



**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING**

November 20, 2013

8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Los Angeles County Arts Commission

Large Conference Room

1055 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90017

(213) 202-5858

**PRESENT:**

Council Members

Wylie Aitken, Chair  
Susan Steinhauser, Vice Chair  
Michael Alexander  
Andrew Green  
Charmaine Jefferson  
Terry Lenihan  
William Turner  
Rosalind Wyman

Arts Council Staff

Craig Watson, Director  
Scott Heckes, Deputy Director  
Patricia Milich, Programs Officer  
Mary Beth Barber, Special Projects Coordinator  
Caitlin Fitzwater, Public Information Officer  
Diane Golling, Administrative Assistant

Invited Guests

Sofia Klatzker, Director of Grants and Professional Development, Los Angeles County Arts Commission  
Ashley Lautzenhiser, Rodriguez Strategies  
The Honorable Adrin Nazarian, Member of the California State Assembly

Other Attendees

Members of the Public

**NOT PRESENT:**

Council Member

Christopher Coppola

## MINUTES

### I. Call to Order, Roll Call and Welcome

Chair Aitken calls the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. The Council's regular business is moved to after lunch so that the new strategic plan can be addressed during the first half of the meeting. Public comment is also deferred, and will be heard just before the afternoon's business.

Turner asks if Council members can question the people who show up for public comment, if they have knowledge about a proposal we are discussing. Aitken says this was discussed at the last meeting and we decided we couldn't. Members of the public must make their presentations only during the open Public Comment period, prior to the discussion. Turner respectfully requests that if we are voting on a proposal here today and there is someone here who has made the effort to attend and has relevant information, we should be allowed to ask them to present it. Aitken says we should be able to bend if necessary.

Sofia Klitzker, Director of Grants and Professional Development, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, welcomes the Council on behalf of Director Laura Zucker, who is in Istanbul. She talks about their \$4.3M grants budget and what they are doing with it: arts education, public art, running an amphitheatre, lots of different things to serve the county.

Golling calls the roll. A quorum is present.

### II. Approval of Minutes from September 25, 2013

Aitken asks if there are any changes recommended to the Minutes. There are none.

**ACTION:** Turner moves to approve the Minutes without amendment. Green seconds. The Minutes are approved unanimously.

### III. Chair's Report

Aitken defers to Steinhauser for the strategic plan discussion.

### IV. Strategic Planning Session

Steinhauser points out that an enormous amount of public input went into this plan, in contrast to our existing plan. This draft has four basic pillars: building public will for the arts, diversity access and partnerships (reaching different demographics), thought leadership (policy development, convenings, research), and programs and services (grants and services to the arts field). Council will be redirecting some of its current efforts and shifting priorities.

The California Arts Council (CAC) will become the voice and advocate for public funding of the arts. The CAC will become a thought leader. The CAC will fund the arts through programs and services. Those will be our three priorities.

For each of the pillars the strategic plan team has proposed implementation steps. Today, Lautzenhiser and Steinhauser will lead the Council through the mission, vision and values, go over each of the pillars with the proposed steps, and talk about where we need to make additions or deletions. Staffing, funding, and current programs will not be discussed. All of that will be taken up at the January meeting.

Green asks what the departures are from our current plan. Steinhauser says our current plan emphasizes revenue generation, capacity building, staffing and technology. This plan is about building relationships and public will. Listening tours indicated constituents and members of the public wanted to do more with this. Most people think of us as a grant making entity and don't realize we offer other services. The new plan lends itself to more convenings, maybe four times a year with different themes. The CAC may start to keep a library of cultural plans for communities and become more of a think tank. The plan calls for the CAC to form more partnerships so we are not relying on our funding alone to get grants to the field.

Watson points out that a lot of California citizens made extensive comments and those comments, while invisible here, were taken into consideration. Steinhauser agrees that this is not an incestuous product. Alexander points out that this document is more closely aligned with what a public agency should be doing.

Green congratulates Steinhauser, the staff and the consultants on a very fine piece of work. He likes the four pillars and that how we fund it becomes a secondary discussion. He also likes the implementation steps. At some point, we need to develop the metrics – how do we know we're winning?

Turner's concern is that we have spent a lot of time over the past several years trying to come up with funding that isn't dependent on the legislature. The field respects that, but we don't have any measurable results to show for our efforts. He still thinks the efforts should not be abandoned.

Lenihan enjoys the depth in the current version but says we need an executive summary, so people don't have to read the whole thing unless they are particularly interested.

Alexander says we should address the value of our arts assets and their role in cultural tourism.

Watson, on behalf of the staff, says he, like Lenihan, is most excited about thought leadership. He thinks there is a rich future for the CAC in being at the table and more visible.

Aitken suggests that the mission statement as is seems to focus on artists and it should be directed at all people. Wyman asks what the distribution on this will be. Fitzwater is going to put together a handout and also put it online, a summary version and the full version.

Jefferson thinks we're missing the big picture in the mission, why the state thinks it is important to engage in this, and why it's important for the state's legacy. Alexander agrees that the strategic plan needs a "because."

Jefferson asks if we have figured out a distinction between arts education and the arts impact on health and well being. She says that the arts have an intrinsic value but they are equally a tool for learning and a tool for healing. She is concerned that if we talk about the value of arts education, what we mean by it may not be what the public "hears."

Alexander suggests that we express pride in the diversity of our population and how that is expressed through the arts. He says we need to be fair and to be perceived as fair. Watson suggests we add "transparency" to that objective.

Alexander says if the legislature is expressing the will of the public, it's important to make sure they know the public supports the arts. Heckes and Milich point out that our putting fundraising

first in our current strategic plan was viewed negatively by both the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the public.

Steinhauser notes we should make sure that constituents express to their elected officials that there is an inherent value in the arts, and that government should fund the arts. In that sense, we are building/marshalling/activating public will for the arts. Jefferson says we need to make sure that people don't think that when the CAC doesn't have money it doesn't have a purpose. We still have services we provide, and we still have a policy role.

Alexander says that because we fund State-Local Partners, we have a reason to be talking to local electeds. Many of them end up in state government. We can encourage and gain knowledge from locals, find out who we should be talking to. Turner agrees that local art agencies are where the rubber meets the road for a lot of what we do.

Aitken does not think it should be a goal of ours to provide leadership in national organizations. He feels there's too much to do here in the state. Turner says our relationship with WESTAF has been a benefit and they have taken actions that help us fulfill our mission. Green suggests we broad-brush it by saying "maintain productive relationships with" the national organizations. Turner says that attending national convenings has been helpful and fruitful to him, and he would hate to see us forego that. Aitken doesn't think we should announce it as part of our mission and obligation. He likes "maintain a relationship" rather than the more aggressive "pursue leadership." Steinhauser says we don't want our detractors to call us isolationist; we are the biggest/most populous state. So involvement will be necessary.

The "diversity, access, partnerships" pillar grew out of the listening tours. The work of the CAC needs to reflect the state. The goal is to expand the CAC's footprint and reach as many people as possible.

Regarding the use of technology, Jefferson says that technology is not accessible to all, and is used by different populations in different ways. Watson says yes, we need to layer our outreach to reach the most citizens, and make ourselves available in multiple ways. Lenihan says we need to talk to people outside the arts, science and so forth, and that should be in there. Alexander says we should also add information flow in both directions to/from ethnic specific and genre specific service organizations. Jefferson says one of the Council's goals should be to increase its own awareness of what's out there. Green suggests changing "inclusion" of the arts to "integration" of the arts, when pursuing collaboration with other agencies. Steinhauser asks Fitzwater to create a glossary so everything can be made clear. Watson suggests that the glossary include examples. Not everyone reading this will have the same understanding of what we are saying, and examples would make it clearer.

Watson notes that in the old days, communities would form business committees for the arts and the businesses represented would not have anything to do with creative industries. They'd be banks, manufacturing, everybody. Lenihan says every business needs creative people in it. So the bottom line is, the consultant is instructed to open up the language.

The strategic plan team believes the "thought leadership" pillar gets to the heart of what the CAC is uniquely positioned to do. The CAC should be the leading voice, the leading authority on the arts in California.

Aitken says it's great to explore, to be aspirational, but we need to be realistic about what we can actually do. Jefferson says as staff and Council members change, our approach toward

implementation of the strategic plan will change. Watson says there will be occasions where we can exert leadership and we have to decide whether the opportunity matches the CAC's goals. Some of the strategic plan language is crafted to allow us to do that, so we can decide on the fly whether we can or can't take a legislative position or a leadership role.

Aitken says that fair pay for artists is an issue he wishes the CAC could do something about. So while the Council is listing aspirations, he'd like to throw that out there.

The last pillar of the new strategic plan is programs and services. Aitken says we are still wrestling with the idea of what is going to happen with grants, and Steinhauser says there is a difference between flexibility and lack of direction. This is designed to give us flexibility. Aitken says he isn't taking a position but there is an internal discussion regarding whether we should do more grants at a smaller amount, or larger grants but fewer of them. Lenihan says the grants are more than just a sum of money. Turner agrees and says our small grants are like "proclamations with benefits." Aitken says he is developing ideas that he has not advanced, but he's glad this is a guideline rather than a straitjacket. He wants to have as few encounters as possible with "that isn't in the strategic plan." Steinhauser appreciates his making that point. This is an organic document, designed to change over time. If there's a good idea, anyone should feel free to bring it up.

Jefferson says once we go through the discussion this afternoon we will be better able to flesh out this pillar, which is largely about implementing our objectives.

The strategic plan team will reconvene and prepare appendices, an executive summary, stakeholder outreach, and an action plan, all in preparation for the January meeting. Lautzenhiser requests two hours at the January meeting.

#### V. Lunch Speaker

At 1:00 p.m. the Council breaks for lunch. Assembly Member Nazarian addresses the Council and thanks them for their support with his recent legislative efforts. He reminds us to be mindful of transparency and make sure everything we do is out in the open so there's never any concern. This is an issue that often plagues the world of public affairs.

#### VI. Artists in Schools Grant Redirection

The meeting reconvenes at 1:27 p.m.

Milich introduces the redirection of an Artists in Schools (AIS) grant which was to go to the Arts Council of Sonoma County. Administration of the grant will be done by California Poets in the Schools (CPITS) rather than the local art council, which is now defunct. So the project will remain the same, but the funds will be administered by CPITS rather than the Arts Council of Sonoma County.

Turner asks if changing the grant administrator violates any of our guidelines. Heckes explains this isn't an operational grant, going to an organization to support the organization. It's for a project. We are asking the Council to allow us to approve a fiscal receiver.

**ACTION:** Steinhauser moves to redirect the AIS grant to CPITS. Jefferson seconds. The motion is approved by Aitken, Alexander, Green, Jefferson, Lenihan, Steinhauser, Turner. Wyman abstains.

## VII. Programs Calendar

Watson says any questions should go to him, Milich or Heckes. No action is required on this item. Steinhauser asks that the calendar be included in the January packet as well.

## VIII. Public Comment

Aitken requests that no one speak unless recognized by the Chair. He opens the floor for public comment and welcomes Malissa Feruzzi Shriver as former Chair.

The Chair calls on Nathan Birnbaum from the City of Santa Monica, Cultural Affairs Division. Birnbaum says the city is thrilled that \$2M is available and has high hopes that this is the opening of a new era. He asks that the Council fund accessible programs to foster innovation and to focus on the broadest statewide impact possible.

The Chair recognizes Angela Johnson Peters with Lia Fund, who is a long-time arts advocate. She is here to express a concern about lack of transparency. She would like to know how the proposals under consideration were solicited. What efforts were made to reach out to diverse populations?

The Chair recognizes Joe Smoke, Grants Director, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, who encourages us to set a path toward future grant categories, make the impact statewide and equitable, and serve both urban and rural populations. He asks that the Council choose programs that provide the best opportunities for traveling and touring artists to provide jobs and reach geographic diversity.

The Chair recognizes Danielle Brazell of Arts for LA. She says she owes her start to the CAC and its artist residency program. She congratulates the Council on the unprecedented allocation of \$2M but asks that the Council ensure that their choices are based on a set of criteria, not a set of relationships. There are questions around the process and what the criteria is based on, and we need to answer these questions.

Aitken says he wants to address the concerns expressed instead of giving his prepared remarks. Great opportunity leads to tough choices. He wants to make sure it's not thought that some members of the public had inside information or favoritism was shown. The preparation for these funding decisions was discussed in a previous open meeting in September, where the Council came up with criteria to judge what should be funded. He explains some of the criteria to the members of the public who are in attendance. He also announces that the War Comes Home proposal has been withdrawn by California Humanities. Watson passes along Ralph Lewin's hope that the Council will hold some funds back to dedicate to arts for veterans.

Aitken calls on Heckes to define the funding mechanisms under review: sole source (noncompetitive bid), request for proposal, and competitive grants. Heckes does so.

## IX. Options for One-time \$2 million Funding Increase

At 2:07 p.m. Aitken starts the discussion of the proposals before the Council. Steinhauser asks whether the Programs Committee will be given time to report out, and what we hope to have accomplished by 6:00 p.m. Aitken assumes there will be voting but doesn't know how many proposals the Council will vote on. The Chair declines to recognize the Programs Committee for presentation of their recommendations.

