

#### 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

#### Staff

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

# Summary Minutes

## Tacoma Arts Commission

### Community & Economic Development

These minutes accompany the recorded meeting of the Tacoma Arts Commission, which is available at [www.tacomaculture.org/arts/tac.asp](http://www.tacomaculture.org/arts/tac.asp).

Date: March 12, 2012

Location: City of Tacoma Municipal Building North, Room 16

Time: 5:00 pm

#### *Commission Members in Attendance:*

Robin Echte, Chair  
Jan Brazzell  
Rachel Cardwell  
Sarah Idstrom  
Don Lacky  
Bill La Vergne  
Dane Meyer  
Zach Powers  
Dawn Quinn  
Scott Ramsey  
Mike Sweney  
Jana Wennstrom

#### *Commission Members Excused Absence:*

Antonio Edwards, Jr.  
Traci Kelly, Vice Chair  
Catherine Stegeman

#### *City Council Member Present:*

Lauren Walker  
Marty Campbell

#### *Staff Present:*

Amy McBride, Tacoma Arts Administrator  
Naomi Strom-Avila, Cultural Arts Specialist  
Martha Anderson, Assistant Director, CEDD

#### *Public in Attendance:*

Susan Warner  
Ricky Powell  
Laura Berry  
Darcy Nelson  
Kit Evans  
Mark Reutlinger

**1. Call to Order** **5:05 pm (00:07)** **Chair Echte**

**2. Excusal of Absences** **5:05 pm (00:15)** **Chair Echte**

Vice Chair Kelly and Commissioners Edwards and Stegeman had an excused absence.

**3. Approval of Minutes and Agenda** **5:05 pm (00:46)** **Chair Echte**

Staff recommended moving Budget Update before 5% Admissions Tax Exemption for Non-Profits on the agenda.

Motion: Bill La Vergne

Second: Jana Wennstrom

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Motion: Carried

**4. Welcome to Tacoma City Manager T.C. Broadnax 5:06 pm (1:45)**

City Manager T.C. Broadnax recognized the service of the Tacoma Arts Commission. He looks forward to working with the Commission to help move the City forward and highlighting what makes the City unique, including the arts.

Mr. Broadnax noted that Council is currently working to address a long-term budget issue and the problem can't be solved by cutting budget alone, there must be revenue as well. The 5% ticket tax on non-profit organizations could bring in about \$500K a year.

Mr. Broadnax noted that the City has looked at other revenue sources including: the non-profit healthcare tax, changing how the City approaches how they fund streets, reductions to non-essential services, and the mental health sales tax. Council Member Campbell noted that there has been an increase in business license fees, an increase in false alarm fees, an increase in red light ticket fees, and a fee for non-profit business licenses. Mr. Broadnax noted that most of the budget balancing will come out of the expense vs. revenue side and that he is looking to define what the City's limits are and live within those limits so that the current budget situation does not continue on into future budget cycles.

**5. Chair's Report 5:15 pm (10:09) Chair Echtle**

Chair Echtle noted that the Commission would be accepting public comment for the 5% Admission Tax Exemption for Non-Profits.

**6. Staff Check-In 5:17 pm (12:00)**

Public Works and Environmental Services are assisting in the moving of the Sun King sculpture to Fleet Services where it will be structurally reinforced. It will then be placed on a base and sited in the grassy area at Dock Street & S. 15<sup>th</sup>.

Six finalists – Kyle Dillehay, Diane Hansen, Ed Kroupa, Bret Lyon, Elise Richman, and Claudia Riedener - were selected for consideration for two public art opportunities at the Foss Waterway Seaport and along the Esplanade. These artists are participating in the Public Art: In Depth training program and will move on to be interviewed for the projects.

Historic Tacoma, the Planning Division, and Historic Preservation have begun discussing live/work spaces. Sharon Winters, past president of Historic Tacoma, will present to the Commission in the near future.

Commissioners volunteered to attend and evaluate funded events as follows:

<b>date</b>	<b>organization</b>	<b>event</b>	<b>volunteer</b>
4/27/12	DASH Center for the Arts	Winter Musical "Cinderella"	Jan Brazzell
4/29/12	DASH Center for the Arts	Winter Musical "Cinderella"	Zach Powers, Don Lacky
4/10/12 - 5/12/12	Hilltop Artists	"The Lost Tribes of Hilltop, Shared Values" exhibit	Rachel Cardwell



4/22/12	King's Bookstore	Tacoma Wayzgoose	Mike Sweney, Dawn Quinn, Scott Ramsey
4/13/12	Second City Chamber Series	Masterpiece Series	Don Lacky
4/20/12	Tacoma City Ballet	Spring Dance Extravaganza	Don Lacky
4/22/12	Tacoma City Ballet	Spring Dance Extravaganza	Dawn Quinn
4/20/12	Tacoma Little Theatre	Footloose	Dane Meyer
4/21/12	Tacoma Little Theatre	Footloose	Mike Sweney
4/22/12	Tacoma Little Theatre	Footloose	Robin Echtle
4/28/12	Tacoma Little Theatre	Footloose	Dawn Quinn

## 7. Discussion

### A. Prairie Line Trail Plan

5:40 pm (35:45)

Ms. McBride presented highlights from the Prairie Line Trail Public Art Plan including influences and themes. Goals for art along the trail include enhancing people's experiences, responding to the site, and looking at a combination of short- and long-term projects. Some possible projects suggested in the plan including a trail-wide text project, a project that responds to the hill climb and arc of the rail, and meta-mapping of historical narrative.

Commissioners were invited to submit comments to Ms. McBride before the April 9 meeting of the Commission.

### B. Budget Update & 5% Admission Tax Exemption for Non-Profits

5:54 pm (49:32)

Ms. McBride gave an update about the currently-known status of the City's budget situation. There has already been a \$209,000 reduction (17.4%) to the Arts Program's overall budget in 2012. The Commission was working under the direction that 100% of Ms. Strom-Avila's position would be funded out of public art funds vs. general funds beginning April 1. This would mean that she would no longer be able to work on specific programming such as Art at Work Month, the Tacoma Poet Laureate Program and others.

Council Member Walker and Council Member Woodards met with Mr. Broadnax recently at which time he committed to finding the funding to retain arts staffing positions in order for programming to continue.

Ms. Walker noted that there were currently two options:

1. Go with the current 5% tax proposal to keep the City's Arts Program alive
2. Kill the 5% tax proposal and look at other ways of keeping staff and make sure there is adequate arts funding to make programming viable



Chair Echtle gave background on the Commission's notification of and involvement in discussions and votes on the 5% ticket tax to date.

City Council will hear the first reading of the ticket tax ordinance on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Campbell gave an overview of the current ordinance. The proposal addresses the sustainability of the City's Arts Program by creating a separate funding stream for the arts. It exempts fundraisers, school events, and memberships; it would change the effective date from July 1 to October 1, 2012; and it would be reviewed in 2015. Mr. Campbell is interested in looking other options such as a 0.1% sales tax to replace the ticket tax at that time.

It is estimated, based on 990 Forms, that this tax would generate \$567K per year.

Commissioner Brazzell requested a clarification of "Admission Charge."

Commissioners questioned if the proposed tax is the only way to secure funding for the arts and asked what secure funding looks like.

Ms. Walker suggested that the City take more time to look at the situation and find a solution. Council Members Woodards and Walker met with Mr. Broadnax and asked for a guarantee that the City not cut any current arts positions, ensure that there is some freedom in the funding sources for staff to produce programming, and ensure that funding to arts organizations and programming is not slashed.

Mr. Broadnax noted that he has not heard of other cuts to the arts in 2012 or 2013. He pledged that, for 2012, all the remaining arts program's flexibility will remain intact and that Ms. Strom-Avila's position will be secure.

Commissioners discussed the impact of the tax on all affected organizations.

The discussion was opened to public comment.

Susan Warner, Interim Director of Museum of Glass, asked the City to take more time in figuring out a solution and asked for a more strategic community conversation. She noted that the tax would set an unfortunate precedence.

Kit Evans, Executive Director of Hilltop Artists, noted that the arts are the greatest strength of Tacoma and they serve the needs of citizens. She is concerned about unintended consequences of the tax and asked that the City to use the urgency of the situation to come up with strategic, long-term solutions.

Ricky Powell, Executive Director of First Night, is against the tax and noted that any money going into non-profit organizations leverages much more in return.

If the Ordinance moves forward, the first reading by City Council would be on March 13.

### **C. Tacoma Arts Commission Retreat Wrap-Up 6:57 pm (01:52:43)**

Chair Echtle asked, "Can I get a motion to table that for next time?"

There was a motion: "So moved."

Motion: Sarah Idstrom

Second: Jan Brazzell



Motion: Carried

## **8. Report Back**

### **A. Arts Events Attended**

**6:58 (01:53:10)**

There were no comments.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm

