



MINUTES OF THE  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
Arts and Culture Commission

Thursday, September 25, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

El Cerrito City Hall Council Chambers  
10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito

*Approved 10/23/2017*

**7:01pm Roll Call**

Present: George Gager, Heidi Rand, Christopher Sterba, Nga Trinh, Christopher Walsh.

Absent: Ruth Cazden (excused), Judith Tannenbaum (excused)

Council Liaison present: Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto

**1. Commissioners Reports & Liaison Reports**

Staff Liaison Suzanne Iarla reported that she has met with ECCRU Artist Sandy Drobny and the ECCRU program will be launched in October. At Rand's report that the ECCRU webpage still has the RFP, Iarla stated that will be fixed. Sterba suggested that the El Cerrito poet laureate page might be a good model for the ECCRU webpage.

Iarla provided an updated on Trinh's donated origami artwork: it has been framed; the Hillside conference room is being considered as a location in which to hang the artwork. At Trinh's suggestion, Iarla said that the wall to the left of the south entrance to City Hall will also be taken into consideration.

Iarla reported that the Fairmont Park Improvement planning process is at 65% design completion. There will be a public meeting on September 27, 2017 to look at schematic designs for Phase I improvements (which do not include the mural); Council recently approved renaming the City's portion of Fairmont Park as Centennial Park; The Recreation Department is working with Maintenance Department on Parks and Recreational Facilities Master Planning process, and an online survey is available for public input.

Councilmember Pardue-Okimoto reported on major actions taken by the Council at July, August and September 2017 meetings and said that the City is looking for a new space for the Senior Center since the lease from the school district is ending next summer.

**2. Comments from the Public**

None.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

It was moved (Rand/Gager) to approve the minutes of the meeting on August 24, 2017 as presented. Unanimous (5-0).

**4. Arts Month Planning**

**One City, One Book program:** Iarla said information is available on library and City websites; the County issued a press release; 100 copies of the book were purchased and distributed around town. There will be two events: a group discussion of the book on October 10, 2017 and an author reading/signing on October 24, 2017. Sterba described the author's background; author may be on KECG radio. Sterba has made buttons and displays. Iarla requested that Sterba inform staff if the October 10 discussion will focus on particular stories within the book, so that website can be updated. Bookmarks have not arrived from the publisher; Iarla will follow up with librarian Heidi Goldstein.

**Arts Day event on October 21, 2017:** Sterba described the event, which will include music and dance performances that highlight various eras of El Cerrito's history. Sterba and Tannenbaum are working on outreach to schools, senior centers, church groups and arts-related businesses. Sterba has also done publicity at other Centennial events. For the event, programs and greeting and tabling help will be needed.

It was moved (Walsh/Rand) to allocate funds up to \$250 to pay for cupcakes for the event. Unanimous (5-0).

Iarla recommended a conversation between herself, Walsh and Sterba to discuss the details of the event in the next week or so. Walsh agreed to provide to Iarla the publicity graphics from the performers.

Iarla reported that the Arts Month street banners will be hung in September. An Arts Month publicity flyer is in progress; commissioners can request copies to distribute.

There will be a stained glass exhibit by David Helfant in the City Hall lobby starting in October.

**El Cerrito Free Folk Festival:** Iarla reported that postcards are available for distribution. There was discussion as to which commissioners can staff the ACC table at the ECFFF and what materials to have available at the table. Iarla requested that Commissioners provide their availability to her.

**El Cerrito Art Association Annual Sale and Show:** Trinh and Gager have agreed to judge the show. Commission has authorized \$25 as a prize; Iarla described the process and the form for sending the check to the artist.

Council will consider an Arts Month proclamation at its October 3, 2017 meeting. At the October 17, 2017, Council meeting, Chair Sterba will present the ACC Work Plan and also introduce ECCRU artist Sandy Drobny.

#### **5. Economic Development Committee Partnership**

Sterba suggested continuing this item to the next regular meeting. Iarla will circulate the EDC list of projects to the Commissioners.

#### **6. City Hall Mosaics Public Art Project**

Sterba and Iarla summarized this potential project in regards to budget, considerations of timeline, and RFP. Release of RFP in early 2018 seems best suited, to avoid holidays. Discussion followed about the process and about Commission responsibilities versus staff responsibilities. The project will be an agenda item for next meeting.

#### **7. Consideration of Organizing a Film Series**

Iarla described Eve Ma's presentation/concept of a film series in El Cerrito, and the pros and cons of various venues. There was discussion regarding programming, determining other aspects of such a series, and forming a subcommittee. It was agreed to continue the discussion at a future meeting.

#### **8. Reflection on Participation in Centennial Parade**

Commissioners reported that they had a lot of fun and got a good reception. Gager expressed appreciation for the Commission's placement in the parade, between Magic Nathaniel and the El Cerrito Dance Group. Iarla reported on other Centennial Celebration weekend events.

#### **9. Children's Writing Workshop Series Idea**

Regarding D.L. Pughe's offer to put on a series of writing classes for children in Spring 2018, Sterba said that this series of workshops falls in line with ACC's interest in offering classes. Iarla explained

that it would be helpful to get more information from Pughe regarding possible costs and her thoughts in general.

There was discussion of having the workshops listed in the rECGuide brochure of classes, and other outreach channels to children.

It was moved (Walsh/Rand) to direct staff to contact Pughe to obtain more information, in order to pursue putting together a more detailed proposal. The motion passed (5-0).

**10. Items for Next Meeting**

Possible discussion regarding forming a subcommittee to outreach to institutions.

Keith Johnson, High School Band Director, would like to be on October meeting agenda regarding continued support of Jazz Festival.

Presentation by Corey Mason regarding July 4 festival.

*Adjourned – 8:47pm*