



## Happy New Year Staff Report

Tacoma Arts Commission  
Community & Economic Development Department

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To: Tacoma Arts Commission

From: Amy McBride, Tacoma Arts Administrator

January 3, 2011

Happy New Year!! I look forward to all the great things we will accomplish this year! I want to thank Robin Echtle for her two years of service as our Chair and welcome Sarah Idstrom into her new role from Vice-Chair to Chair and Traci Kelly as Vice-Chair. There are a few things on the agenda I would like to review before our meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Artist-in-Residence/Enviro-Challenger program**

Toward the end of last year, we met with a team from the Environmental Services Solid Waste Division and Environmental Services Director Mike Slevin to talk about the 1% for art program and consider some of their ideas for how they might want to direct the funds. They didn't feel that putting the funds into creating a large scale public artwork for the landfill was the best use of funds. They had expressed interest in seeing if we could develop an artist-in-residence type program to coincide with their successful Enviro-Challenger program. The EnviroChallenger program was established about 10 years ago and teaches FREE environmental lessons with a mix of science, social responsibility and fun in Tacoma's second through eighth grade classrooms. All the lessons include supplies and support state standardized test objectives.

Because the funding source for their capital projects is bond money, this type of program would typically be precluded, but they are so excited about this, they would like to trade the equivalent of bond dollars for operational funds thereby freeing up the restriction and still making their appropriate contribution. Obviously, a lot needs to happen to develop an effective program that will insure that the arts and artists provide meaningful and authentic arts experiences that support the Environmental Services mission. I will be working closely with the Environmental Services leadership to develop the program and this development will of course come back to you for review as it evolves. However, at this point, it is your role to consider this option and approve this direction. We will discuss this in more detail at the meeting, but I wanted to introduce the topic ahead of time.

### **2011 Retreat and Focus topics**

Please be sure to bring your calendars and sense of availability so we can figure out a date to have our retreat. We usually have it on a weekend day, sometime in March. Start thinking of topics you would like to have covered. There are a few things that are extra important this year and will demand time and attention. Because this is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Art at Work month, we really want to be thinking about things early and work hard at generating enthusiasm. In addition, we kick off the Arts & Economic

Prosperity Survey again and we will introduce in more detail what this will entail in the coming months.

### **Poet Laureate Program**

We have met with the Urban Grace staff and current Poet Laureate Tammy Robacker to develop the Call to Artists for the Poet Laureate program. You may have seen the press release that went out announcing the changes. I think people are supportive and excited about the transition.

### **State of the Arts Discussion**

There are a lot of changes and transitions for our fellow arts organizations including the Washington State Arts Commission, Pierce County Arts Commission, the Olympia Arts Commission and Arts Fund. We will bring updates on what the status is for these organizations to be sure everyone is informed. It is good to be aware of the climate and share concerns and insights. We are including an article in your packet that gives great kudos to Tacoma and our arts scene, so let's continue to lead and see how we can be supportive of the overall arts eco-system.

### **Other Business: Prairie Line Trail Public Art Plan**

We were funded by the NEA to create a public art plan for the Prairie Line Trail. It is a fast track project as the funding has to be spent by July 2011. I will have the call ready for our meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Arts Commission appointments**

We will have a lot of Arts Commission terms expiring this year and are putting a call out for new Arts Commissioners. Please think of people who may be a good fit for the Arts Commission and represent the diversity of our constituents. Jackie Peterson's term officially expired in January. After serving two terms she will be stepping down and I thank her for her service and dedication to the commission. Per our ordinance, she will maintain her attendance until a new commissioner is appointed. **Thank you Jackie.** We will share with you the roster that shows the terms so everyone is aware of term expiration. Arts Commissioners who would like to stay on the commission must re-apply and are not guaranteed a renewed term, so if you do want to re-up, be sure to apply when your term expires so you will be under consideration.

Please remember to contact us if you are going to be absent on Monday. Many thanks.