

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

**April 22, 2016
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

Gallery 800
Lankershim Arts Center
5108 Lankershim Boulevard
North Hollywood, CA 91601
(818) 752-8838

PRESENT:

Council Members

Donn K. Harris, Chair
Susan Steinhauser, Vice Chair
Larry Baza
Phoebe Beasley
Kathleen Gallegos
Nashormeh Lindo
Louise McGuinness
Rosalind Wyman

Council Members Absent: Christopher Coppola, Jaime Galli, Steve Oliver

Arts Council Staff

Craig Watson, Director
Ayanna Kiburi, Deputy Director
Caitlin Fitzwater, Communications Director
Mary Beth Barber, Special Projects and Initiatives Associate
Shelly Gilbride, Programs Officer
Ian Branaman, Budget Officer
John Seto, Arts Program Specialist
Josy Miller, Arts Program Specialist

Invited Attendees

Joe Smoke, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs
Yago Cura, Hinchas de Poesia
Jill Moniz, curator
Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian

Michael Alexander, former Arts Council member
Tim Pershing, Office of Assemblyman Richard Bloom

Other Attendees / Members of the Public

Jessica Ceballos, Writ Large Press / Avenue 50 / Highland Park Neighborhood Council
Henry Nuñez, Strindberg Laboratory
Michael Bierman, Strindberg Laboratory
Amy Eriksen, Angles Gate Cultural Center
Ana Carillo, Acuña Art Gallery and Cultural Center
Rebecca Nevarez, Latino Arts Network
Michelle Weger, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra
Dora Espaza, Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian's office
Jessica Wilson Cardenas, Los Angeles Poet Society
Margaret Arnold, NELA Art
Griselda Suarez, Arts Council for Long Beach
Rick Stein, Arts Orange County and Californians for the Arts
John Gallogly, Theatre West
Sophia Klatzer, Arts for LA
Daisy Noemi, LA Zine Fest
Kristin Runnels, CalArts
Teresa Flores
Lauren Pizer Mains, Legislative Joint Committee on the Arts

MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Welcome from Host

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The Council and public was welcomed by Meagan Daine, managing director of the Lankershim Arts Center and its resident theatre company The Road Theatre, which also provides administrative support for the Arts Center. Daine said that the building was built circa 1939 as a Department of Water & Power Building, and later renovated and transformed into an arts center by the Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of Los Angeles. It is now a registered cultural landmark.

She also noted that the first NOHO (North of Hollywood) "Arts Walk" was the previous evening, and marks a first of many for this culturally rich area of greater Los Angeles.

Nancy Bianconi, President of the NoHo Arts District board, welcomed the Council as well, and gave the members an overview of the area. She noted that within one mile down Lankershim Blvd and neighboring side streets there are 27 live theaters, seven dance studios, 30 recording studios, and 30 acting studios and training facilities. The area has grown to be a destination spot in the greater LA area.

II. Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum

Barber takes the roll at 10:04 a.m. and a quorum is established. (Baza arrived at 10:06; Steinhauser arrived at 10:13.)

Baza was acknowledged by the Chair as a recent appointee by Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins. Baza briefly thanked the Council and noted he was looking forward to working on the Council.

III. ACTION ITEM: Minutes of meeting on January 22, 2016

Barber distributed a corrected version of the draft minutes from the January 22, 2016, meeting to the Council. The Council reviewed the corrections.

- Beasley moved to approve them as amended
- Gallegos seconded
- Beasley, Gallegos, Harris, Lindo, McGuinness and Wyman approved, with Baza abstaining and Steinhauser not present during the vote.

IV. Chair Report

Harris discussed aspects of the written Chair's Report provided to Council at the meeting and discussed additional items of interest – noting that based on the recently released Otis Report on the Creative Economy of California 2015 that there was an increase in the number of people involved in California's creative economy. He also commented that as the Chair of the thought leadership subcommittee, he would like the Council and staff to consider how to further the expertise and importance of the arts in California.

V. Director's Report

Watson informed the Council that newly announced Council member Juan Devis, the VP of Content Development and Production at KCET Link, also sits on the advisory committee for the

LA County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative. Devis is a Senate appointee and will start in June, said Watson.

Watson gave an update to the Council on SB 916 by Senator Ben Allen that would restore the Dance and Theater credentials for K-12, noting that Annette Bening testified in the state Senate the previous month about the importance of the bill. Watson said he would inform the Council about the status of the legislation as it makes its way through the legislative process, and that various education credentialing institutions – specifically California State University – are in a position to fulfill the credential if the legislation becomes law.

Watson noted that newly announced Council member Devis has presented remarks the previous year on the Otis Report at the Sacramento information legislative hearing in the capitol announcing the report's finding, and that KCET had been a media partner through a series of multi-media stories about the impact of the Creative Economy. This year's Otis Report provides a series of regional snapshots that examine the importance of the creative economy on different parts of the state – a new feature for the annual study.

Watson noted in the research findings and proposed message framework to build public will for Arts and Culture coordinated by ArtsMidwest with the Metropolitan Group, San Diego was cited as one of the communities, with specific leadership by the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture, which Baza chairs. Baza said that San Diego is very enthusiastic about the program and his fellow commissioners are very interested.

Steinhauser noted when she served as an advisor with the investigation by ArtsMidwest and the Metropolitan Group, a number of projects were investigated. She noted that when it comes to the question of access to arts, the investigation explored why people felt outside the arts world, and suggested a number of changes to the framing of the identity of the arts to include family, relationships, self-health, self-expression and others. Steinhauser noted that the City of San Jose was a great partner for this investigation under the leadership of Kerry Adams Hapner, the Director of Cultural Affairs and the Deputy Director of Economic Development. Steinhauser added that she hoped to see more information about public will in the agency's eNewsletter, the California ArtBeat.

Watson also welcomed Kiburi as the new agency deputy director as one of the team, saying that she is taking in information about the agency like a sponge, and that she has deep experience in state government.

Beasley asked if Senator Allen had any co-authors for SB 916, and Watson noted that Senators Fuller and Hertzberg were co-authors, as well as others. Watson said he would notify the Council of others as they join as co-authors.

VI. Introduction of Assemblyman Nazarian and Honoring of Outgoing Council member Michael Alexander

Watson introduced Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian, noting that the Council meeting was taking place in the Assemblyman's district. Watson noted that Assemblyman Nazarian has been a strong supporter of the arts and creative economy in his years in the Legislature.

Assemblyman Nazarian welcomed the Council and guests to his home district, which he characterized as the birthplace of creative ingenuity during the explosion of economic activity from the early growth of the film era. The affordable flatlands in the Los Angeles area where

workers in the entertainment industry lived is now the North Hollywood area location of the Council meeting. The neighborhoods and cities nearby now consist of multiple generations of families – the children and grandchildren of the first creative workers in the region, said Nazarian. The Assemblyman said that in his observations from representing the area, he and others sometimes take for granted the importance of the arts and not invest in something that's already economically strong, but that he is trying to change the conversation and encourage investment and nurturing of what Californians are good at in the arts and creative economy. Assemblyman Nazarian noted that the 46th Assembly District that he represents includes the area on Magnolia known locally as Theatre Row.

Nazarian noted that in his role on the Assembly Budget Committee over the years, specifically as Chair of Subcommittee 4 (General Government), he has been fortunate enough to witness and support the expansion of the California Arts Council's General Fund allocation from \$1 million to \$7 million. He noted that it's important for those who support investment in the arts to remain vigilant about its importance. He added that he has been talking to other legislative colleagues about how important arts activities, investment and support are not just in the urban areas, but in rural areas as well. He reminded the Council that in the Los Angeles area there is a great deal of support and public/private partnership opportunity, but that there is investment in the arts statewide, especially when examining a program like the recently established Cultural Districts Program, approved by the Legislature and Governor in 2015.

Assemblyman Nazarian acknowledged the dedication and service of former Arts Council member Michael Alexander, noting that he met Alexander previously when the Assemblyman was a lead staffer for former Assemblyman Paul Krekorian. Alexander, as the executive director of Grand Performances, brought free performing arts from various multi-cultural backgrounds to the people who live and work in downtown Los Angeles, enriching the lives of local Angelinos. Nazarian also acknowledged the dozen of years Alexander was on the Council, and presented legislative acknowledgements to Alexander, as well as outgoing Council member Steinhauser.

Watson acknowledged Assemblyman Nazarian for his longtime support of the arts in California, including through the bill his first year in office that would have increased the General Fund investment in the arts to \$75 million. While the bill did not make it through the legislative process, Assemblyman Nazarian certainly received positive attention from the arts community.

Alexander noted that the arts as a field have to create a network of services and support. The sciences have support services and advocacy, and the arts have support services from nonprofit resource groups. But there's a need for an expansion of these kinds of services, noted Alexander. California is very diverse, and in his experience at Grant Performances, he notes that every socio-economic class wants the arts in their lives.

Alexander, the previous Assembly appointee to the Council, acknowledged Larry Baza the current Assembly appointee and encouraged him to continue to push for financial and other support for the arts field, as well as recognition that the arts field deserves. He finished his remarks by stating that he was honored to work with the Council and to meet everyone he encountered in the dozen years he served. He singled out Steinhauser and her eight years on the Council.

Attendees enjoyed a special performance in honor of Alexander, given by Nevenka, a Los Angeles-based women's folk chorus performing songs from Eastern Europe.

Steinhauser noted that she and Alexander were the last of the cohort that worked through the extra lean years of funding for the California Arts Council. Steinhauser added that creating a strong network of local arts agencies through the State-Local Partnership Program is vital for the state, and also acknowledged Wyman for her long history of support for the arts and participation in arts policy.

Wyman acknowledged both Steinhauser and Alexander, she was especially impressed by the success of Grand Performances and the organization's free performances in downtown Los Angeles, saying that Grand Performances under Alexander's leadership filled a need in the urban city, and the organization did so in a way that was meaningful and impactful. On a final note, Alexander reminded the Council to utilize the support of arts educators as well as professional artists and groups in their advice to policymakers.

VII. Program Panel Recommendations Approval Process

Arts Council staff directed the Council members to the tabs in their books with the recommendation by the peer-review panels for funding in State and Regional Networks, JUMP StArts, and Artists Activating Communities (Tabs 4, 5, and 6). Kiburi asked the Council members to review for conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest with any of the organizations in the documents. Baza and Steinhauser noted one conflict each for the Artist Activating Communities program recommendations. Harris asked if the Council members needed to notify staff if the organization was not recommended for funding, and Watson asked that the Council acknowledge those as well.

Wyman asked if staff had reviewed and determined conflicts ahead of time as in previous meetings, and Watson replied that staff flag previously known conflicts for their Council members when they are aware of them, but the issue must be brought forward prior to every funding vote. Gilbride noted that Council members may be present during general discussion of a program, but cannot be present if they have a conflict and those specific organizations are discussed. Wyman wanted confirmation that general discussion was allowed, and Watson noted that the Arts Council staff would review the codes regarding general discussion of programs prior to a Council vote for approval of funding recommendations.

Beasley suggested that Council members provide a list of conflicts to staff ahead of time for staff to review against panel recommendations, and Watson welcomed the suggestion to streamline the process, while acknowledging that new conflicts could arise at anytime, and thus a check will always be performed prior to Council items pertaining to grant allocation votes.

VIII. Approval of Artists Activating Communities (AAC) Peer-Panel Review Recommendations

Gilbride and the AAC peer-review panel chair, curator Jill Moniz, gave an overview of the process and recommendations. Gilbride noted that the correct county listing in the recommendation for Brava Women for the Arts is San Francisco County (the listing cites "United States"). Moniz noted that the AAC review panel was a very rigorous panel that reviewed each application carefully, and that the members of the review panel participated in much discussion and debate over each application. Moniz noted that the members of the panel were very experienced and thoughtful.

She added that the applications were for strong artist-based projects that fulfilled a need for communities, including immigrant communities, urban areas crowded out because of the cost of living (San Francisco especially), proposals that bridged the past to contemporary communities, especially concerning ethnic groups and communities of color. She explained that the panel members reviewed the proposals for content and strength of projects, not minor non-relevant details like grammar mistakes or misspellings.

Harris noted that this particular program harkens back to the Arts Council's and other funding organizations' history in the 1970s of "Arts in Unusual Places." Moniz said that the applicants have some amazing ideas about how to engage communities in art-making and have a significant positive impact. There were many strong applicants, said Moniz.

Gilbride noted that the AAC program for FY 2015-16 had \$500,000 allocated as a modest and typical start for a new program. Because of the large number of applications and limited funding, the peer-review panel recommendations are for applications receiving an "8" or above out of a scale of 1 to 10. Gilbride also noted that successful applications had strengths in both artist-driven projects and community activities and engagement.

Wyman asked if there was a minimum requirement for length of time for an applicant to be in business, and Gilbride responded that it was two years. Wyman asked if the Council members could move to approve other applicants who scored below an 8. Watson advised against doing so. Wyman asked if it was allowed, and Watson noted that the peer-review panel process is based on the historical and transparent process established by the NEA over forty years previous. Wyman asked about the purpose of the Council in that case, and Harris noted that if the Council were to do so, there would need to be a change in the process and the Council members would need to be part of the peer review and read all the applications as part of a fair and transparent process. Given the Council's role in programmatic oversight, Gilbride noted that the Council and the Programs Committee in particular, fulfilled this role by developing the guidelines for each program, determining the funding allocations of each program, and reaching out to potential panelists.

Moniz explained that the peer-review panel members analyzed the applications in great detail and made their recommendations based on dozens of hours of review and discussion. Gilbride offered to provide notes from the peer-review panel process to Council members who were interested. Gilbride also reminded the Council that the peer-review panel for AAC was examining proposals for projects. There were many excellent organizations who submitted applications, but their projects didn't suit the criteria of both being artist-driven and community-engagement activities.

Gilbride also noted that with the limitations on the funding many quality applications receiving below an 8 were not funded. Harris wondered if the Council could hypothetically vote to extend fundable applications below the "8" ranking -- if there were funds available. Gilbride reminded the Council that the enthusiasm from the public through the large number of high-quality applications should be viewed as a good thing for a pilot, indicating high interest and need that can influence future funding decisions. Gilbride also noted that the amount requested for funding this program through the ranking of "8" is \$559,968, with staff recommending an allocation of the amount above \$500,000 to come from unused funds slated for the JUMP StArts program.

Wyman said that she would have liked more information on the applicants and the reasoning for the recommendations. Lindo noted that as a Council member she didn't want to read all the applications unless she was officially a member of the peer-review panel, but did ask that the

summaries of the applications be enhanced, noting that some of the summaries did not make it clear how the projects were artist-driven.

Moniz acknowledged Lindo's observation, and added that for very small organizations, individuals that may seem to be administrative or executive staff are the artists. The panelists looked at the impact of the project, not the internal staff structure of the organizations, she said. She also noted that the panelists, as part of the fair and transparent process, had to rely on the information in the application and not from outside knowledge or assumptions.

McGuinness said that while the summaries appeared brief, as a Council member she trusts the panelists' review and recommendations.

Gallegos asked how many of the applicants were new to the Arts Council, and Gilbride said she would investigate. Gilbride added that many of the applications included artists new to the Arts Council. Gallegos commented on the cultural and economic diversity of the panel. Moniz noted that reviewing some of the applications was difficult – that they saw communities with a deep need for AAC-type projects, but poorly formulated applications and not-well-thought out projects. Some of the applicants did not seem to understand the process, said Moniz, and the panel members noted the overall need for technical support and grant-writing training for the organizations and communities with the greatest need for AAC and other similar programming.

Harris asked if the funding for the program could be augmented at the next Council meeting; Gilbride noted that the scheduling would not match up against the application, as many of the projects would or should have started by the Council meeting in June. Gilbride noted that the panel members for the peer review were from very diverse backgrounds and communities.

Gallegos said that she didn't find the formatting of the report to be helpful in understanding the projects because the artists from each AAC application were not easily identifiable until she read the narrative summaries, and she asked that next time the staff reports identify the artists more easily in the staff report.

Wyman added that she needed more time to review the reports and staff recommendations before the Council meeting.

McGuinness asked if staff are available in the office if applicants have questions; Watson said yes, but added that additional outreach to the field is important and will be enhanced and increased as the agency builds up on staff.

Harris recommended that the Programs Committee analyze the pattern of information provided to Council.

Beasley said that as Council members, they should honor the peer-review panel process, with its long history of openness and transparency, and added that while it's not possible to change the rankings of a peer-panel review, it may be a worthwhile investment of time and resources to discuss and analyze with the Programs Committee and staff on how to improve the process.

ACTION ITEM: Steinhauser moved to approve the staff recommendation to fund 45 of the AAC applicants ranked 8 and above for artist-driven projects in a community setting except for organizations Piece by Piece and Art Produce, for a total of \$540,868. Baza seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Steinhauser stepped out.

ACTION ITEM: Gallegos moved to approve AAC applicant Piece by Piece for \$13,500. Lindo seconded, and the motion passed with aye votes from Baza, Beasley, Gallegos, Harris, Lindo, McGuinness, and Wyman. Steinhauser cast no vote and did not participate in conversation concerning this action item.

Steinhauser returned to the meeting; Baza stepped out.

ACTION ITEM: Steinhauser moved to approve AAC application Art Produce for \$5,600. McGuinness seconded, and the motion passed with aye votes from Beasley, Gallegos, Harris, Lindo, McGuinness, Steinhauser and Wyman. Baza cast no vote and did not participate in conversation concerning this action item.

IX. Approval of Juveniles Utilizing Massive Potential Starting with Arts (JUMP StArts) Peer-Panel Review Recommendations

Gilbride introduced the agency's Arts Education Program Specialist Josy Miller and JUMP StArts panel chair Yago Cura. Gilbride also directed the Council to a correction in the funding recommendations listing for Each One Reach One, as the organization resides in San Francisco County (the listing cites "USA"). Gilbride also noted the number of applicants to this program in San Diego and Los Angeles counties, indicating there may be a strong interest in rehabilitative arts programming in these parts of the state.

Cura noted that the work involved in the JUMP StArts programming – providing immersive arts programming to juvenile offenders – is difficult work. The individuals who sat on the peer-review panel came from different backgrounds, but there was consensus among the panelists about quality applications that could be fulfilled. Gilbride noted that in watching the panel, it became apparent what a huge need there was in the state for juvenile rehabilitative arts programming. She added that the panelists gave good recommendations on how to make the program and application stronger.

Watson noted that with the publicity surrounding the Arts Council's partnership with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), staff has been asked why the agency hasn't done more work addressing this need earlier. Watson said that he directs those who pose the questions to programs like Artists in Schools and JUMP StArts.

Harris said that he had worked in a juvenile work camp and found the process and procedures in an incarceration setting to be a complicated impediment to providing the arts services at times. Cura agreed, noting that the purpose and principal focus of law enforcement and custody officials is the safety and security of staff and the wards or inmates, while the purpose and principal focus of the arts providers is the arts programming. Having these two groups with divergent focuses can be complicated, said Cura. The JUMP StArts panelists kept these facts in mind when reviewing the applications, he said, looking for proposals that were realistic.

Gallegos asked if there was an evaluation – survey or study -- in place for JUMP StArts, as well as other programming, as well as an analysis of the backgrounds of the artist providing services. Watson noted that for the Arts-in-Corrections (AIC) partnership, the agency is contracting for research with a team of noted evaluators, including a California expert on evidence-based rehabilitative programs. Barber gave a brief overview of the research goals for AIC. McGuinness added that based on the various videos and media reports provided to Council about AIC, the program appears to have a strong positive impact.

Gilbride noted that there is an identified need for assessment tools and evaluation in arts-in-juvenile justice. Cura noted that many of the applicants included surveys and other evaluation tools to assess their programming. Beasley commented that she attended an arts program at a Los Angeles County juvenile camp provided by a longtime Arts Council grantee, and learned how much the arts can positively impact the wards and give them hope and a positive direction.

Wyman asked what the proportion of arts services being provided to women versus men in the AIC program. Barber said she would research the issue. Gilbride noted that many of the JUMP StArts applicants serve girls too.

Gallegos asked if the visual artwork created by the JUMP StArts juveniles or performances are available, as the photos and media stories on AIC are, to provide support for the program and others of a similar nature. Gilbride noted that the program applications includes a documentation section and requirement, but there are very strict rules protecting the identity of minors, as well as the need to create a safe place and atmosphere for the juveniles. Cura added that local law enforcement appears to be starting to see the benefit of arts programming for juveniles, which can lead to attitude changes.

ACTION ITEM: Gallegos moved that the Council approve the panel recommendations to fund 27 JUMP StArts applicants ranking 5 and above for arts education services in juvenile justice settings in California for \$603,071. Lindo seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Gilbride drew the Council's attention to the second staff recommendation for this program of a \$20,000 allocation for an evaluation of the first three years of the JUMP StArts program. Harris asked if the evaluation funds were to go to the grantees, and Gilbride said that the funding would be for a contract with professional evaluators through the public Request-for-Proposal process.

ACTION ITEM: Beasley moved that the Council approve the staff recommendation of a \$20,000 allocation for an evaluation of the first three years of the JUMP StArts program. McGuinness seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Wyman said she appreciated the work that is done at these juvenile incarceration and rehabilitative facilities, saying that it was hard work. She noted that she had experience with a juvenile boys' camp years ago when her daughter worked at one, and told a humorous story about how the camp staff and wards played a trick on her when she came to visit. That the staff and the juveniles were able to coordinate in a safe manner to play a practical joke impressed the importance of communication and interaction – exactly where the arts can play a role.

X. Approval of Artists Statewide and Regional Networks Peer-Panel Review Recommendations

Gilbride introduced Arts and Special Project Associate John Seto to provide the Council with information about the peer-review panel for the Statewide and Regional Networks (SRN) program. Seto noted that while the two previous programs were project based, SRN provides general support for arts service organizations that provide services statewide or on a regional basis. He also noted that the requirements for Regional Network organizations were changed to allow more organizations to be eligible. Twenty-nine organizations applied, and the panel recommended funding 28. The one not recommended for funding did not meet the criteria of a service organization, said Seto.

Seto introduced Joe Smoke of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs who served as the panel chair for the SRN peer-review panel. Smoke explained that the panel consisted of five experts from diverse backgrounds in terms of age, arts expertise, location in California, rural versus urban, etc. Smoke noted that the SRN panel addresses the very important category of building of the arts infrastructure throughout the state. Smoke added that this was a highly competitive category of funding, and the applicants that received the top rankings had very good applications.

Wyman asked if the number of applicants was a surprise. Smoke replied that there were new organizations and that he believes there will be even more in future years than applied this year.

McGuinness had a question about one of the terms used in the description of one of the applicants, "emerging arts," and if the applicant means new jobs in the arts. Gilbride agreed that the term was confusing and said that the panel noted the overuse of jargon in that particular application. Watson said that the term is used by national groups in relation to new leadership in the arts field, which could mean new jobs as a focus for that organization. Seto added that the Arts Council provides quality information for those seeking jobs in the arts field through its "Arts Jobs" and "Artists' Call" listings on the Arts Council website that he edits.

Steinhauser asked if there were any first-time applicants, and Gilbride noted that at least five of the applicants recommended for funding were new to this program. Wyman asked if there was overlap between Arts for LA and Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network, and staff noted that Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network is a project of Community Partners, a southern California organization for social and civic entrepreneurs.

ACTION ITEM: Steinhauser moved to approve the panel recommendations to fund 28 Statewide and Regional Network applicants ranking 6 and above for regional and statewide service organizations in California, for a total of \$490,984. McGuinness seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Council took a short break at 12:40 p.m., and reconvened at 12:50 p.m.

XI. Cultural Districts RFP

Watson noted that the next agenda item concerning the new California Cultural Districts program as approved by the Legislature and signed into law last year by the Governor. The bill was carried by Assemblyman Richard Bloom, and Watson introduced Tim Pershing from Assemblyman Bloom's district office.

Pershing introduced himself and thanked the peer-review panel chairs for their hard work and long hours reviewing the program applications. He said that Assemblyman Bloom is very familiar with the positive impact of the arts and how they played a role in transforming Santa Monica from the 1970s to what it is today. Assemblyman Bloom sees a pattern with arts and cities or neighborhoods in places like Venice, CA or Jersey City, NJ – places where artists once lived but few now do because the areas have become too expensive. Pershing noted the importance of preserving the arts through the Cultural Districts program, and to develop a program that gives equal opportunity and can be applicable to small towns and large urban areas alike and can highlight local strengths and economic benefits, as well as partnering with other cultural resources like parks, historical resources, etc.

Watson noted that the Governor signed the bill in the fall of 2015, and how the Arts Council has been tasked with developing the process to enact a program in the state. California now joins 13 other states that have arts/cultural district programs. Some have economic benefits like tax incentives, abatement and technical assistance. California's statute crafts a program most like the one in Massachusetts, with the recognition of a state-sanctioned area designated as a cultural district. While there are no funds associated with California's Cultural District program currently, Watson noted that after a few years of the program, the MA legislature opted to invest in the program with \$5M in their budget.

Watson proposed that the Council consider investing \$48,000 of funding that was originally allocated for a statewide convening that's been postponed to the next fiscal year for a Cultural District planning consultant through the contracting Request-for-Proposals process.

Harris clarified that the statewide convening was moved to the upcoming fiscal year, and Watson confirmed.

McGuinness asked how many districts would be in the program at the start. Watson said that it was a good question, as there are dozens of potential candidates for designation, and the agency expects to receive a large number of applications. Before launching into that process, Watson recommends seeking a highly qualified consultant that can help establish the process. McGuinness asked if any of the applicants received funding, and Watson noted that the current plan for the Cultural Districts program is as a state recognition, branding and networking program, especially when working with the state's travel and tourism agency, Visit California.

Watson added that there's concern that an Arts and Culture District program will have an impact on gentrification and displace the original artists in the district, and there is need to have planning in place to address the challenge. Pershing from Assemblyman Bloom's office agreed with Watson, noting that there is information from other states and their programs for best practices.

Harris asked why the proposed amount was \$48,500, and Kiburi said that the amount is under the threshold for the contract approval process after the RFP process concludes.

Gallegos said she was very worried about the destructive impact a cultural district program could have on communities of color. She is extremely cautious about supporting the program because of this concern. Watson noted that similar concerns were brought up during the legislative process, and that the chosen consultant through the RFP process would have to address this issue in a sensitive way. Watson noted that Council member Oliver could provide insight and history on this issue for the City of San Francisco. McGuinness said she observed similar issues in Oakland. Lindo noted that the same issues impacted Philadelphia as well.

Gallegos emphasized that when establishing a cultural district, the local community must be brought into the process. Fitzwater offered to show Gallegos the language from the RFP about this subject. Gallegos said she would encourage establishing cultural districts in rural areas where there is room to grow, or abandoned areas that need investment, and to not displace communities of color.

Fitzwater said that the issue would be addressed in the scope of work in the RFP. The Council engaged in a general discussion about the contracting process. Steinhauser noted that the funds must be encumbered by June 30 and asked when the proposals would be due. Fitzwater said the application would be open for four weeks.

Harris asked if the Council could have input on the details of the RFP, and Kiburi said that they can't announce the details in an RFP ahead of the official release date because of regulations and issues of fairness. Harris asked how the Council could have input, and Gallegos asked where the RFP would be posted. Branaman said that the RFP posting will be on both the Arts Council website as well as the state contracting website, and Watson added that the notification about this RFP would be widely available to the public.

Wyman asked if applicants would be companies or individuals, and Fitzwater said an applicant could be either. Steinhauser asked when the final product would be due from the contractor, and Fitzwater said four months, and Harris noted that would be in October.

ACTION ITEM: McGuinness moved to approve the reallocation of \$48,500 of the \$50,000 budget allocation for a statewide arts convening for the purposes of hiring a contractor to develop a comprehensive state cultural districts program. Beasley seconded. The motion passed with aye votes from Baza, Beasley, Harris, Lindo, McGuinness, Steinhauser, Wyman; no vote was cast by Gallegos.

XII. External Evaluation of Agency Programs

Gilbride gave a verbal update on program evaluation project. Programs staff is currently drafting the RFP for an external evaluation of grant programs. The RFP will be issued over the summer for an 18 month, mixed-method evaluation. The funds for this evaluation will be from non-grant programs expenditures within the programs budget.

XIII. Update from Californians for the Arts

Richard Stein, Arts Orange County and Californians for the Arts (CFTA) and California Arts Advocates (CAA): gave brief remarks and provided written fact sheet about CFTA and CAA. Noted that the CFTA has been supporting the outreach and education activities of the Arts Council, and CAA as a 501(c)4 funded with no state funds or funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, is able to hire a lobbyist to advocate for increased funding for arts programming in California to watch various bills impacting the arts community, as well as the budget process.

AB 2855 by Assemblyman Jim Frazier was on CAA's watch list, as the original language would have required all nonprofits to post overhead expenses on every web page as well as all fundraising documents, said Stein. The bill was later amended to require all web pages and fundraising documents to have links to the Attorney General's already publically accessible website on charities – a requirement that caused the nonprofit sector to nickname the legislation "The Nonprofit Warning Label Bill," said Stein. This would be an undue burden on nonprofits, including arts nonprofits, because of the cost of pre-printing and amending every document and webpage for every nonprofit in the state, forcing every nonprofit to re-print all the materials and re-publish their websites at their own cost, he said.

Other pieces of legislation Stein said CAA is watching include issues such as: homeless loitering and property owner/leasers rights – including arts nonprofits owner/leasers; summer camp regulations proposed by large camp organizations that could negatively impact smaller camp operators, including many arts organizations; and on the federal level legislation that could speed up or slow down the issuing of travel and work visas for international professionals, including international artists temporarily in the U.S. for tours, performances, or other work.

Stein added that Californians for the Arts, which had proposed to provide services to the Arts Council for a statewide arts technical-assistance and training conference in Sacramento in spring of 2016, has had difficulties finding and securing hotel space for such a conference because of the large number of conferences and other events that have already reserved space during the spring months. Stein proposed that the technical assistance conference be postponed until fall, with September 26 and 27, 2016, as an ideal date for the conference, as well as perhaps a Council meeting.

In closing, Stein added that arts funding from foundations is becoming more and more rare, noting that the Irvine Foundation – once the largest foundations in California for arts funding – has shifted their focus to families and young adults struggling with poverty, and phasing out their directed arts support. Other foundations are making similar moves, or eliminating staff positions that once had a focus on arts.

XIV. Public Comment

Harris invited members of the public to give comments to the Council. Members of the public who chose to speak include the following:

- Jessica Ceballos of Writ Large Press / Avenue 50 / Highland Park Neighborhood Council: asked that the Council consider funding micro organizations, especially organizations of color. Watson asked if Ceballos was familiar with the Cultural Pathways program from the Arts Council, and she answered in the affirmative.
- Michael Bierman, Strindberg Laboratory: thanked the Council and staff for all their hard work, including through the Arts-in-Corrections program, as Strindberg Laboratory is a contractor working at California State Prison-Los Angeles County in Lancaster.
- Henry Nuñez, Strindberg Laboratory: thanked the Council for their support, and noted that the arts helped him in his transition out of jail. Nuñez said he was introduced to theater arts programming through Strindberg Laboratory's program in the Men's Central Jail in Los Angeles, and is now working for the theater company providing arts services to autistic adults.
- Amy Eriksen, Angels Gate Cultural Center: thanked the Council for their support of arts programming in general and the Angels Gate Cultural Center over the years.
- Ana Carillo, Acuña Art Gallery and Cultural Center (artist volunteer): thanked the Council for their work and noted that the organization has applied for accessibility grants in the past, as well as the Local Impact program more recently.
- Rebecca Nevarez, Latino Arts Network: Nevarez said that as a Statewide Network grantee, she has various suggestions for the evaluation and ways to improve and streamline the grant application process. She said that many organizations don't apply because of the cumbersome nature of the application, and she was willing to serve on a team to help guide positive changes to the applications. She also wanted to thank the Council for the funding the Latino Arts Network received last year through the Professional Development Grants to create a bilingual website in English and Spanish. Nevarez said she was very willing to be on a peer-review panel and has submitted her information for consideration and been on approval lists, but has not yet been asked to serve. In closing, she said that the gentrification and communities-of-color displacement issues surrounding the Cultural Districts issue is of high concern, and is being discussed nationally.

- Sofia Klatzker, Arts for LA: thanked the Council for the eligibility change in the SRN program that allowed Arts for LA to be eligible for this funding. The funding will enable the organization to expand their convenings and technical assistance for the large urban area they cover, including partnering or joining resources with Arts for Incarcerated Youth.

XVI. Committee Reports

Fitzwater gave a report for the Thought Leadership committee, noting Steinhauser and Coppola's dedication and work on the committee. Harris said he would like the work from this committee to move forward, and for the Arts Council to be the place to go to find expertise information for anything arts related. Steinhauser reminded the Council of the upcoming plans for consortiums on arts reporting and public media, as well as one on performing arts touring and presenting.

Harris asked if there were other Committee Reports, and Watson noted that information on the Keep Arts in Schools Fund that is sometimes included in the Revenue and Resources Committee report could be found in the written Director's Report for this meeting.

XVI. Tribute to outgoing Vice Chair

Harris remarked on the leadership by Steinhauser as Vice Chair and longtime Council member, especially noting her direction of the Thought Leadership committee and the strategic planning process.

Steinhauser encouraged the Council and staff to systematically outreach to and engage with past Council members. She said that she recognizes that currently the workload for staff is overwhelming with the new programs, recent retirements, and multitude of vacancies, but a past-councilmember outreach program should be investigated. Wyman asked if Steinhauser thought there would be a cost; mostly staff time, said Steinhauser and other minimal costs.

Fitzwater thanked Steinhauser for her leadership for the strategic plan and the past-council member outreach, especially in the lead up to the 40th Anniversary event in Sacramento. Steinhauser noted that former council members can be valuable resources and supporters for the arts and the Arts Council activities. Harris said he would participate and support such a subcommittee with another member of the Council. Baza volunteered to fill this role.

Watson noted that former Councilmember Eunice David, who had served in the mid 2000s, said she would be honored to participate in such a committee or activity, and Watson said he would be in touch. Harris asked if there was a contact list of all past Council members, and Fitzwater said that during the outreach for the 40th Anniversary event, approximately half to two-thirds were contacted.

Fitzwater played a video of over a dozen leaders in the arts field saying tribute remarks to Steinhauser in dedication of her time served on the Arts Council, as well as a written statement from former Council member Bill Turner.

Steinhauser thanked the Council and staff, acknowledging many of them individually. Steinhauser added that it was important to have more women on policy board and in other areas of leadership, and that Wyman – with her tenacity and leadership for over a half century, since she was a young woman – was a role model for Steinhauser and other women. She remarked about the "lean years" of the agency when there were very few funds to invest in grant programs, and then the growth over time to the budget today. She encouraged everyone to do something creative every day.

XV. Election of Vice Chair

Harris noted that with this meeting being the last for Steinhauser as a Senate appointee, the Council need to appoint a new Vice Chair. Beasley said that the nominating committee of Beasley and Oliver recommended Lindo.

ACTION ITEM: McGuinness nominated Lindo; Gallegos seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

XVI. Council Member Updates

Lindo noted the recent passing of the musician Prince and the loss to the music-loving public and creative community. Harris agreed that he was a very important American artist.

Beasley said that she had recently attended a roundtable on socio-emotional arts with 40 other arts leaders, and noted that funding for such activity can come from many different silos, including mental health, arts education, juvenile justice, and other areas. She noted that the reality in schools today is that educators and school staff have to deal with social and emotional issues in addition to academic issues, and the arts can have an impact.

The Council asked about issues relating to the Legislature, including membership of the legislative education committees that can impact arts education policy. Watson said that the Arts Council staff – specifically Legislative Director Kristin Margolis – will be watching the committee changes in the Legislature. He also noted that he was asked to testify in Senate Subcommittee 5: Public Safety about the Arts-in-Corrections program, which is currently set at \$3.5 M for FY 2015-16 through the interagency agreement with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, but which will decrease to \$2 M in FY 2016-17. He added that the legislative committee commented that the Arts Council's contracting process was considered a best-practice model.

Gilbride reminded the Council that there will be a large number of peer-review panel recommendations to review and funding allocations to approve at the June 2016 meeting, including for the Artists in Schools, Local Impact, Professional Development, Creative California Communities, Veterans Initiative in the Arts, and Cultural Pathways programs. She noted that the presentation of the programs items at the June meeting will be very similar and consistent with this meeting.

Harris noted that he's observed an increase in the amount of anxiety expressed by children, so much so that more and more they cannot seem to cope in a classroom setting, and he wondered if arts education can assist. Watson noted that the National Endowment for the Arts has begun conversations about arts and mental health, and Steinhauser added that the Western States Arts Federation has explored the topic as well, especially considering that suicides are on the rise.

XVII. Adjournment

The Council adjourned in the memory of:

- Prince, with Lindo repeating her remarks about the loss of this creative musical artist;
- Country music legend Merle Haggard, originally from the Central Valley, and
- San Francisco theater pioneer Richard Reineccius, who founded the influential Julian Theater in 1965.