



CITY OF OAKLAND

**Cultural Affairs Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 28, 2022
5:30 – 7:50 PM**

Members in Attendance: Diane Sanchez (Chair), Kev Choice (Vice Chair), Jennifer Easton, J. K. Fowler, Michelle Mush Lee, Shannon Price, Vanessa Whang, Theo Aytchan Williams

Members Absent:

Staff in Attendance: Roberto Bedoya, Neha Balram, Kristen Zarembo, Regina Acebo

Guests: Ayana Allen (Department of Race & Equity), Karen Boyd (City Administrator's Office), Emily Ehlers (OakDOT), Alana Landrum (guest artist), Ilana Lipsett, Nicole Neditch, (City Administrator's Office), Tina Risker (City Administrator's Office), Walter Wallace (Cultural Strategist), Candice Wicks-Davis (Cultural Strategist)

Roll Call/Call to Order

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chair Sanchez.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Commissioner Price led the land acknowledgement.

3. Action Item 1: Adopt Resolution 22-11-08 Determining that Conducting In-Person Meetings of the Cultural Affairs Commission and its Committees would Present Imminent Risks to Attendees' Health, and Electing to Continue Conducting Meetings Using Teleconferencing in Accordance with California Government Code Section 54953, a Provision of AB-361

Motion to adopt Resolution 22-11-08 made by Commissioner Whang; seconded by Chair Sanchez.

Choice	Abstain
Easton	NO
Fowler	AYE
Lee	NO
Price	Abstain
Sanchez	NO
Whang	AYE
Williams	Absent

The motion did not pass.

4. **Action Item 2: Approval of Minutes from September 19, 2022**

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from September 19, 2022 made by Commissioner Easton; seconded by Commissioner Whang.

Choice	AYE
Easton	AYE
Fowler	AYE
Lee	AYE
Price	AYE
Sanchez	AYE
Whang	AYE
Williams	AYE

The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Artist Spotlight: Alana Landrum**

Chair Sanchez introduced Alana Landrum.

My name is Alana Landrum and I am a multimedia visual artist based in Oakland, California. My practice includes painting, drawing, and community arts programming with Civic Design Studio. In my artwork, I intend to create an imaginative representation of a feeling or pay homage to a person, place, or thing. I am inspired by nature, architecture, and music and am drawn to the use of vibrant, saturated colors to create otherworldly environments. I most enjoy working with acrylic and oil paints as well as oil pastels and I implement abstract, naturalistic, and surreal techniques to give rise to imagination and interpretation for myself and the viewers of my work.

6. **Cultural Affairs Division Manager's Update**

Roberto Bedoya provided an update on the Cultural Affairs Division.

Staffing

He noted that the position for the Cultural Funding Program Coordinator application deadline has closed and applications are in the review process. Interviews will begin in January. He said that the next vacant position to be posted and filled is the program analyst for the Public Art Program.

Cultural Funding Program

The new one-time grant *The Creative Economies of Belonging: Jobs, Networks, Catalysts* (made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts) just completed the grant review process. Seventeen arts organizations supporting teaching artists have been recommended for funding. City Council will need to approve the grant recommendations.

The next round of Neighborhood Voices: Organizational Projects will be re-designed as "Neighborhood Voices: Organizational Programs" to target arts non-profits with an existing, repeat program, instead of the design and launch of a new program. Neighborhood Voices: Individual Artists will remain unchanged.

Bedoya noted that staff capacity for generating more grant agreements is not possible without additional staff.

7. Public Comment

Comment made by Tanisha Cannon.

8. Cultural Affairs Commission Chair's Update

[East Bay Arts and Cultural Alliance](#), Chair Sanchez and other members of the group, have been working on county-level arts advocacy. The group was able to secure \$1M in government funds for the Alameda County Arts Commission for 2021. Forty-five percent of the new grant funds distributed by the Arts Commission went to Oakland artists. The group continues to have conversations to advocate for continued funding.

Chair Sanchez noted that the Bureau of Environment in the City's Public Works Department contacted Balram about seeking input from Cultural Affairs about their Urban Forest Plan. The group is looking to infuse the plan with an arts and culture vision. The plan will be presented to City Council for approval likely in later 2023.