Discussion begins regarding the first proposal: a Chinese Cultural Exchange Symposium. The proposal is summarized by Heckes. Aitken asks how the Council can vote on something that is not our initiative, but the Governor's. Watson says if the Council likes the idea it could take a leadership role. Steinhauser says we have no idea what will come out of the symposium. The clear benefit for California jobs is not apparent. Discussion ensues and Council concerns are addressed.

**ACTION:** Wyman moves to approve funding the Chinese Cultural Exchange Symposium at an amount up to \$25,000, with the staff to report on progress at the January council meeting. Turner seconds. The motion is approved by Aitken, Alexander, Green, Jefferson, Lenihan, Turner and Wyman. Steinhauser votes no.

Milich begins a running total on the whiteboard of what monies are being allocated to which proposals.

Jefferson presents the next proposal, Cinemedia. Questions arise and Council members express awareness that if Coppola were present some of these questions could be answered. Green points out that film is identified with California and that this project could attract private sector partners. Cost per student is deemed high. Aitken says that any proposal turned down today could conceivably come back in a different form.

**ACTION:** Turner moves to not approve Cinemedia. Alexander seconds. The motion is approved by Aitken, Alexander, Jefferson, Lenihan, Turner and Wyman. Steinhauser and Green vote no.

At 3:16 p.m. Green presents the Creative California Communities proposal. Steinhauser expresses support for the Programs Committee recommendation, contained in the report they prepared but did not present, of increasing this initiative and using it as an umbrella to cover some of the ideas that the Council does not vote to approve today. Turner says if we take our \$2M and sprinkle it around the state it will get absorbed and disappear like a shower in the desert. We need to concentrate the money so we can point to a result. Aitken and Wyman dislike the proposal and question why the Council cannot grant money to organizations it recognizes as outstanding. Heckes explains that the CAC cannot directly give money to any of the "one-off" proposals before the Council today, because as a state agency we must have a competitive process. The Council Members cannot substitute their individual judgment for a competitive process that is open to all. After discussion, the following action is taken:

**ACTION:** Green moves to approve the expenditure of \$750,000 to create a Creative California Communities grant program that will award grants up to \$100,000, not requiring, but encouraging, a 1/1 match; grants will be awarded on a competitive basis; and applicants whose proposals are in hand, but are rejected today, are eligible to reapply for consideration under this initiative. Alexander seconds. The motion is approved by Aitken, Alexander, Green, Jefferson, Lenihan, and Turner. Steinhauser and Wyman abstain.

At 4:43 p.m. Turner presents Creativity at the Core. Watson comments that the CAC has a unique opportunity to put the arts at the table when the common core standards are developed. Discussion ensues.

**ACTION:** Turner moves to fund Creativity at the Core in the amount of \$300,000. Alexander seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

At 5:17 p.m. Aitken presents JUMPStARTs. Green and Steinhauser support it but Green would prefer to not fund the “how-to guide” portion of the proposal. Alexander wants to make sure the panelists come from the juvenile justice system as well as the arts. We need to go for good geographic distribution. He would also like to hold off on the how-to book. Aitken is concerned that if we make the grants too small we won’t achieve anything, and thinks we should do a pilot in a single school. Steinhauser requests that we fit into the guidelines something about the victims of crime, or make sure that it’s clear that the kids we serve through this program are, themselves, victims of crime.

**ACTION:** Aitken moves to fund JUMPStARTS at four geographically-varied sites at \$50,000 each, for a total amount of \$200,000; the guidelines will require a report-back. Green seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

At 5:36 p.m. Turner presents Turnaround Arts. Green thinks that being a lead investor is a good idea, especially if you want acknowledgment as a founder. Lenihan says a lot of people are excited about this and we should be the people who are starting it. It’s shovel ready; we have California schools that are already identified as turnaround schools. Aitken asks Feruzzi Shriver to explain what she means by “founder.” She says we would fund the administration startup and hiring of the director. We would be, she hopes, partnering with the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities. We’re being advised by the Gates Foundation as to how to customize the initiative; the California model will be different from the national model. We would be recognized as the first funder. Steinhauser objects to putting in \$300K because Feruzzi Shriver has already told us they can get the money elsewhere. Her concerns are addressed.

**ACTION:** Turner moves to fund Turnaround Arts at \$300,000. Green seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

#### X. Adjournment

The Chair adjourns the meeting at 6:20 p.m. in memory of artist Joseph Gatto, Assembly Member Mike Gatto’s father; former Council Member A.C. Lyles; and Sacramento poet and artist Jose Montoya.