



**MINUTES OF THE  
MEETING OF THE  
Arts and Culture Commission  
Monday, April 24, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.**

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

*Approved 5/22/2017*

**7:03pm Roll Call**

Present: Ruth Cazden, Heidi Rand, Christopher Sterba, Judith Tannenbaum, Nga Trinh, Christopher Walsh.  
George Gager arrived late (during first item).

**1. Commissioners Reports & Liaison Reports (taken out of order)**

Tannenbaum mentioned a writing program, provided through the library, at Juvenile Hall in Contra Costa County. She will explore the program and would like to have librarians make a presentation to ACC about it.

Cazden reported that David Ramadanoff, of the Young People's Symphony Orchestra, is eager to create a connection with El Cerrito, possibly establishing a program of classical music for non-professional adults, with coaching. ACC might be able to sponsor by providing venues for classrooms and/or supporting the teachers/coaches.

Sterba reported that he had attended the "El Cerrito High Athletics - A History of Victory" event on April 19. 35-40 people were in attendance; it was a good event.

Iarla reported on the following items:

- Sterba represented the ACC at the most recent City Council meeting and recommended that the Council send a letter in support of NEA/NEH. The letter was signed by the Council and sent.
- ECCRU Call to Artists has been made public and sent out. If Commissioners know of anyone who wants more information, they can contact Iarla.

**2. Selection of Chair and Vice Chair**

Iarla thanked Sterba for his service as Chair of ACC during the past year. Sterba is eligible to serve another term as Chair.

It was moved (Rand/Tannenbaum) for Sterba to serve another year as Chair. Unanimous.

It was moved (Sterba/Trinh) for Rand to serve as Vice Chair from April 2017 through March 2018. Unanimous.

**3. Comments from the Public**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

It was moved (Rand/Tannenbaum) to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday, March 27, 2017 as amended. Unanimous.

**5. 2017 Work Plan Development**

Sterba led a discussion regarding development of the 2017 Work Plan. Commissioners reviewed the 2016 Work Plan and discussed possible ideas for new projects, how to evaluate the success of programs and events, and how to approach creating the new work plan.

Some ideas shared included:

- Commissioning a new artwork in 2017
- Identification of musical performance spaces
- Work with City's Economic Development Committee to make El Cerrito more attractive through art
- Create an Art Fair Day (artists sell their works)
- International Food Day; multicultural
- Explore ways to promote the literary arts (beyond the Poet Laureate program)

The item was continued to the next meeting.

## **6. Report on Recent Events**

- California Poet Laureate Dana Gioia Poetry Reading Event: Rand reported that the sound system didn't work, which was a problem for El Cerrito Poet Laureate Win and the student poet. The event was standing-room-only; Gioia is a gifted performer. Tannenbaum reported that the audience was not as diverse as it might have been. She suggests buying a good sound system for the library. Iarla believes this expenditure would be a legitimate ACC expense. Iarla also mentioned that Gioia would not have chosen El Cerrito as his Contra Costa venue, in his statewide tour, if El Cerrito didn't have a Poet Laureate, which speaks to the impact and success of the El Cerrito Poet Laureate program. Sterba mentioned that he has publicized events on nextdoor.com, which affects the number and makeup of the attendees. Cazden suggested a future agenda item to hear Gager's assessment of the library wiring, in regards to the functionality of any sound system.
- Earth Day Event: Trinh reported that lots of kids participated and had fun at the ACC art activities. Sterba reinforced that the button activity, in addition to the other activities, was very popular. Iarla reported that the participants represented a wide age range, and that the City will post several pictures from Earth Day on the City website.
- Screening of "This Ain't No Mouse Music": Tannenbaum reported that 67 people attended. Chris Strachwitz and director Maureen Gosling attended. A temporary glitch in the screening was quickly resolved. Walsh also attended.

Sterba encourages Commissioners to attend ACC events.

## **7. October Arts Month**

Sterba reported on his vision to incorporate Arts Day (October 21, 2017) and El Cerrito's Centennial through the musical heritage of El Cerrito.

He has contacted the following musical groups, which by performing in sequence would represent various periods of local musical heritage:

- Vincent Medina (Chochenyo Ohlone) – traditional music and rap – and Isaac Bojorguez (Rumsen Ohlone) – flute and storytelling.
- Los Arribeños de San Francisco/California Fandango Project
- Saddle Cats with Buddy Blake – Country swing from 1940s-1950s
- SF Sakuranran & Keijii with Hideo Date – Issei-Nissei, 1900 to present
- Alabama Mike – electrified blues, 1940s and 1950s.

A professional sound system will be needed for the Community Center. This event will be more dance-oriented than last year's event.

It was moved (Rand/Cazden) to authorize up to \$3,500 for Arts Day October 21, 2017 event. Unanimous.

Gager raised the idea of asking local musicians for mementos, such as signed pictures, and possibly creating an honor roll. In relation to this, Cazden mentioned that items are being sought for the Centennial time capsule, and that possibly the ACC could collect and submit such items.

It was moved (Cazden/Rand) to create an Arts Day subcommittee of Tannenbaum, Sterba, Walsh to plan and carry out the 2017 Arts Day Centennial event. Unanimous.

It was moved (Sterba/Rand) to pursue Los Arribeños de San Francisco and the Saddle Cats performing at the event, in order to get on their schedules. Unanimous.

Rand left the meeting after this item.

**8. Creation of a Subcommittee to identify venues for Musical Performances**

Cazden led a discussion regarding creating a subcommittee to look into possible music venues in El Cerrito. Cazden, Walsh and Gager volunteered to serve on such a subcommittee. It was moved (Cazden/Sterba) that the ACC establish a subcommittee of Cazden, Walsh and Gager to identify and evaluate music venues in El Cerrito. Unanimous.

**9. Update from Public Spaces Subcommittee**

Trinh offered to donate an origami artwork to the City, inspired by the Dinosaur Forest. It is 32" x 40". The commission will consider the donation at the next meeting and Trinh said she will bring the piece to the meeting to show the Commissioners.

Sterba reported that Trinh has identified companies that create dinosaur sculptures.

**10. Schedule Joint Meeting with the Economic Development Committee**

Gager provided background on this item for the new Commissioners. Four possible dates for the joint meeting were identified; Iarla will provide this list to the EDC and report back to the Commissioners in the coming week.

**11. Items for Next Meeting**

No suggestions were made.

*Adjourned – 9:17pm*