9. Update: Cultural Strategist-in-Government (CSIG)

Commissioner Whang, the Program Manager for the Cultural Strategists-in-Government program, facilitated a presentation from the three of the strategists and their partner City departments.

• Kev Choice & Citywide Communications/Office of the City Administrator

A classically trained, Hip-Hop musician with wide-ranging skills and tastes, [Kev Choice](#) has shared the stage with the likes of Michael Franti and Michael Morgan. He is at home in the studio as well as the opera house. An educator, activist, and advocate for young people and artistry as a vehicle for social justice, Choice will partner with the [Citywide Communications Team](#) to expand understanding of the [City's motto](#), "[Love Life](#)," adopted in 2016 in memory of 16-year-old Lo'Eshe Lacy as a mantra against violence and an affirmation of the value of life. Given that the motto needs to be grounded in the community to be embraced and have meaning, those who are familiar with Choice and his heart-filled music know that it would be hard to find a better person to animate Oakland's motto.

- OaklandLoveLife full video (2:33) <https://youtu.be/QKYcxU8nZG8>
- OaklandLoveLife Instagram reel (showcasing user generated social content, optional if we have time) https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cj_dv0DtjXT/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

• Walter Wallace & Department of Transportation (OakDOT)

Founder of the Black Film Guild, a place for Bay Area creators to acquire photography and filmmaking skills, [Walter Wallace](#) is an Oakland writer, cinematographer and editor with a drive to be the change he wants to see in the world. His experience of working with CalTrans and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District makes him well placed to collaborate with [OakDOT](#) to activate communities to participate in designing safe, accessible streets that facilitate public gatherings, placekeeping, and belonging.

• Candice Wicks-Davis & Dept. of Race & Equity Artist

Entrepreneur, and activist [Candice Wicks-Davis](#) combines song, performance, and media as a catalyst for social transformation and believes the intersection of art, humility, strategy, and policy is an effective way to transform systems of inequality. In the pilot phase of the Cultural Strategists-in-Government program in 2019-20, the [Department of Race and Equity](#) (DRE) began a collaboration with Wicks-Davis to create programming and inclusive processes to further understanding of and address anti-Black bias in the City of Oakland. Interrupted by the pandemic lockdown, DRE's project will be completed in this new iteration of the CSIG program

as Wicks-Davis creates a song cycle based on themes that emerged from [DRE's racial equity report](#) of 2018 that will be recorded.

Cultural strategists are meant to play roles different from typical artists-in-residence. There is no expectation that CSIGs will create an artistic product. CSIGs can be artists, or people who consider themselves cultural workers, creative entrepreneurs, traditional culture bearers, community historians or others who are knowledgeable of culturally specific practices, history, or heritage relevant to communities in Oakland. CSIGs should be interested in serving the community and believe that City government can and should work effectively for all Oaklanders.

10. Discussion Item: New Mayor and City Council Next Steps

The Commissioners discussed introductions to newly elected officials, relationship building, and advocacy for arts and culture. Vice Chair Choice noted that the CAC should build upon past interactions and previously established relationships to further the goals of the Cultural Affairs Division. Commissioner Lee expressed a need to identify the Division's priority areas and where the CAC can support Bedoya in communicating those needs. Additionally, Commissioner Lee said that we should ask Mayor-elect Thao what her arts and culture priorities and values are. Commissioner Whang noted that elected officials need to understand that the position of arts and culture is cross-sectoral and works towards the City's equity and social justice goals. She added that cultural equity is a new way of achieving the City's goals. Chair Sanchez said that the Commissioners should actively build a professional relationship with elected officials' staff members who can better help to gain access and achieve goals. Commissioner Easton said that the CAC should be strategic in its messaging and communicate that we are working towards the same quality of life goals for the artist community and the Oakland community at large who would benefit from cultural equity. Chair Sanchez asked the CAC to share additional ideas with her and Balram.

11. Open Forum

No comments were made.

12. Announcements & Acknowledgements

The Commissioners shared arts and culture activities in Oakland.

13. Closing

A motion to end the meeting was made by Commissioner Easton, seconded by Chair Sanchez.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.