

Members

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

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.

Staff

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

Date: May 13, 2013

Location: City of Tacoma Municipal Building North, Room 16

Time: 5:00 pm

Commission Members in Attendance:

Robin Echtle, Chair
Traci Kelly, Vice Chair
Jan Brazzell
J.D. Elquist
Don Lacky
Dane Meyer
Zach Powers
Scott Ramsey
Catherine Stegeman
Mike Sweney
Jana Wennstrom

Commission Members Unexcused Absence:

Wanda Thompson

City Council in Attendance:

Lauren Walker

Staff Present:

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

Guests:

Lewis Kamb
Victoria Becker

Commission Members Excused Absence:

Rachel Cardwell
Matt Hudgins

1. Call to Order **5:05 pm (00:01)** **Chair Echtle**

2. Excusal of Absences **5:05 pm (00:08)** **Vice Chair Kelly**

Commissioners Cardwell and Hudgins had an excused absence.

3. Approval of Agenda and Minutes **5:05 pm (00:14)** **Vice Chair Kelly**

Vice Chair Kelly asked for “a motion to approve the agenda and minutes.”

There was a motion: “I so move.”

Motion: Jana Wennstrom

Second: Mike Sweney

Motion: Carried

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4. Chair’s Report

5:06 pm (01:30)

Chair Echtle

Chair Echtle asked if the Commission would like to take one month off over the summer. Commissioners discussed preference for month to take off.

There was a motion: “I move that we take July off.”

Motion: Mike Sweney

Second: Jan Brazzell

Motion: Carried

5. Staff Check-In

5:08 pm (03:40)

Work on the Bridge of Glass is continuing. The Crystal Towers were cleaned at the end of April; an assessment of the towers is also being conducted. The Towers will be relit with LED lights. Diagnostics of the Venetian Wall is complete and a new fastening system is being explored to allow for a more secure and safe access into the wall for maintenance. Plans are underway to relamp the Seaform Pavilion.

The one tower of the Water Forest public art piece that was broken by vandals in April has been placed in storage. The rest of the Water Forest is still operational and safe.

Documents are going out to bid for pouring a base and installing the Sun King public art piece.

Spaceworks currently has a call out for a paid 3-month internship as well as a call to artists for Artscapes, Special Projects, and Creative Enterprise. Spaceworks will be participating in the May 16th Third Thursday Art Walk/Art Mingle.

Paul Rucker’s Human Rights Legacy Project will be dedicated at Peoples Park on May 22, starting at 4:30 pm.

Chandler O’Leary’s public art piece, Droplets, will be dedicated at Old Town Dock on June 16, 11 am – 1 pm.

Amy led a public art walk of downtown Tacoma on April 17 for Walk Tacoma.

Thank you letters from Arts Anchor Fund organizations were passed around.

Commissioners volunteered to meet with TAIP funded artists for mid-project reviews as follows:

artist	volunteer
Bill Colby	Dane Meyer
Josie Emmons Turner	Jan Brazzell
Scott Scoggin	Mike Sweney
Noah Struthers	J.D. Elquist

Commissioners volunteered to attend funded events as follows:

date	organization	event	volunteer
6/8/13	WA State Historical Society	In the Spirit juried art exhibit opening	Robin Echtle, Don Lacky



6/14/13	Puget Sound Poetry Connection	Distinguished Writer Series and Open Mic	Zach Powers
6/21/13	Tacoma Little Theatre	The Laramie Project	Mike Sweney
6/23/13	Tacoma Little Theatre	The Laramie Project	Catherine Stegeman

Commissioners viewed a preview of the Arts Program section of the new City website, tentatively scheduled to launch at the end of May.

6. Discussion/Updates

A. Firemans Park Totem Pole

5:21 pm (16:47)

Amy McBride gave an overview of the status of the Firemans Park Totem Pole. For the past year, Public Works had been working with the Arts Program to identify a way to support the pole with an architectural brace system. The stability of the pole has been compromised by dry rot and a former infestation of carpenter ants. The pole is currently being shored up by a temporary brace while work is being done to determine the next steps.

The pole is a historic landmark as well as a part of the Municipal Art Collection. As such, it falls under the oversight of both the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Tacoma Arts Commission.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission was presented with the option of shoring up the pole with a permanent metal pole brace. At their meeting, the Landmarks Commission brought up that historically, when totem poles were created, they were intended to disintegrate and return to the land. It is a Western convention to try and prop them up and conserve them indefinitely. The Landmarks Commission suggested to culturally investigate whether an architectural brace would be the right avenue to pursue.

Commissioner Elquist noted that he spoke with a representative at the Sealaska Heritage Institute in Juneau, Alaska about best cultural practices regarding totem poles. From the standpoint of the representative, totem poles have a natural life span and are left standing naturally as long as possible until they become safety hazards or the poles are taken down and taken back into the forests from where the wood was originally harvested and laid to rest in a ceremony.

Shaun Peterson, a professional practicing artist of the Puyallup Tribe, is under contract to help provide some cultural consultation about the pole.

It is not known who the carvers were for the Firemans Park Totem Pole or what tribe they were from. It was designed as a tourist item that was commissioned by white businessmen who wanted to have a taller pole than Seattle.



A working group has been assembled and includes Commissioner Elquist; Shaun Peterson; and Ed Echtle, Vice Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. The working group discussed taking the pole down and siting it horizontally in a place where people could visit it and learn about its history through interpretive signage. That concept was presented to the Landmarks Preservation Commission and a majority of the commission felt comfortable with it. If this concept is to move forward, they will host a public hearing about it.

Ms. McBride recommended that the Arts Commission convene a deaccession panel to look at the cultural, artistic, and political aspects of the pole, and review it according to the Arts Commission's deaccession policy and come up with an official recommendation to present to the Arts Commission.

Ms. McBride also recommended a joint meeting of the Tacoma Arts Commission and the Landmarks Preservation Commission for a public hearing about the pole.

Commissioners discussed next steps and considerations.

Chair Echtle asked, "Do we have a motion to approve Amy and the City moving forward on establishing and convening the deaccession committee to discuss the Firemans Pole?"

There was a motion: "So moved."

Motion: Catherine Stegeman

Second: Mike Sweney

Motion: Carried

B. Artist Live/Work Space

5:45 pm (40:39)

Ms. McBride gave an overview of Artspace's recent visit to Tacoma to conduct a feasibility study on affordable artist live/work space. Artspace will return with the results of the study in about a month. Commissioners discussed their impressions of the meetings they sat in on.

C. Art at Work Month Discussion

5:54 pm (49:19)

Naomi Strom-Avila gave an overview of results from a survey that was sent out to the community to gather feedback regarding a proposed change of month for Art at Work Month from November to October in 2014.

There was a motion: "I would motion that we follow through and change the Art at Work Month to October in the year 2014 and on."

Motion: Dane Meyer

Second: Jana Wennstrom

Motion: Carried

Chair Echtle gave a synopsis of the meeting and discussion had by the Art at Work Month Opening Party and AMOCAT Arts Awards Committee including possible dates, sites, and programming.

D. Tacoma Murals Project

6:18 pm (01:13:42)

Commissioners reviewed the Call to Community Groups for the Tacoma Murals Project. Applications are due May 28.



E. Prairie Line Trail**6:22 pm (01:17:27)**

Vice Chair Kelly gave an update for the Prairie Line Trail steering committee. The committee has endorsed the goals and conceptual design presented by PLACE. The committee will write a letter to City Council encouraging them to pursue implementation of the plan and to acquire the additional land that is required to complete the goals of the trail. The committee is also looking into assembling a “Friends of the Prairie Line Trail” group to support and further the cause of the trail.

7. Report Back**A. Landmarks Preservation Commission****6:26 pm (01:21:18)**

Commissioner Elquist reported about activity on the Landmarks Preservation Commission including that council will vote on adding the Browne’s Star Grill building and the historic pavements on the North Slope to the historic register and that the Commission nominated the Pagoda for the national register. Preservation Month awards will be held May 30 at Feather & Oar; it will be an RSVP only event.

B. Advocacy Reports**6:27 pm (01:22:36)**

Commissioners reported back about council coffee meetings they have had with Mayor Strickland and Councilmember Mello.

C. Tacoma Poet Laureate Event**6:32 pm (01:27:02)**

Commissioners reported back about the Tacoma Poet Laureate celebration and reading event on April 23.

D. Arts Events Attended**6:36 pm (01:31:24)**

Commissioners shared arts events they had attended or been involved with including attending a poetry reading at the Hub, Dukesbay Theater opening, Wayzgoose, TAIP mid-project meetings with Sean Alexander and David Domkoski, Jason Lee art show fundraiser and mural, and fashion show at Broken Spoke.

Meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm

