



**Draft MINUTES**  
**ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION**  
Monday, March 25, 2024  
6:30 p.m.

**ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 6:33 p.m., Chair Maa called the meeting to order at City Hall, 10300 Torre Avenue, Conference Room C.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Carol Maa, David Wang, Dana Ford, Kiran Rohra, Rani Agrawal (arrived 6:39 p.m.)  
Commissioners Absent: None  
Staff Present: Gian Martire, Jessica Javier

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Subject: Meeting Minutes for the January 22, 2024 Arts and Culture Commission Meeting  
Recommended Action: Review and approve the minutes for the January 22, 2024 Arts and Culture Commission meeting.

Chair Maa motioned to approve the January 22, 2024 Arts and Culture Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Ford seconded. Motion carried with 4 yes and 1 absent (Agrawal).

**POSTPONEMENTS**

None

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

2. Subject: Election of Chair and Vice Chair  
Recommended Action: Elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Arts and Culture Commission

Gian Martire, Senior Planner, gave a brief overview of procedure and expectations.

Vice Chair Wang asked for clarification on term limits and normal cycles of approval. Staff stated there were no established protocols. They clarified that Commissioners could self-nominate and nominate for either position.

Chair Maa asked for clarification on if a Vice Chair should be someone who had never held either position before. Senior Planner Martire stated that there was no written rule.

Commissioner Agrawal arrived.

Chair Maa stated that at the Mayor's meeting it was suggested that continuity be a factor for the Chair and Vice Chair appointments.

Commissioner Rohra stated that regardless of title, all commissioners had an equal and valid voice in the commission.

Commissioner Rohra motioned and Chair Maa seconded to nominate Vice Chair Wang for Chair of the Arts and Culture Commission.

The motion carried unanimously with 5 – Yes, 0 – No, 0 – Absent.

Commissioner Rohra motioned and Commissioner Agrawal seconded to nominate Commissioner Maa for Vice Chair of the Arts and Culture Commission.

Commissioner Maa motioned and Commissioner Agrawal seconded to nominate Commissioner Rohra for Vice Chair of the Arts and Culture Commission.

Senior Planner Martire took the vote for the first motion.

The motion carried unanimously with 5 – Yes, 0 – No, 0 – Absent.

Chair Wang reiterated that every Commissioner at the table has an equal voice.

Chair Wang closed the item.

3. Subject: Artist Awards Program Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Recommended Action: Receive an update on the Artist Awards program requirements and provide feedback on the evaluation criteria.

Senior Planner Martire introduced Jessica Javier, Administrative Assistant, Parks and Recreation. She provided an overview including background information, updated application requirements, process refinements and the reasons for them.

The commissioners asked clarifying questions.

Vice chair Maa asked for clarification as to the removal of participants who only work in Cupertino. Administrative Assistant Javier explained that applicants employed in Cupertino were originally added to promote participation in the early years. Recent years have seen an increase in resident participation, and it was decided that this should be a priority. Vice Chair Maa asked if there were other opportunities addressed to make more efficient use of staff time. Administrative Assistant Javier clarified that the use of online applications and reduction in the number/size of pieces submittable will and has been helpful. She also stated that the request by the Commission for anonymous applications was considered but would add a significant increase in staff time.

Vice Chair Maa asked if limiting the size and format of submissions had been considered. She stated that when viewing the pieces, a lot of zooming in and out happened due to the non-standardized submittal requirements. Administrative Assistant Javier clarified that the acceptance of multiple non-uniform submission formats is to be more inclusive for applicants. She stated all entries eventually are converted to PDF. She stated she would ask IT if there might be a solution.

Commissioner Rohra asked for clarification on if the length of the resume had been considered. Administrative Assistant Javier stated that it had not but was open for discussion and suggestions. Commissioner Rohra stated she would like to see resumes no longer than one page in a legibly sized font. Commissioner Ford suggested a maximum of two pages for applicants with more substantial experience. Chair Wang stated it might be difficult to limit a resume to one page for those artists with more history. Commissioner Rohra clarified that she meant the personal statement and not the resume. Commissioner Agrawal suggested a word limit for the personal statement. Commissioner Ford stated that 500 words was roughly one page of text. Commissioner Rohra asked that the discussion on page limit be for both resume and personal statement.

Commissioner Agrawal suggested that anonymous entries be sent to past year's winners to help judge and evaluate. She stated that this could help with the number of entries that need to be evaluated. Chair Wang stated that he liked the idea of public participation but was concerned about the logistics. Vice Chair Maa asked if there was concern over review time. Commissioner Agrawal stated that she didn't feel the amount of time allowed to review submissions was sufficient. Chair Wang stated he was fine with current rating of the submissions but suggested maybe Commissioners could pick their favorites and bring those in as opposed to ranking every single entry.

Commissioner Rohra asked for clarification if decisions needed to be made at this meeting. Senior Planner Martire clarified that the input would be taken by Administrative Assistant Javier and evaluated. Administrative Assistant Javier stated she would come back at the next meeting with revised submission requirements. She clarified that Commissioners could update with amendments to a motion when it is being voted on. She encouraged the Commissioners to provide feedback and ideas they felt strongly about. Chair Wang asked for clarification on if a

commissioner had an idea could they email Administrative Assistant Javier for it to be taken into consideration. Staff confirmed as long as the suggestion didn't require the other commissioner's input.

Vice Chair Maa stated she felt some of the judging categories were redundant and suggested consolidating some criteria. She stated she also felt that if the personal statement did not reflect the theme, immediate disqualification should be considered. Administrative Assistant Javier asked for clarification if staff or the commissioners would be disqualifying entries. Vice Chair Maa stated that she was fine with staff doing it. Administrative Assistant Javier stated that the staff's function was to take in applications and make sure that the basic information was included. She clarified that it was the Commission's responsibility to judge whether an entry met the criteria artistically speaking. Chair Wang suggested an alignment among the commissioners on criteria to be met with entries. He stated a failure to meet the criteria could lead to disqualification.

Commissioner Agrawal reiterated that she would like the artist's identities to remain anonymous during judging. Commissioner Rohra stated she felt that would be too much work for the staff especially if names had to be redacted from statements. She suggested that maybe the categories for the younger artists could be anonymous since no personal statements were involved. Chair Wang agreed that that would be a solution that would be acceptable. Vice Chair Maa asked if there was maybe some way to remove the disqualified entries before the judging stage. She stated that she would like to be able to flag art pieces that had been submitted in previous years. Chair Wang stated that the rules did not prohibit submission of previously submitted art. Vice Chair Maa asked if there was a way to eliminate submissions that did not meet the contest theme.

Commissioner Rohra suggested that each commissioner choose a top 3 for each category and that could be where the discussion starts for to final choices as opposed to tallying the scores and using those choices. Administrative Assistant Javier stated that all the scoring had to be done in a public meeting. Commissioner Agrawal stated she didn't mind the scoring process and wanted to be fair to all entries.

Vice Chair Maa asked if anyone had a suggestion on how to minimize the submission review burnout. She stated it was difficult to be fair with the number of submissions that had been received recently. Commissioner Agrawal suggested an additional meeting for the judging process.

Chair Wang asked if there was a way to streamline the judgement categories for consistency. He asked for clarification if there was any context for how the evaluation criteria was arrived at initially. Administrative Assistant Javier stated that the original wording was composed by past commissioners. She stated that it is up to the current commissioners if they choose to reword the evaluation criteria.

Vice Chair Maa suggested consolidating the evaluation criteria across all submission categories. Commissioners discussed combining the evaluation criteria for each submission category. For the Young Artist category, the criteria were decided to be:

- Media/Tools
- Creativity of Contest Theme
- Originality

Commissioner Agrawal asked for clarification of the Media/Tools criteria. Chair Wang stated he felt it was how well an individual executes with their medium of choice.

Vice Chair Maa asked that the contest theme criteria be added to the verbiage for the Emerging and Distinguished Artist categories. Administrative Assistant Javier clarified that for the Young Artist category only visual entries were accepted. She stated that for Emerging and Distinguished, performance, literary, film, etc. were acceptable as well. She stated that placing a theme criteria might limit applicants' ability to participate. Vice Chair Maa stated that she felt the applicants should make the effort to tie their submission to the theme. Chair Wang stated he saw both points of view but felt that no theme allowed the judges to get a full picture of who an artist is. Chair Maa asked how the commission would feel if a piece from a previous year was resubmitted. Administrative Assistant Javier clarified that the commissioners do not have to give an award if they choose not to. Commissioner Agrawal suggested a line in the description that stated that although art piece submissions from previous years would be accepted, they are discouraged.

Administrative Assistant Javier asked for clarification on if the descriptors that accompanied the criteria categories should be removed along with the category. Chair Wang clarified that staff should use their judgement to consolidate the ideas with the categories. Commissioners decided to consolidate the Imagination and Individuality categories with the Creativity and Originality category for Emerging Artist submissions.

Chair Wang suggested combining the Design and Composition category with Technique/ Skill of Construction for the Distinguished Artist submissions. Vice Chair Maa suggested for consistency, the category be changed to Media/Tools and Technique/Skill be used as a bullet point. Commissioners agreed. Chair Wang asked for clarification on if four categories for Distinguished Artist would remain, just renamed for consistency. Commissioners agreed.

Vice Chair Maa reiterated her wish to make the contest theme a requirement for all categories and submissions. Administrative Assistant Javier clarified that the Emerging and Distinguished categories had no such requirement. Vice Chair Maa stated that she thought it was a reasonable ask considering the amount of prize money. Commissioner Ford suggested that the theme be part of the Creativity and Originality and not the Personal Statement. Administrative Assistant Javier asked for clarification on if the commissioners wanted to add a theme to these award categories. Commissioner Rohra suggested the theme not be a requirement, but a suggestion.

She stated that possibly one art piece in a portfolio be linked to the theme. Administrative Assistant Javier stated that doing that would require changing descriptions not only on the evaluation forms, but the website as well. She asked for clarification if the commissioners wanted an overall theme for the program. She asked how that would impact non-visual media such as literary and performing arts. Commissioner Ford stated that applicants would have to find a way to tie their work in.

Commissioner Rohra expressed concern that inserting a theme requirement might narrow possible submissions too much and eliminate some applicants who wish to participate but don't have a piece that is on theme. Commissioner Agrawal suggested deciding on a theme earlier in the process and allowing contestants more time to create artwork. Administrative Assistant Javier stated that the shorter submission window was more beneficial to the program, but that once the theme is decided, it can be circulated ahead of the submission period. Commissioners agreed that an overall theme for the program would be welcome. Administrative Assistant Javier clarified that the suggestion for only one piece of art in a portfolio be requested to be on theme. Commissioners agreed.

Chair Wang asked for clarification on if there would be an awards event for the upcoming year. Administrative Assistant Javier stated there would be.

Chair Wang closed the item.

#### **STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

Chair Wang reported on the March Mayor's meeting, giving a brief presentation on what was covered. He stated he had conveyed recent Art and Culture Commission activity and encouraged the Commissioners to read the notes he collected. He stated that there had been some updates to the Commissioner Handbook and suggested the Commissioners familiarize themselves with new policies. He highlighted a few of the updates.

Senior Planner Martire made a short presentation on the scheduled upcoming Arts and Culture Commission meeting dates and asked if they needed to be changed due to holiday conflicts. Commissioners agreed on changing the May 27<sup>th</sup> meeting to May 29<sup>th</sup> and the November 25<sup>th</sup> meeting to November 18<sup>th</sup>.

Senior Planner Martire reported on the City Manager Commission Liaison meeting and some of the possible changes to the reporting and minute taking that may be coming.

Senior Planner Martire gave a brief update on the art installation for the Westport project and overall status.

#### **COMMISSIONER ATTENDANCE AT UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

The Mayor's meeting is bi-monthly and alternates between in-person and remote. The meetings must be attended by either the Chair or Vice Chair.

Commissioners to attend the upcoming Mayor's meetings as follows:

May 15 – Chair Wang (in person)

July 17 – Vice Chair Maa (virtual)

### **FUTURE AGENDA SETTING**

Vice Chair Maa motioned for a report on the status of the City Council Work Program items that were submitted to City Council. Commissioner Rohra seconded the suggestion.

Commissioner Agrawal motioned for a discussion on a possible event that showcases all Cupertino artists as a community and brings them together for display. Vice Chair Maa seconded the motion.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Wang adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m. to the May 29, 2024, special meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Jon de Ridder, Administrative Assistant  
Community Development Department  
*Minutes approved at the \_\_\_\_\_ regular meeting*