



CITY OF OAKLAND

Cultural Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting – Minutes

Monday, July 27, 2020

4:00 – 6:00 PM

Members in Attendance: Diane Sanchez (Chair), Kev Choice (Vice Chair), Roy Chan, Jennifer Easton, J.K. Fowler, Michelle Mush Lee, Michael Orange, Richard Raya, Charmin Roundtree-Baaqee, Vanessa Whang, Theo Aytchan Williams*

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Roberto Bedoya, Neha Balram, Jim MacIvaine, Denise Pate, Kristen Zarembo

Guests: Dr. Ayodele Nzinga

*Indicates partial attendance

1. **Welcome**

Meeting called to order by Commission Chair Diane Sanchez at 4:00 PM.

2. **Centering Exercise**

Recognition of the meeting space as Huichin territory, the unceded land of the Chochenyo Ohlone led by Commissioner Jennifer Easton. She asked the group to reflect on the following questions:

- How does this acknowledgement relate to the work you are doing?
- What intentions do you have to disrupt colonialism in support of Ohlone and other native communities beyond this territory acknowledgement?

3. **Tribute to Rep. John Lewis and Rev. C.T. Vivian**

A musical tribute led by Commissioner Kev Choice in memory of the recently departed Representative John Lewis and Reverend C.T. Vivian.

4. **Overview of the Cultural Affairs Commission**

Commission Chair Diane Sanchez provided a brief overview of the re-established Cultural Affairs Commission and a description of its roles and responsibilities as advocates and ambassadors for arts and culture in Oakland.

5. **Action Item #1: Vote on Vice Chair Position**

Commissioners cast their vote for Vice Chair for either candidates, Commissioner Kev Choice or Commissioner J.K. Fowler. Commissioner Choice was elected to the Vice Chair position with seven votes. One abstention and one absence.

6. **Public Comment**

The following members of the public made comments: Indi McCCasey, Deborah Vaughn, Zakiya Harris.

7. **Cultural Affairs Division Manager's Report**

Roberto Bedoya provided updates and comments on the following items:

- a. **FY20/21 Budget** - Cuts to the Division resulted in zeroing out support for the City's Festival Fund, zeroing out the City's sponsorship of the Art & Soul Festival, and a modest cut to our Cultural Funding grantmaking program. The budget deductions were linked to Transient Occupancy Tax and the loss of those revenues.
- b. **Cultural Funding Program** - Postponed spring 2020 grant round. Cultural Affairs Division secured resources needed to honor the 2nd year Organizational Assistance FY20-21 will include categories for: Neighborhood Voices, Youth Voices, and Spaces.
- c. **East Bay/Oakland Relief Fund for Individuals in the Arts** - \$416K allocated to Oakland artists in June; seeded through the Mayor Schaaf's COVID-19 Relief Fund and the Cultural Affairs Division
- d. **Oakland Creative Works** (Organization Projects & Individual Artist Awards) - Designed to invest in our diverse communities that has been impacted by COVID-19, our contracted economy, the calls for equity and the work of realizing a Just City. Will support projects that address our civic needs, foster social cohesion and create feelings of belonging in a time of physical distancing by offering ways that animate civic recovery and well-being.
- e. **Racial Equity Impact Analysis** - Oakland-based firm LeaderSpring hired to conduct analysis of the Cultural Affairs Division's programs as part of Phase 1 of the Cultural Plan.
- f. **Oakland Murals Art for the Movement** - The East Oakland Black Cultural Zone Collaborative and the Black Cultural Zone Community Development Corporation (collectively the Black Cultural Zone or the BCZ), along with other Black-led organizations and Black artists, are leading this effort to hold the conversation and frame a path forward, which will include working with artists to re-mount ongoing exhibitions. The Oakland Museum of California, Oakland Art Murmur, and a host of allies have committed to support the Black Cultural Zone's goal of lifting Black voices in the pursuit of justice and equality.
- g. **Belonging in Oakland: A Just City Fund** - new multi-year program that turns to Oakland cultural practitioners of color to radically reimagine a racially just city. In Year One of the program, Reflect & Reimagine grants will support breathing space and idea generation for what a just Oakland could look like, feel like, and be like. 113 applications were received; 12 Reflect & Reimagine grants of \$25,000 each; award announcement expected late summer-early fall
- h. **CARES Funds** – Cultural Affairs Division received \$1.8 Million funds from Federal Government; funds will be used to support individual artists and arts organizations with the assistance of an intermediary non-profit organization; funds need to be spent by December 30, 2020.

8. **Open Forum**

The following members of the public made comments: Indi McCCasey, Jean Marie Durant, Destiny Muhammed

9. **Commissioner Comment Period**

10. **Ad Hoc Teams Chair Report Out**

a. Community Cultural Development

- Spaces: Community Benefits Agreement
- Festival Culture-Cultural Commons: Cultural Mapping
- Civic Engagement/Civic Narrative of Belonging:
 - Poet Laureate Program
 - Fellows Program

b. Covid-19 Recovery & Re-Imagine

- Racial Equity
 - Devoted to working with Oakland’s arts and culture economy to strategize how City resources are accessed, as well as adequately and equitably, distributed, especially in ways that better serve artists and communities disproportionately affected by displacement and poverty.
- Cultural Infrastructure support - Teaching Artists, Individual Artists, Cultural Gig Workers, Arts Organizations
 - What do we need to understand in order to support artists to thrive in spaces of technology and innovation? What assistance do our teaching artists need in order to effectively remote teach? What are ways artists and gig workers can monetize arts-based teaching experiences?
- Jobs Program for Cultural Workers - Artists and cultural workers positioned to lead workforce trainings and public health protocols for events, festivals and concerts (post-Covid-19)

c. Revenue Streams & Advocacy

- Build trust within the arts and culture communities
- Research current and potential revenue streams into the Cultural Affairs Division
- Partnerships: Grow cross-sector relationships internal/external relationships
- Platform: Improve Cultural Affairs portal for more equitable access to information

11. Artist Spotlight: Ayodele Nzinga

Commissioner J.K. Fowler introduced Dr. Ayodele Nzinga who recited her poem called “Roll Call” (poem on next page).

12. Announcements

Commissioner Williams announced that Samba Funk! is moving forward with the Oakland Carnival virtually in August on Fridays from 7:00 – 10:00 PM and on September 4 they will host a live virtual Carnival Dance Party. Commissioner Choice announced that his band Black London will perform live virtually at the Piedmont Piano Company on August 13 6:00 PM. Commissioner Roundtree-Baaqee announced new online art auction she founded and curates called “The Art of It All” (Instagram: theartofitall_bayarea) supporting local artists and non-profits.

13. Closing

Commission Chair Sanchez thanked the Commissioners and the public for participating and staff and KTOP for their support and assistance.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM