



## CITY OF OAKLAND

### **Cultural Affairs Commission Regular Meeting Minutes Monday, March 27, 2023 5:32 – 8:36 PM**

**Members in Attendance:** Diane Sanchez (Chair), Kev Choice (Vice Chair), Jennifer Easton, Michelle Mush Lee, Ilana Lipsett, Jim Santi Owen, Theo Aytchan Williams

**Members Absent:** Shannon Price, Vanessa Whang

**Staff in Attendance:** Roberto Bedoya, Neha Balram, Raquel Iglesias, Kristen Zarembo,

**Guest Speakers:** Jean Johnstone (UC Berkley), Jim MacIrvine (Economic & Workforce Development Department), Gregory Minor (Economic & Workforce Development Department), Cava Menzies and the CO-LLAB Choir

#### **Roll Call/Call to Order**

**1. Welcome**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sanchez at 5:32 PM.

**2. Land Acknowledgement**

Chair Sanchez read a land acknowledgement.

Vice Chair Choice read the City's [Love Acknowledgement](#).

**3. Action Item 2: Approval of Minutes from January 23, 2022**

A vote on this item was moved to the May 22 meeting due to lack of a quorum.

**4. Update: Special Event Permitting (Greg Minor, Deputy Director, EWDD)**

Minor provided an update on the Special Event Permitting process, including an introduction of the new [online permit center](#) and an explanation of the permit appeal process. Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S. introduces a Review Committee to hear appeals of special event permit denials.

The Review Committee consists of three members: a member of the Cultural Affairs Commission, the Chief of Police or their designee, and the Director of the Economic and Workforce Development Department or their designee. This three-person committee offers multiple perspectives, increases transparency, and ensures the decision-making body that is nimble enough to hear requests for reconsideration on short notice and in advance of any proposed event. Commissioner Jim Santi Owen will serve on the committee.

**5. Action Item 2: Approval of CAC Member Participation on Special Event Permit Request for Reconsideration**

Motion to approve Cultural Affairs Commission member participation on special event permit reconsiderations made by Chair Sanchez; seconded by Commissioner Santi Owen.

Choice	AYE
Easton	AYE
Lee	AYE
Lipsett	AYE
Sanchez	AYE
Santi Owen	AYE
Williams	AYE

The motion passed.

**6. Artist Spotlight: Cava Menzies and the COL-LAB Choir**

This item was moved to a later part of the meeting.

Vice Chair Choice introduced Cava Menzies and members of the CO-LLAB Choir, the artist spotlight for the meeting. Cava Menzies introduced a performance by the CO-LLAB Choir.

As the founder, director and guiding spirit of Oakland-based CO-LLAB Choir, Cava Menzies has created a powerful new vehicle for bringing musicians together for synergistic collaboration. The 24-member contemporary vocal ensemble develops new works by vocalists and singer-songwriters through a rigorous process of co-arranging and co-writing material. The ensemble also collaborates with professional artists on studio recordings and performances.

**7. Update: Report on the State of the Arts: CA 2023-2024 (Jean Johnstone, Lecturer in Arts and Cultural Policy, UC Berkeley)**

Jean Johnstone, a lecturer in arts and cultural policy and a member of the ad hoc team looking at the General Plan, Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, and other topical issues provided an informational update to the Commission on arts advocacy and arts education advocacy at the State level.

**8. Update: Oakland Film Office (Jim MacIlvaine, Special Events Coordinator, EWDD)**

Jim MacIlvaine discussed the current challenges facing the one-man operated Oakland Film Office and the film industry. He provided his perspective on what concessions and accommodations Oakland would need to make to make filming in Oakland more attractive and affordable for productions interested in filming in the City.

**9. Public Comment**

Comments from Dr. Mieko Hatano (Executive Director, Oakland Symphony), David Mack, Executive Director, Joe Goode Performance Group).

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

FY2023-2025 Budget Cycle

The Cultural Affairs Division have been asked to work through a scenario where the division was cut by 20%. The cut would impact Cultural Funding Program's grantmaking capacity. In the last fiscal year the Cultural Affairs Division received a one-time allocation of \$1M through a City Council directive to support Festival culture and programs in the flatlands. The loss of these funds will have an impact on our ability to serve Oaklanders with an equity lens. The Division is a small unit in the City with a budget is less than 1% of the City's total budget. Yet the CAD is able to support community by building and supporting the social networks and cultural expression that make our city livable and safe.

#### Staffing

Fully staffed the CAD should have 6.5 employees. The CAD currently has 2.5 vacancies.

#### Grantmaking

The panel recommendations associated with Neighborhood Voices: Programs, and Neighborhood Voices: Individual Artists with being presented to the Life Enrichment Committee of the Council on April 25. Raquel Iglesias provided further detail on the funding recommendations.

#### April is Arts, Culture and Creativity Month

The proclamation from Mayor Sheng Thao declaring April as Arts, Culture, and Creativity Month in Oakland was read aloud.

### **11. Cultural Affairs Commission Chair's Update**

Chair Sanchez noted that the Commission will discuss ad hoc team goals and activities at a later meeting. She provided a brief update on the Henry J. Kaiser development, noting that a search committee has been established to help hire a manager of the space and that Dr. Ayodele Nzinga is involved in supporting the Community Benefit Agreement requirements.

Commissioner Lipsett provided an update on the ad hoc team work she and Chair Sanchez have been doing on the Urban Forest Plan. Chair Sanchez noted that the Commission needs to work on identify new members. Additionally, she noted that staff have worked on a Division briefing book that has been shared with the Mayor's office and can be shared with Councilmembers.

Chair Sanchez encourage the Commission to schedule meetings with Councilmembers to talk about the importance of preserving arts and culture in Oakland.

### **12. Open Forum**

No comment was made by the public.

### **13. Announcements & Acknowledgements**

The Commission took a moment to remember Robert Henry Johnson, Oakland choreographer, poet, and playwright who passed away in December 2022.

### **14. Closing**

A motion to end the meeting was made by Vice Chair Choice, seconded by Commissioner Santi Owen.

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.