

**Members**

Robin Echte, *Chair*  
Sarah Idstrom, *Vice Chair*  
Julie Anderson, *City Council Liaison*  
Lauren Walker, *City Council Liaison Alternate*  
Jan Brazzell  
Rachel Cardwell  
Janice Karroll  
Traci Kelly  
Donald Lacky  
Bill La Vergne  
Janet Matzke  
Kristi Nebel  
Jacqueline Peterson  
Michael Reynolds  
Mike Sweney

# Minutes

## Tacoma Arts Commission

### Community & Economic Development

**Staff**

Amy McBride, Tacoma Arts Administrator  
Naomi Strom-Avila, Cultural Arts Specialist

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Date: July 13, 2009  
Location: City of Tacoma Municipal Building, Room 16  
Time: 5:00 pm

*Commission Members in Attendance:*

Sarah Idstrom, Vice-Chair  
Jan Brazzell  
Janice Karroll  
Don Lacky  
Bill La Vergne  
Janet Matzke  
Jacqueline Peterson  
Michael Reynolds  
Mike Sweney

*Staff Present*

Amy McBride, Tacoma Arts Administrator  
Naomi Strom-Avila, Cultural Arts Specialist

*Guests Present:*

Judy Durkin  
Steve Naccarato  
Robbi Firestone

*City Council Member in Attendance:*

Julie Anderson

*City Council Member Absent:*

Lauren Walker

*Commission Members Excused Absence:*

Robin Echte, Chair  
Rachel Cardwell  
Kristi Nebel

*Commission Members Absent:*

Traci Kelly

**1. Call to Order** **5:05 pm** **Vice Chair Idstrom**

**2. Excusal of Absences** **5:05 pm** **Vice Chair Idstrom**

Chair Echte and Commissioners Nebel and Cardwell had an excused absence. Commissioner Kelly was absent.

**3. Approval of Minutes** **5:05 pm** **Vice Chair Idstrom**

Motion: Bill La Vergne

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Second: Mike Sweney

Motion: Carried

#### **4. Approval of Agenda**

**5:06 pm**

**Vice Chair Idstrom**

Motion: Janet Matzke

Second: Jan Brazzell

Motion: Carried

#### **5. Chair's Report:**

**5:06 pm**

**Vice Chair Idstrom**

Commissioners were asked to submit their volunteer hours for June.

#### **6. Staff Check-In**

**5:07 pm**

##### **Brewery District**

Amy McBride noted that one of the strategies stemming from the Angelou Economics study that was recently conducted of Downtown Tacoma was to look at the Brewery District and come up with development options and ways to possibly develop it as a creative arts and design district. The City has hired VIA Architects to develop initial strategies for the comprehensive plan. They are currently researching options. Amy has met with them once and is working on lining up people for them to talk to. Names of people VIA Architects should talk to should be submitted to Amy McBride.

Commissioner Reynolds suggested VIA Architects talk with people from Historic Tacoma.

Amy will keep the Commission apprised of what is happening with this study and will let them know of any opportunities to be involved.

##### **Shunpike**

Shunpike has agreed to open a satellite office in Tacoma where they can meet with local artists and arts organizations. Shunpike can help organizations and who are not a 501(c)3 by acting as an umbrella organization. They also offer back office help with things like board development and accounting. Shunpike will be coming to Tacoma on July 17. Amy is working on developing a list of possible organizations that might be able to utilize their services; suggestions are welcome.

##### **Water Forest**

Commissioner Reynolds asked for a response to the following inquiry that had been voiced by members of the public regarding the Water Forest: How do we justify the expense associated with rebuilding and re-installing a piece of art that was expensive to begin with and how do we make certain that the same situation doesn't happen in the future?

Amy McBride responded that changes have been initiated to prevent similar situations from happening in the future. A new requirement is to have a structural engineer approve the plans and installation of the proposed artwork. Another requirement is to have a conservation expert review plans, ask questions, point out problems and help problem solve to make the piece better.

Amy also noted that, when taking into consideration the investment that had already been made in the acquisition of the Water Forest in the first place, the Commission felt that it made the most sense to forge ahead and find a fix for the piece.

Another possible preventative measure could include requiring artists to obtain bond insurance. This could be fiscally preventative for artists.

Commissioner Sweney noted that it was an unusual circumstance that caused the piece to fail and that no matter how well structurally engineered a piece is, we cannot always predict outside forces or prevent things from happening to the piece.

Amy noted that while we cannot prevent a similar situation from happening again, we now have processes in place to help minimize the risk to the City.

Commissioner Karroll asked how the Museum of Glass handles insurance on outside installations.

The Water Forest does not currently drain and fill as originally programmed. The City is working on reprogramming the system to adjust the drain and fill cycle to minimize the risk of vandalism and provide for ease of maintenance.

### **August Meeting**

The Commission will not be meeting on August 13.

### **Commission Openings**

Phil Hill submitted his resignation from the Commission. The Commission has a call out for two open seats on the Commission

### **Review Sign-up**

Commissioners volunteered to attend and evaluate Arts Projects and Anchor Fund events as follows:

<b>date</b>	<b>organization</b>	<b>event</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>
Jun 6 - Sep 13	Tacoma Art Museum	Ornament as Art; Avant-Garde Jewelry	Mike Sweney
Jun 27 - Oct 11	Tacoma Art Museum	Loud Bones: The Jewelry of Nancy Worden	Mike Sweney
31-Jul	Tacoma Art Museum	Metal-Urge Free Community Festival & Iron Artist Competition Playground Express	Jackie Peterson
11-Aug	Victory Music Tacoma Concert	Summer Concerts Summer Concert in the	Michael Reynolds Michael Reynolds, Don
13-Aug	Band	Park	Lucky

Commissioners volunteered to meet with City Council members as follows:

<b>Council Member</b>	<b>Tacoma Arts Commission Member</b>
Mike Lonergan	Michael Reynolds
Marilyn Strickland	Janet Matzke
Spiro Manthou	Jan Karroll, Jackie Peterson
Jake Fey	Jan Brazzell

Lauren Walker	Traci Kelly, Mike Sweney
Connie Ladenburg	Sarah Idstrom, Robin Echtle
Mayor Bill Baarsma	Don Lacky, Michael Reynolds

## 7. Presentation

### Click! Commercial

5:25 pm

Commissioners previewed a 30-second commercial created by Click! to advertise the call for public submissions of video pieces to air on Click! ON Demand's TacomaArt & Culture button.

Currently the button airs items that were created by artists and arts organizations funded by the Arts Commission. The Commission worked with Click! to put together a call for public submissions; the call is open until July 20. Public submissions will go through a review process.

## 8. Action Items

### A. Arts Commission Code

5:30 pm

#### 1.28.A 040.E

The Commission considered whether or not to keep the Landmarks Preservation Commission Liaison position a required and voting member of the Arts Commission. As the Ordinance is currently constructed, the Landmarks Preservation chair can appoint someone from their body to serve as a voting member on the Arts Commission for one year terms. At one time there was a reciprocal seat on the Landmarks Preservation Commission for an appointee from the Arts Commission. This seat has since been eliminated.

Having a designated Landmarks Preservation Commission Liaison can potentially hold up appointments to the Arts Commission because it requires there to be someone on the Landmarks Preservation Commission who wants to be a liaison. If Landmarks Preservation Commission does not appoint someone to the Arts Commission seat, then the Arts Commission can go through its regular appointments process but it is not clarified when the seat goes back to a Landmarks Liaison seat.

Amy McBride asked that, if the point of having this liaison seat is to facilitate open exchange of information between the two commissions, is there another way of exchanging information that could be more constructive? If the liaison seat was removed it could become an at-large position or a professional position.

Commissioners discussed and were unsure whether the seat has served its purpose thus far.

Commissioner Reynolds asked what the reasons are for communicating with the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Amy McBride noted that the position started back when both Commissions were grouped together under the Cultural Tourism Division. Places for possible crossover between the commissions are when dealing with urban design, joint review of public art siting in historic districts, and proposed placement of memorials.

Other options could include having a joint sub-committee to address special topics applicable to both commissions or sharing of basic correspondence, including minutes, between commissions.

Commissioner Reynolds voiced his desire to ensure that another communication mechanism was in place if the seat was eliminated. Staff will bring a proposal to the September meeting.

There was a motion: “I move that we strike E from 1.28.A 040, Composition of the Tacoma Arts Commission.”

Motion: Mike Sweney

Second: Michael Reynolds

Motion: Carried

There was a clarification that the position would turn into an at-large position.

### **1.28.B 030.C & 1.28.B 030.D**

Amy noted that the Government Performance & Finance Committee suggested clarifying the language regarding staff salaries. As it currently is written, it allows staff salaries to be paid for out of the Municipal Art Fund, which was not the intention of the Arts Commission.

Julie Anderson suggested updating the wording of 1.28.B 030.C to “A percentage of the Municipal Art Fund shall be appropriated for administrative costs associated with the project including directly related staff costs.” She also suggested updating the wording of 1.28.B 030.D to “In general, staff salaries will not be funded from the Municipal Art Fund however administrative costs associated with specific projects may be charged against the Municipal Art Fund.”

There was a motion: “I would make a motion that we make the changes recommended by Julie and adopt the revised code as indicated.”\*

Motion: Jan Brazzell

Second: Janice Karroll

Motion: Carried

\*After consultation with legal, wording for 1.28.B 030.C was changed to “A percentage of the Municipal Art Fund shall be appropriated for administrative costs associated with the project.” Wording for 1.28.B 030.D was changed to “Staff salaries will not be funded from the Municipal Art Fund however administrative costs, including directly related staff costs, associated with specific projects may be charged against the Municipal Art Fund.”

### **1.28.B 030.F & 1.28.B 080**

Amy noted that the City’s attorney suggested deleting the entire section 1.28.B 030.F from the Ordinance because it is an administrative directive, not policy, and ties the Arts Commission too closely to processes. In reality, the City Council can choose the appropriate funds at any time it is asked to, it does not have to happen biennially with the City’s budget cycle as outlined in this section.

She also suggested deleting “When the appropriation for the Municipal Art Fund is approved by City Council” from 1.28.B 080 because this prohibits staff from working on a public art plan draft until City Council appropriates funds and can interrupt and slow down the flow of work.

There was a motion: “I make a motion that we strike those out as recommended by staff.”

Motion: Jan Brazzell

Second: Jackie Peterson

Motion: Carried

### **1.28.B 020.L & 1.28.B 050.I**

Amy noted that currently section 1.28.B 020.L lists the term “Municipal Local Improvement Districts”. This term is not officially recognized by the City of Tacoma. Currently the City uses the term “Comprehensive Local Improvement Districts.”

The term “Municipal Local Improvement Districts” is also used in 1.28.B 050.I.

Vice Chair Idstrom asked, “Do we have a motion to make the change from Municipal LID to Comprehensive?”

There was a motion: “So moved.”

Motion: Don Lacky

Second: Jackie Peterson

Discussion: Commissioner Reynolds asked for clarification regarding use of the term “Comprehensive Local Improvement Districts” even though it has not been officially adopted by the City of Tacoma. He asked if the inclusion of the term in the Ordinance will cause any problems.

Julie Anderson noted that the term is not anchored anywhere in the City’s code. She said she would push to try and have the term made more concrete but in the mean time, it would be best for the Arts Commission to sync up Ordinance language with the language used by the City.

Motion: Carried

## **B. Funding Allocation**

**5:56 pm**

Because Wintergrass has moved programming to Bellevue, this makes them ineligible from receiving further funding from the Arts Commission’s Anchor Fund program. The balance of their allotted funding, roughly \$15,000, needs to be redistributed by the Commission. These funds would need to be spent before the end of 2010.

Some possible ideas are to roll the money into Arts Projects funding in 2010, provide one-time technical assistance grants, divide funding between existing Anchor Fund organizations, fund summer concerts, research out a signature art event that could replace Wintergrass, or provide some funding to Tacoma Little Theater if they could successfully address the concerns of the Commission.

Julie Anderson noted that if the funds are not programmed and reappropriated, they risk being pulled from the budget. She suggested finding a way to program the funds so that there is a clear intention of spending the funds and recommended against rolling the funds over into 2010.

Commissioner Sweney suggested that a sub-committee be formed to brainstorm ways to reallocate the funds. Commissioners Sweney and Lacky volunteered to be on this sub-committee.

Commissioner Brazzell asked for a straw-poll of how many people were in favor of proportionately redistributing the funds to the 2009-10 Anchor Fund recipients. Five were in favor, four were unsure/against. Commissioner Sweney noted that he was not against reallocating funds to the Anchor Fund recipients, but that he just didn’t know what all of the options were at this time.

Commissioners were asked to send any re-allocation ideas to Amy before the September 14 meeting.

## **C. Pacific Plaza Proposal**

**6:22 pm**

Commissioner Sweney presented the public art proposal created by Jill Anholt for Pacific Plaza. Jill's first proposal had been modified. Her current proposal is to create a floor and wall pattern using blue and green recycled glass hexagonal tiles. The pattern will mimic a water drop and ripples and the ground and wall will be relief sculpted to reflect the ripples. The footprint of the piece traces the general area of the underground cistern. The zigzag stairs of the current hill climb will be redone so that they go straight up.

The piece will be etched with a quote from the historic Tacoma Ledger that reads "From amidst a somber forest of firs, a city has risen as if by a stroke of an enchanter wand. Like a new Venice, Tacoma looks forth over the glassy waters and prepares to handle the commerce of the world. Let Energy! Ambition! And Enterprise! Continue to give luster to the City of Destiny!"

At the center of the wall ripple will be a motion-activated light which will project light and part of the quote down over the wall.

Jill's proposal is inspired by the underground cistern, green roof, and the transformation of Tacoma.

Research is being conducted to ensure that the piece will be ADA compliant. The proposed tile meets all specifications to ensure it is not slippery.

Julie Anderson asked if consideration had been taken to protect the piece from people skateboarding on it or climbing the wall. Commissioner Sweney was unsure.

Commissioner Reynolds inquired whether the Commission could push to see an artistic re-design of the remaining stair climbs that link Commerce and Broadway. Julie Anderson noted that she believes VIA Architects addressed the hill climbs in their downtown plan. Amy McBride noted that the City does not have any funding currently to proceed with the redesign of other portions of the hill climb. She also noted that the budget for the Pacific Plaza hill climb renovation is much larger than what other renovations of any remaining portion of the hill climb might be because Pacific Plaza is a public-private partnership that is receiving funding from the Percent for Art program.

There was a motion: "I move that it be accepted."

Motion: Michael Reynolds

Second: Janice Karroll

Motion: Carried

## **D. Stewart Heights**

**6:38 pm**

Naomi Strom-Avila passed out information to Commissioners about the new Stewart Heights Police Substation. It will be the fifth substation for the Tacoma Police and is being built at S. 56<sup>th</sup> and McKinley. It will be similar in look to the other four substations.

The project has a \$10,000 budget. Due to the size of the budget, it will be an excellent opportunity for emerging artists. There are possible opportunities to integrate artwork into the skate park adjacent to the substation, on the grounds of the substation, or on the building.

The proposed community process would entail hosting a stakeholder meeting to see what community members want to say about their neighborhood, sending out a call for artists, and then assembling a jury panel to review submissions. The jury panel will consist of a Tacoma Arts Commissioner, community members, a member of the Police Department, and an artist with public art experience.

Commissioners discussed eligibility requirements for the call.

Commissioner Karroll asked who the call was open to for the other four substations. The previous call was open to artists or artist teams living in Pierce County.

Commissioner Sweney suggested not limiting the call to only emerging artists. He felt the budget would dictate who will apply.

There was a motion: "I make a motion that we limit it to Pierce."

Motion: Bill La Vergne

Second: Jan Brazzell

Motion: Carried

Amy noted that the money for this project still needs to be appropriated; that will be done in the mid-biennium budget or as a separate item.

### **E. Art at Work Month**

**6:45 pm**

Commissioners were asked to volunteer to sit on committees to help plan Art at Work events.

Dates of Arts Commission-hosted Art at Work Month events are as follows:

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date/Time/Location</b>
Art at Work Month Opening Party	October 29, 6 - 9 pm, Tacoma Art Museum
Studio Tours	November 7 & 8, 10 am – 4 pm
Arts Symposium	November 14 & 15, roughly 9 am – 5 pm, University of Puget Sound
Art Slam	November 18, 6:30 – 9 pm, Rialto Theater

Applications to participate in the Studio Tour will be accepted until July 20. Commissioners were asked to help spread the word about this opportunity.

The Arts Symposium committee had their initial meeting and brainstormed ideas for possible session topics and presenters.

The Art Slam committee will be meeting on July 15 to discuss the format of the Art Slam. The call for submissions will come out in a few months.

Commissioners were asked to spread the word about the current call for Art at Work Month arts activities. The activities submitted will be included in the calendar of events as well as exhibit and workshop listings in the Art at Work Month brochure.

Art at Work materials are being designed by Nicole Gleadle, a junior design student at Pacific Lutheran University. The printed materials this year will include an all-in-one brochure which will include both the regular brochure as well as a studio tour section.

The printing budget has been reduced this year by eliminating some pages from the brochure, choosing a less-expensive paper stock, and creating an all-in-one brochure. A website is being created for Art at Work Month that will include special features such as a searchable database of events and studio tour listings.

### **F. AMOCAT Award Nominations**

**6:58 pm**

Commissioners were asked to think about and nominate people and organizations for the three AMOCAT Award categories: Community Outreach by an Artist, Community Outreach by an Organization, and Arts Patron.

Commissioners were asked to submit their nominations to Naomi before the September meeting. They will need to vote on AMOCAT nominations at the September meeting.

Commissioner Lacky nominated Heather Schlegel for the Community Outreach by an Artist award for the mural she created at the Wheelock Library.

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm