



MINUTES for Monday, August 3, 2020, 5:35 PM – 7:03 PM
scheduled Zoom meeting

Commissioners Present: Silvia Ledezma, District I; Beverly Kumar, District II; PJ Shelton, District III; Elizabeth Wood, District IV; Teresa Snook O’Riva, District V; Y’Anad Burrell, At-Large I; Joan D’Onofrio, At-Large III; Lanita Mims, At-Large IV; Pearl Parmelee Cabrera, Alternate

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Roger Renn, AC5 Managing Director; Julia Taylor, Senior Management Analyst, Administrator’s Office

Guests/Visitors Present: Dr. Bianco, VIA Artist and Anna Smith, Richmond.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Ledezma called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM and welcomed everyone. She introduced the new Executive Committee resulting from the July meeting and said that she was looking forward to working with all the Commissioners, stating that as Chairperson, she would work hard to advance the work of AC5. Commissioner D’Onofrio is the acting VICE-Chairperson and Commissioner Shelton is the SENIOR Commissioner.

Commissioner Ledezma thanked Mr. Renn for assisting with this meeting- his last official duty – and for all his hard work guiding and directing the Commission for more than five years.

The Chair shared background of Managing Director, Ms. Jenny Balisle. Ms. Balisle earned a B.A. in Art and Communication from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and a M.F.A. from the Academy of Art College in San Francisco. She is a working artist and has taught at the Academy of Art University, UC Berkeley Extension, and Diablo Valley College. Ms. Balisle has also served as Chair on the Richmond Arts and Culture Commission and Public Art Advisory Committee.

Commissioners, Ms. Bianco and Ms. Smith introduced themselves.

Public Comment:

No comments were made, nor emails received.

Approval of the June 8, 2020 Minutes

Minutes for the June Commission meeting were approved.

- ✓ MOTION MADE: Commissioner Wood moved that the June 8, 2020 Commission meeting minutes be approved.
MOTION SECONDED: Commissioner Shelton
ABSTAINED: Commissioner Cabrera, Commissioner Snook O’Riva
ABSENT: Commissioner Mims
IN FAVOR: Commissioner Ledezma, Commissioner Wood, Commissioner Y’Anad Burrell, Commissioner D’Onofrio, Commissioner Wood, Commissioner Shelton, and Commissioner Kumar.
- ✓ MOTION PASSED

Update on the Via grant

Commissioner D’Onofrio presented a report that stated that the Veterans in the Arts grant [VIA-19-7322] can continue offering ABOUTFACE: Self-understanding through Self-portraits Workshops to Veterans. A one-year grant from the California Arts Council and matching funds from the County Board of Supervisors allows for multiple-day workshops in the spring.

The program supports the mission of AC5 to “advance the arts in a way that promotes communication, education, appreciation and collaboration throughout Contra Costa County.” including the 72,000 veterans and their families who reside in this county. Workshops will address the needs and improve the lives of Contra Costa Veterans by increasing equity, access and opportunities for Veterans to participate in quality arts programming that is sensitive and responsive to their unique experiences.

The VIA grant committee stated three goals for the program. Goal #1: Offer one ABOUTFACE online workshop using Video Webinar. Register 20 Veterans or family member. Mail out art supplies prior to workshop. Write News releases and submit final report to California Arts Council. Goal #2: Have a reunion of last year’s veterans and families [prior to online workshop] who participated in the program to thank them for participating and solicit their thoughts on how the program affected them. Goal #3: To encourage participation all vets should be told that their finished artwork may be exhibited at the conclusion of the workshops.

Funding includes Veterans in the Arts grant [VIA-19-7322] with County match. Financial donations from Community groups including Rotary and Veterans will be sought out. In-kind donations from volunteers will be tracked.

Cultural Planning Committee Report

Julia Taylor, Senior Management Analyst, Administrator’s Office reported on the AC5 presentation to the Health and Human Services July 27 to pursuit of a new countywide Arts and Cultural Plan.

The last County’s cultural plan was written in 2001. Demographics and the environment of any city changes dramatically about every 10 years, and arts and culture play a vital role in those changes, from arts in schools to the public art displays. AC5 has made it a priority to focus on the work needed to develop a new Cultural Plan for the County. In June 2019, AC5 contracted with the Cultural Planning Group, to execute a Cultural Planning Prospectus. This document has given AC5 a framework.

Goals of Executing a Cultural New Plan were stated: Contra Costa County has a population of approximately 1.1 million whose residents are in constant motion and represent ethnicities and Cultural traits of all racial groups as well as the Veterans of America, the disabled, LGBTQ, and all Immigrant communities. To better understand various cultures, Racial Equity is one of the components essential to our mission. AC5 believes pursuing a new Arts and Cultural Plan will achieve the following:

1. **Increase Engagement:** AC5 envisions this plan will be essential in hearing the needs of our County’s diverse, vibrant population and the Five Districts they encompass.
2. **Increase Outreach:** The plan will require the implementation of new and innovative outreach tools, to tap into the diversity of our Cultures.
3. **Increase Community Awareness of AC5:** The Plan will enhance Ac5’s visibility as Art advocates, and provide a better understanding of the Culture in all the surrounding communities.
4. **Increase Community Awareness of County Arts Resources:** Residents will be made aware of the cultural resources through social media, public awareness, CCTV announcements, partnerships with museums, and art centers.

5. **Conduct a Needs Assessment:** AC5 will hear the needs of the community and provide them with the support necessary to release their artistic outlets and embrace their creative processes.

AC5 will use the findings of the Cultural Plan to inform the work of the County and the Arts Commission.

Next Steps:

- AC5 recently applied for CARES ACT funding - expanded outreach and networking work will be started as part of that grant.
- AC5 would vote on members to serve on an advisory group (about 15 members).

CARES funding to support most-impacted communities

Commissioners discussed re-grant Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to local arts and cultural organizations serving communities of color disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and on how to focus time and resources towards developing innovative means for reaching new organizations, communities and people. They agreed to use the California Arts Council's *Decision Support Tool* and to advertise using outreach strategies.

Commissioner Ledezma, Kumar and Burrell were interested in outreach. Commissioner Wood had added information from the US Censuses Quick Facts.

Managing Director Report 2nd Quarter (April 1, 2020 through June 31, 2020)

Mr. Renn, AC5 Managing Director, reported that major accomplishments included holding a Zoom AC5 meeting in June, following the California Arts Council COVID-19 concerns, extending the VIA grant and applying for the CARES ACT grant from the CAC [SLP-CRS-20-9743]. A Virtual Arts Café was presented on the AC5 website, otherwise all programs were postponed due to the COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place order.

State Budget

Governor Newsom signed the 2020 Budget Act on June 29, 2020. The CAC's baseline budget remained intact with \$24,300,000 in state local assistance funds. The proposed one-time increase of \$10.5 million was withdrawn in the Governor's May Budget Revision.

Flexibility for Current Grantees

In response to the impacts of COVID-19 on the arts and culture field, the California Arts Council is allowing grantees and awardees permission to make necessary adjustments in order to complete grant contracts. Guidance from the CAC has been provided regarding our grants, and the importance of maintaining funding for artists in our approved grant proposals [SLP & VIA].

CARES ACT Grant [SLP-CRS-20-9743]

Special funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the CARES Act allows the CAC to provide a timely response to the continued needs of arts organizations in disproportionately impacted communities throughout the state of California by distributing the \$710,400 at a county level to all 46 SLPs who elected to opt in. AC5 has opted in and was granted funding [SLP-CRS-20-9743]. The grant activity period begins August 1, 2020.

California Relief Funding for Individual Artists

The Council also voted in May to establish a rapid relief grant for funding individual artists who represent socially vulnerable communities most highly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The vote called for the CAC to redirect \$1 million in funds previously approved for a pilot

individual artists fellowship grant in order to provide more immediate emergency support for California artists disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Two existing CAC Statewide & Regional Networks grantees were invited to submit proposals to administer the grant funds. CAC staff, with guidance from the Council Programs Allocations Committee, has identified the Center for Cultural Innovation to serve as the administering organization for the grant program, to quickly disburse the much-needed awards of \$1,000 per individual. The application cycle closes Tuesday, August 18 at 3 PM.

Final Note

Mr. Renn's contract for AC5 Managing Director ends August 15. He wishes the best for the Commission and hopes the new leadership will be fruitful in bringing the Arts and many Cultural events to every community in Contra Costa. Mr. Renn is very proud of his accomplishments over the five years, serving as Managing Director. Bringing Commissioners visions to light has been rewarding for him. He hopes that AC5 will continue to grow from the groundwork that has been set in place.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Kumar: Reported that she attended Arts Planning Team & Student Show at the County Office of Education. Hanna Ma, STEAM Coordinator at the Contra Costa Department of Education invited her to be a part of an Arts Planning Team. The Arts Planning Team's goal is to bring into the spotlight arts education and student artists in all five arts disciplines. This team will plan showcases in our county's community convenings and venues.

Hanna featured the Virtual Artist Cafe on the front page of the Contra Costa County Office of Education's STEAM summer newsletter and invited Carolyn to be a part of the Arts Planning Team.

The County Education Arts Planning Team is finalizing details on the first Contra Costa County Office of Education High School Arts Exhibition titled, "The Art of Resilience." The show will run coinciding with the 2020-2021 school year. This show is a combination of physical artwork by students, in addition to QR Codes in which showcase performing arts students spanning across Contra Costa County High Schools. While they plan to eventually have a physical event opening at the office of education, due to COVID-19 they will be adding a digital component to the show, which also ties into our marketing and promotion of this event. The planning team is creating opportunities to showcase this exhibition on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and CCTV. In addition, they plan to have weekly "art challenges" that are inspired by the work in this show. We will be identifying key social media art teachers, artists and influencers to enhance the process. Right now we are in the process of ordering frames for the physical works and collecting art from students.

HEARTS! Hearts on Hartz, Danville's 2nd Annual Public Art Exhibition is now in full swing in Danville. This exhibition will go on through mid-October when the hearts will be auctioned off online. All proceeds will go to the art fund for the town. The Danville Gallery will soon be opening its doors again so visitors can see the new show, Color Play!

Education/Advocacy. Commissioner Kumar signed up for two webinars throughout the California Alliance for Arts Education: *Student Role and Participation in Advocacy*, in September and *Student Voices Campaign Launch Event* in November.

Commissioner Ledezma: Reported that she is settling into her role as Chairperson and has been reviewing the By-laws and other AC5 documents. She communicated with Commissioner Burrell to make sure the transition went smoothly. Commissioner Ledezma has directed most of her time to

preparing the presentation to the Health and Human Services to pursue a new county-wide Arts and Cultural Plan.

Commissioner Parmelee Cabrera: Reported that 4,000 masks had been decorated and distributed.

Commissioner Wood: Thanked Mr. Renn for asking her to serve on the Commission back in 2013 and will remember all the projects they both worked on over the years. Commissioner Wood reported that she participated in the selection panel for the new Managing Director and is still working hard to revive Contra Costa Musical Theater.

Commissioner Shelton: Reported that she is sad to inform the Commission that she has moved out of Supervisor Burgis district and was asked to step off as Commissioner for AC5. Her plan is to stay involved in any way she can with the Arts and Culture within Contra Costa County.

Commissioner D’Onofrio: Reported that she has been working on ABOUTFACE workshops and met with the instructors to explore ideas. Changes are being made because of COVID-19.

Commissioner Burrell: Commissioner Burrell reported that she is running for the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board Trustee for Area 4. That is looking forward to the opportunity to deepen her work in the arts by further advocating within the District for the importance of arts and culture within the curriculum and how government funding needs to be more intentionally earmark in this area.

Commissioner Snook O’Riva: Reported that many health care workers are feeling burnout because of COVID 19 and that it is important to heal the healers

Arts Cafés: Commissioner Kumar reported that Carolyn Considine would have the Artist Café on August 27th from 7-8pm Live on Facebook.

Arts Recognition Awards: Commissioner Wood asked if all the task need for the awards to happen in October could be done. Ms. Taylor offered help but cautioned that many things are happening.

AC5 Planning Retreat: Commissioner Ledezma requested topics that could be addressed at a retreat. Both the By-laws and the Youth Advisor board were mentioned. The Chair suggested that more discussion should be held during the September meeting.

Request for Agenda items for September meeting

- ✓ SAA CARES Relief Fund Opportunity
- ✓ Youth Advisor
- ✓ Cultural Planning
- ✓ By-Laws regarding committees
- ✓ Commissioners Commitment to programs & projects
- ✓ VIA Grant/ABOUTFACE
- ✓ Arts Recognition Awards
- ✓ Art Passages & New Admin Bld.

Meeting Adjournment

Chair Ledezma adjourned the meeting at 7:03 PM.