

Members

Robin Echte, *Chair*
Traci Kelly, *Vice Chair*
Lauren Walker, *City Council Liaison*
Marty Campbell, *City Council Liaison Alternate*
Jan Brazzell
Rachel Cardwell
Antonio Edwards, Jr.
Sarah Idstrom
Donald Lacky
Bill La Vergne
Dane Meyer
Zach Powers
Dawn Quinn
Scott Ramsey
Catherine Stegeman
Mike Sweney
Jana Wennstrom

Minutes

Tacoma Arts Commission Community & Economic Development

Staff

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

Date: March 3, 2012

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

Time: 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Commission Members in Attendance:

Robin Echte, Chair
Jan Brazzell
Sarah Idstrom
Don Lacky
Dane Meyer
Zach Powers
Dawn Quinn
Catherine Stegeman
Mike Sweney
Jana Wennstrom

Commission Members Excused Absence:

Traci Kelly, Vice Chair
Rachel Cardwell
Antonio Edwards, Jr.
Scott Ramsey

Commission Members Unexcused Absence:

Bill La Vergne

Staff Present:

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

1. Call to Order **10:18 am** **Chair Echte**

2. Excusal of Absences **10:18 am** **Chair Echte**

Commissioners Cardwell, Edwards, Ramsey, and Kelly had an excused absence.

3. Approval of Agenda **10:18 am** **Chair Echte**

Motion: Dane Meyer
Second: Jana Wennstrom
Motion: Carried



4. Introduction**10:19 am**

Chair Echtle presented an overview of the retreat schedule and planned activities.

5. Get to Know Me**10:21 am**

Commissioners shared why they choose to serve on the Commission and then participated in an exercise focused on helping them get to know each other and work in teams.

6. Arts Commission Primer/Refresh**11:10 am**

Ms. McBride gave an overview of the Tacoma Arts Commission Ordinance, TMC 1.28A and 1.28B, focusing on the Purpose and the Powers and Duties of the Commission. She presented a PowerPoint of 2011-12 funded artists, organizations, and programs; public art projects; Art at Work month; Spaceworks Tacoma; and other arts programming.

Commissioners participated in an exercise to develop a list of arts and culture things they love about Tacoma. They then categorized these items by things the Commission owns, influences, or has nothing to do with. The list included:

Things the Commission Owns/Produces

- Art at Work Month
- Spaceworks Tacoma
- AMOCAT awards
- Arts Symposium
- Tacoma Murals Project
- Studio Tours
- Percent for Art program

Things the Commission Influences (funded through Arts Projects)

- Grassroots Arts Projects programs
- Tacoma Little Theatre
- Art on the Ave
- Proctor Arts Fest
- Wayzgoose
- Outdoor festivals
- D.A.S.H. Center for the Arts
- Fab-5
- Asia Pacific New Year Celebration
- Monkeyshines
- Fulcrum Gallery
- Gold From Straw Theater
- Beautiful Angle
- Northwest Repertory Singers

Things the Commission Influences (funded through Arts Anchor Fund)

- 72-Hour Film Fest
- Grand Cinema



- Tacoma Opera
- Tacoma Musical Playhouse
- Northwest Sinfonietta
- Tacoma Symphony
- Hilltop Artists
- Museum of Glass
- Tacoma Art Museum
- Tacoma Youth Symphony
- Museums
- Free tickets from arts groups

Things the Commission Influences (miscellaneous items)

- Graffiti garages
- James Sinding's *Words* and *Letters* projects
- Art in Zina Linnik Park
- Wide variety of things happening in Tacoma
- Theater District
- Public Art
- Glass
- Downtown arts corridor
- Broadway Center for the Performing Arts
- The Warehouse
- Arts Impact
- Arts being in schools

Things the Commission has nothing to do with

- Taste of Tacoma music and art
- 253HipHop.com
- Maritime Fest
- The Dance Broomz
- Ethnic Fest
- Roller Derby
- Tacoma Dome
- Small performing venues
- Point Defiance
- Tacoma is for Lovers
- Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium
- Local record stores
- Parks
- Tacoma School of the Arts
- TCC and PLU art galleries
- Franke Tobey Jones Senior Art Show
- Local bands and Hip Hop artists
- Telephone Room gallery



Commissioners participated in an exercise to brainstorm ways that the arts (programs, projects, methods) directly or indirectly support: Education, Economic Development, Safety, Quality of Life, Community Development, and Tourism. This was the first phase of an exercise that we will complete at regular arts commission meetings.

