - Metal-Urge
 - Symposium (past program)
 - Tacoma Arts Month
- H. Promote programs for cultural exchange and development.
- Sister Cities (e.g. Sister Cities International Film Festival)
 - Local artist gifts for Sister Cities exchanges
 - Asia Pacific Cultural Center New Year Celebration
 - Funding Arts Anchor Fund organizations that promote cultural exchange and development

7. Spreading the Word

12:15 pm

Commissioners briefly viewed the TacomaArts blog and discussed the concept of Commissioners contributing to the blog through personalized posts about their own experiences attending arts events that were funded by the Commission. Commissioners received a worksheet with brief tips for writing engaging blog posts.

Commissioners split into three groups to review the standard feedback forms that are used when attending and evaluating funded programs. Groups made suggested edits for how the format of the feedback forms could be modified to better accommodate writing a blog post. Staff collected suggested edits and will modify forms and bring them back to the Commission for review.

Commissioner Meyer took a headshot of each Commission member and staff.

8. Lunch

12:40 pm

9. What's the Point? Why Do We Do What We Do? **1:10 pm**

Commissioners reviewed the Arts and Culture Element of the Comprehensive Plan and noted the top points that resonated with them. The list included:



- Public art has an ability to transform eyesores to amenities
- Arts and education includes cultural education available to all ages
- Working artists in schools
- Arts education is vital for the development of well-rounded people
- Developing cultural districts
- Arts contribute to a dynamic place for the engagement of all ages
- Fostering professional practices to help artists be more successful
- Neighborhoods can be a focal point for cultural renaissance
- Cultural diversity is celebrated through the arts
- Grassroots organizations and artists give Tacoma a unique identity
- Development of a signature/special event that makes Tacoma unique to any other place
- Arts in education
- Arts components to community-building events
- A mix of old-growth and grassroots organizations
- Ethnic and cultural diversity is celebrated
- Caring for the City's legacy of public art
- Encouraging public art in private development
- Enabling talent to flourish
- Ensuring access to the arts and artists
- Facilitating connections between artists, organizations, education, and the cultural community
- Leveraging funding through cultural tourism
- The term "graceful" was used to describe Tacoma; Tacoma doesn't need to be "graceful"
- Developing interest in arts amid a complex and changing world
- Development of international programs
- Marketing Tacoma's distinctive character as a whole package
- Maintaining a variety of public venues to accommodate the many needs of the community
- Recruiting artists to Tacoma
- Providing resources for artists - live/work space, cultural incubator

Commissioners brainstormed what an ideal Tacoma would look like in 5 years. The list included:

- The Brewery District is an entertainment hub
- The Prairie Line Trail is complete with public art
- There is a downtown grocery store
- UWT on-campus housing brings more life and business to downtown
- The Warhol flower is on the Tacoma Dome
- There are artist live/work spaces
- Tacoma has a more vibrant, culturally diverse, and active community
- Tacoma is more welcoming to artists
- There are many annual community events
- There is are more film and entertainment centers
- There is a tourism or study-abroad programs for adults
- There is a comprehensive directory of arts and events
- Tacoma has a stronger connection to the education community
- There is a stronger connection to Public Works for city work
- Downtown attracts people to visit



- There are more galleries and shops that would be interesting to tourists
- The city is able to support downtown theaters plus neighborhood theaters
- Tacoma has an active and vibrant artist community including live/work space
- Tacoma is the center of the Cascadia Corridor
- Tacoma is no longer seen as a step-sibling of Seattle
- There is active integration of arts programming in schools
- There is an active commercial art scene
- There are more art gardens around City
- People are filling the parks
- There are bike lanes and safer streets for non-motorized transportation
- There is no tagging and tasteless roll-overs
- Tacoma's streets are clean and the buildings are well-maintained
- Artists are on the streets creating and performing
- Buildings are filled with active businesses
- There is affordable live/work space for artists
- Families are happy, busy, healthy, and engaged
- Tacoma capitalizes on its unique aspects and beautifies them
- The Prairie Line Trail is nationally renowned for public art with connection to the Water Ditch Trail and the Esplanade
- The Link has been expanded south and to MLK
- There is an arts center on eastside
- State tourism groups funnel visitors to Tacoma
- McMenamins is open
- There is a take-an-artist-to-school day
- The City has another full time arts position
- Tollefson plaza is active and beautiful
- There is downtown density and people on the streets
- Downtown is diverse/dynamic with big and small retail
- Neighborhood districts have a sense of community and belonging
- People come to Tacoma for culture
- Unique neighborhoods create a unique/whole city identity
- There are non-bus cross-city transit options
- There are reasons to go across town for something you can't get in your own neighborhood
- Tacoma is the regional heartbeat of Pierce County
- City government is diverse/well-represented
- Tacoma is accepting and welcoming of opportunities for real growth
- City stereotypes are reversed
- Tacoma has developed a culturally-relevant online identity that attracts outsiders
- There are more locally-produced events at downtown venues
- There is a resident artist programs at all public schools
- There is more neighborhood representation on the Arts Commission
- There are more murals and color throughout Tacoma
- There are more parades, festivals, and cultural gatherings
- There are more public spaces with easy access for public gatherings
- The downtown district has more people out on the streets at all times



- There is an interactive art center for all ages
- Tacoma's citizens are more involved
- There is more meaningful and engaging public art throughout the city
- Public art is clean and functioning
- There is a long-term vision for the Tacoma Dome including the Warhol and a flexible interior for different performing arts events
- There is long-term planning for artist live/work spaces and tax breaks for creative enterprises
- The City increases funding for the Arts Program, in particular for Arts Anchor Fund and Arts Projects to allow for more meaningful size grants
- Storefronts have engaging visual interest
- Public transportation is an attractive option
- Tacoma is known for its remarkable natural beauty
- City finds creative solutions to civic challenges
- There are more water features to clean run-off water
- Tacoma has a thriving economy

Commissioners brainstormed what Tacoma may look like in 5 years, if the Commission continues on its current trajectory of programming. The list included:

- There is an increased emphasis on and funding of TAIP program to encourage more working artists in Tacoma and encourage them to become professionals in what they do
- There is an expanded consumption of arts and education of the community to buy art
- Artists are helped to develop brand identity as a business would
- Arts Anchor organizations are thriving thanks to additional funding from City
- Public art is cleaned, well-maintained, and in working order
- Tacoma has a growing reputation for Spaceworks
- There is a growing collection of murals throughout City
- The Warhol is on the Tacoma Dome
- The Prairie Line Trail is complete
- There are unique arts and cultural festivals and attractions
- There is continued public art training for artists
- Small organizations have help with marketing themselves
- Pacific Avenue artwork looks even better
- There is a raised awareness of the public art collection
- Unique artistic characteristics of Tacoma's neighborhoods are identified
- Arts are marketed to a broader audience
- Spaceworks is expanded to all neighborhoods
- Tacoma is known for public art thanks to PA:ID
- Tacoma is known for Tacoma Arts Month
- More arts patrons have been developed
- More murals of all types are seen around the city
- There is more cultural diversity represented in the arts
- People visit the eastside and south end for the art there
- WSDOT includes art in its bridges
- There is further education of how to make a living as an artist
- There is education of how to be a patron of the arts



- Arts Commission is separated from CEDD as their own department/agency within the City
- Public art is a signature/recognized part of Tacoma
- There is more active cross-pollination between arts orgs
- CEDD works with arts program to seek and find art solutions in areas of blight and poverty
- There are more transportation options
- There are more outdoor city-wide arts festivals and galleries
- Tacoma continues to develop into a city people want to come visit for the arts
- There is a directory of arts for outreach regionally and nationally
- The Commission is more involved in decisions related to public works
- Local artists and younger artists are fostered in the educational system
- City Hall has an art gallery
- There are more Arts Program staff
- The Commission has a stronger connection to City Council
- There is artist live/work space
- There is more population density in downtown
- There are creative reasons for visiting and shopping downtown

Commissioners began work on outlining the first strategic initiative and goal for the Commission.

Strategic Initiative 1: Broaden community engagement in the arts

Goal 1: Increase number of youth, young adults, senior citizens, military, culturally diverse, and families attending arts programs

The Commission will continue work on outlining 3 – 5 strategic initiatives and corresponding goals and measures of success at upcoming Commission meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 2:58 pm

