



## CITY OF OAKLAND

### **Cultural Affairs Commission Regular Meeting Minutes Monday, May 22, 2023 5:35 – 7:44 PM**

**Members in Attendance:** Diane Sanchez (Chair), Kev Choice (Vice Chair), Jennifer Easton, Ilana Lipsett, Jim Santi Owen, Vanessa Whang

**Members Absent:** Michelle Mush Lee, Shannon Price, Theo Aytchan Williams

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

**Guest Speakers:** Sofia Navarro (Interim Director, Economic & Workforce Development Department), Tao Shi (Purple Silk Music Education Foundation)

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

##### **1. Welcome**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sanchez at 5:35 PM.

##### **2. Land Acknowledgement + Official City of Oakland Love Acknowledgement**

Chair Sanchez shared remarks about the Land Acknowledgement.

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

##### **3. Action Item 1: Approval of Minutes from January 23, 2023**

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 23, 2023, made by Chair Sanchez; seconded by Commissioner Whang.

Choice	AYE
Easton	AYE
Lee	Absent
Lipsett	AYE
Santi Owen	AYE
Price	Absent
Sanchez	AYE
Whang	AYE
Williams	Absent

The motion passed.

**4. Action Item 2: Approval of Minutes from March 27, 2023**

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 27, 2023 made by Vice Chair Choice; seconded by Commissioner Santi Owen.

Choice	AYE
Easton	AYE
Lee	Absent
Lipsett	AYE
Santi Owen	AYE
Price	Absent
Sanchez	AYE
Whang	AYE
Williams	Absent

The motion passed.

**5. Artist Spotlight**

Vice Chair Choice introduced Tao Shi, the artist spotlight for the meeting, who performed several songs on the erhu. Tao Shi, Head Music Coach, started studying the erhu, a traditional Chinese string instrument, at age seven. In 1984, he won the First Performance Award in China's National Folk Instrument Contest. In 1990, he earned a degree with honors from the prestigious Nanjing Normal University, where he double-majored in erhu and piano. During his career as an erhu performer, Mr. Shi won national awards on many occasions in China. A music educator for many years, he serves as a Music Coach for Purple Silk Music Education Foundation's core program at Laney and as the Lead Teaching Artist for five school-day and after-school residencies, including three school sites in Oakland.

**6. Cultural Affairs Commission Chair's Update**

Chair Sanchez noted that the Commission is not involved in the development of the Henry J. Kaiser Center. She said that Dr. Ayodele Nzinga, Oakland's Poet Laureate is involved in the community benefit agreement discussions.

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

Sofia Navarro, Interim Director of Economic Workforce & Development Department

Bedoya introduced Sofia Navarro, Interim Director of Economic Workforce & Development Department. Navarro relayed her appreciation for the Commission and the important work it does for the arts community.

Life Enrichment Committee

Bedoya noted that he and Chair Sanchez will present to the Life Enrichment Committee (LEC) on May 23. A report has been submitted by staff to the LEC providing an overview of the Cultural Affairs Division programs and recent activities of the Commission.

Budget

Bedoya noted that the Mayor's budget proposes approximately a 20% cut to the Division's previous FY21-22 budget, not the budget in FY22-23, which was higher. He acknowledged the work of Commissioners to educate the community on the budget process and the impact of proposed cuts to the Cultural Affairs Division on Oakland arts and culture. He expressed his appreciation for their energized advocacy efforts.

### Social Metrics for Belonging: Cultural Affairs Division

The Cultural Affairs Division is contracting with Raya Consulting (Marisa Raya) and subcontractor Ground Works Consulting to develop a methodology for measuring and monitoring residents' sense of belonging. Raya Consulting will facilitate a community engagement process to inform and establish (a) measurable belonging goal(s) that the Cultural Affairs Division can operationalize in government. Raya Consulting will develop methods for data collection and reporting on an ongoing basis.

### **8. General Advocacy Discussion**

Vice Chair Choice initiated a discussion on the status of the Commission's advocacy activities. He acknowledged the efforts of the Commissioners advocacy efforts for arts and culture in Oakland. He highlighted the various ways Commissioners have been active in the past month from executing an online petition, educating the community and press on budget issues, speaking at City Council meetings and Councilmember-hosted town halls, setting up meetings with elected officials, and distributing the briefing book.

Commissioners then took turns reporting on the advocacy activities they have participated in greater details and provided comment on advocacy strategy and next steps. Commissioner Santi Owen noted that he reached out to Cultural Funding Program grantees with information about the petition and how to reach out to their Councilmember. Additionally, Commissioner Santi Owen said that he participated in a community advocacy meeting that included arts and culture leaders throughout Oakland. Commissioner Whang acknowledged Commissioner Lipsett for leading the effort to create an online petition and securing the resources need to execute it. Commissioner Lipsett noted that to date the petition has 1,096 signatures and unique testimonies about the value of arts and culture in Oakland. Commissioner Lipsett was able to get the support of a colleague at Californians for the Arts to distribute the petition to their Oakland-based mailing list. Commissioners Whang and Easton attended Councilmember Ramachandran's town hall. Commissioner Easton had a brief conversation with Councilmember Ramachandran who expressed support in Oakland arts and interest in a follow up conversation with Cultural Affairs. Chair Sanchez noted that she attended Councilmember Jenkin's town hall. Commissioners Lipsett and Santi Owen will have a meeting with Councilmember Kalb.

### **9. Public Comment**

No comment was made by the public.

### **10. Open Forum**

No comment was made by the public.

### **11. Announcements & Acknowledgements**

### **12. Closing**

A motion to end the meeting was made by Commissioner Easton, seconded by Commissioner Whang.

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.