The list included:

Education

- Art at Work Month
- Arts Envirochallenger
- Arts Symposium
- PA:ID
- Tacoma Art Place
- Multiple paths to educational success
- Prairie Line Trail installations
- Hilltop Artists
- TSO's Simply Symphonic
- 72-Hour Film Fest
- Free tickets
- Public art
- Arts opportunities for kids
- Arts Impact
- Educational outreach by many Anchor Fund organizations
- Arts Projects funding

Economic Development

- Arts Anchor Fund
- Education
- Estimated \$54 million economic impact in Tacoma
- Rich and diverse art programs makes Tacoma livable
- People want to live, work, and have business in a city that is attractive, safe and clean
- Commitment to the arts attracts young professionals, start-ups, families
- Improves business for restaurants, bars, coffee shops, etc...
- Creative people attract creative people
- 25% increase in visual artists/arts production workers in Tacoma (vs. 14% all artists in Tacoma, 8% statewide)
- Compliments Tacoma Public Schools
- Capacity building Arts Symposium
- Public art maintenance (essential)
- TAIP
- Spaceworks helps launch business and stir up foot traffic
- PA:ID

Safety

- Involving youth in arts projects provides alternatives to violence and mischief
- Provides a constructive direction for young people to express their passion
- Public art maintenance



- Murals lead to drop in graffiti/vandalism
- Arts contributes to a cleaner environment
- Deters vandalism
- Downtown museums and businesses bring patrons out at night, allowing residents to feel safe
- Featuring under-represented youth in mural development and in mural stories

Quality of Life

- Opportunities for kids, especially as educational funding for art dwindles
- Art is everywhere in Tacoma
- Many free, family-friendly events
- Tacoma Art Museum
- Murals and related community building
- Public art
- Wayzgoose and other community programming
- Arts education for all ages
- Restaurants that display artwork and hire musicians
- The Warehouse
- Local bands and musicians
- Great venues
- Access to the arts

Community Development

- Arts Projects
- Arts get people out
- Arts community attracts youth to Tacoma
- Graffiti garages
- Art at Work Month
- Monkeyshines
- Brings people together for public art and mural projects

Tourism

- Museum destinations
- Public art
- Anchor Fund organizations
- Art at Work Month
- Glass greets people entering Tacoma
- Festivals
- Local music
- Art creates destinations
- Graffiti garages
- Performances (such as at BCPA)

7. Lunch

12:30 pm



8. Advocacy and Mobilization**12:45 pm**

Mark Gerth from the Washington State Arts Alliance talked about how the arts contribute to education, engagement, and economy. He noted that sometimes Commissions must work with policy they don't agree with to make it not as harmful as it would have been. He suggested the possible creation of an Advocacy sub-committee and that the Commission starts re-framing policy and discussions now to influence the next 3, 5, and 10 years.

Mr. Gerth clarified that City staff can educate and inform the public and the Commission. Commissioners can educate, inform, and directly advocate for policies. He suggested the Commission look at ways to directly engage City Council with funded arts programming and organizations.

Commissioners discussed the proposed 5% Ticket Tax, the need to develop a position statement, and the need to inform and hear from the organizations who would be affected by the tax (Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, LeMay, Museum of Glass, Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma Youth Symphony, Washington State History Museum, Grand Cinema, and Tacoma Musical Playhouse).

Commissioners each took turns stating their opinions about the proposed tax:

- Commissioner Brazzell – Wants to talk to affected organizations first but would support it if it was the only option to keep the City's Arts Program going
- Commissioner Stegeman – Would like the ordinance to include a way for the \$500K cap on money returning to the Arts Program to increase and/or grow with inflation
- Commissioner Sweney – The revised ticket tax may be the best option when faced with finding the best solution to the current situation. It would keep money within the City and within arts organizations and programming
- Commissioner Meyer – supports the ticket tax
- Commissioner Lacky – The revised ticket tax ordinance is probably the best that can be done for the time being. He is okay with it for the short term but would want to look at it again in 2015 with a possibility of 50% of generated revenue vs. a cap of \$500K going to the Arts Program
- Commissioner Powers – supports the revised ticket tax ordinance for the short term
- Commissioner Wennstrom - The revised ticket tax ordinance is the best solution for the time being. She doesn't think the tax would be prohibitive to those wanting to attend an arts event
- Commissioner Idstrom – the revised ticket tax ordinance is the best solution right now. The City will be more inclined to support the arts organizations if they are relying on their growth in income.
- Commissioner Quinn – The revised ticket tax ordinance is much better than the previous versions and she would support it
- Commissioner Echte – The revised ticket tax ordinance is better than previous versions

Nine Commissioners are in agreement that, given the current threats to the City's Arts Program, the revised ticket tax ordinance is the best option at this time. The Commission will monitor the tax and make recommendations when it is up for review in 2015.

The Commission will come up with a statement page regarding the revised ticket tax ordinance that will include:



- The Commission is disappointed that the budget has brought us to this point where this revenue source is under consideration.
- Under the current circumstances and threat to the stability of the existing arts programs, and given that no other viable option has been shared to date to insure the stability of the City's arts program, the Commission supports Ordinance #13208 as currently proposed as of 3/3/2012
- The only reason the Commission is supporting the tax is because the revenue collected is going back into the arts
- Out of respect for the taxpayers, the ticket revenue needs to go back into supporting the arts, from where the revenue was generated
- If the ticket tax does not pass, the Commission needs to know how the City will shore up the Arts Program

Meeting adjourned at 2:48 pm

