



## Meeting Minutes

### Arts Commission

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Wednesday, May 22, 2024

4:00 PM

Room 488  
625 Fisgard St.  
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

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#### PRESENT

Arts Commission: M. Alto (Chair), P. Brent, D. Cavens, S. Epp, D. Lajeunesse, G. Lemon (EP),  
C. Plant (EP), C. Smart

Arts Advisory Council: M. Chan (EP), R. Ditor (EP), S. Donaldson, R. Gale, C. Haska (EP), S. Reid,  
J. Smillie (EP), J. Verano (EP)

Staff: N. Chan, C. Gilpin, A. Gibbs, E. Sterling (Recorder)

Regrets: AC: K. Roessingh  
AAC: C. Caravaca, W. Greaves, A. Hershberg, E. Mushumanski

EP – Electronic Participation

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm.

#### 1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Chair Alto welcomed everyone and invited each participant to introduce themselves for this joint meeting. She then provided a Territorial Acknowledgement, giving thanks for the nations on whose land we work and live, and inviting members to a daily reflection of our relationship to the land and its first peoples.

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED by Member Cavens, SECONDED by Member Smart,  
That the agenda for the May 22, 2024 Arts Commission meeting be approved.**  
**CARRIED**

#### 3. Adoption of Minutes

**MOVED by Member Cavens, SECONDED by Member Smart  
That the minutes of the Arts Commission meeting of March 27, 2024  
be adopted as circulated.**  
**CARRIED**

#### 4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Alto noted that it was always a pleasure to be with the Commission and thanked the Arts Advisory Council for their presence at this joint meeting, here today, and in their daily work.

**5. Presentations/Delegations - none****6. Commission Business****6.1 Arts Advisory Council (AAC) Chair's Report (verbal)**

J. Verano thanked S. Reid for covering in her and S. Donaldson's absences at the March Arts Commission meeting as chair and funding chair. In April and May, the AAC has been busy adjudicating the Equity, Incubator, and IDEA grants. There have been numerous arts events that we have had the pleasure of attending. Kudos to the staff for getting the work done early for the 2023 Impact report.

**6.1.2 Arts Advisory Council Minutes: May 14, 2024 Meeting** – received for information

**6.1.3 Arts Advisory Council Activities by Council Summary** - received for information

**6.2 Manager's Report (verbal)**

C. Gilpin thanked everyone for attending this joint meeting and highlighted these items:

- We advertised and held an information session for April project grants and we will report back on those at the June meeting.
- At their May 2024 meeting, the CRD Board decided to relaunch the Performing Arts Facilities Select Committee. Previously it did require a lot of his time; it is too soon to know the impact this time around.
- Erin Sterling, the new administrative assistant, is fulltime, whereas Heather Heywood had been working 0.8 FTE, so we can be even more responsive to client inquiries.
- At our June meeting, staff will bring forward the outreach and communications report. In the second half of 2024, a report will come forward that will review of Incubator grants and a potential new capacity-building program. These are both part of the strategic plan and our implementation timeline is on schedule.

**6.2.1 Outreach Report** – received for information

**6.3 Incubator & Equity 2024 Grant Recommendations**

C. Gilpin shared the following:

- A team of four adjudicators approached their work using evaluation criteria, the goals of the new strategic plan which includes regional distribution.
- Incubator Grants are meant for organizational development, capacity building, and new arts initiatives.
- Equity Grants are for applicants who face systemic barriers to accessing support and identifies as part of an equity-seeking community.
- Our outreach initiatives have been successful as there were seven new applicants to Equity, and the highest number of applications in the past four years.

S. Donaldson mentioned that the Incubator and Equity grants were adjudicated with the help of an external advisor who brought relevant diverse perspectives. For Incubator grants, one highlight was the application from Timetheft Theatre, which was particularly well received and fully funded. For Equity, a highlight was BC Black History Awareness Society's "Vibes and Verses" project.

Questions arose from members regarding specific applications that did not receive funding. Staff and members of the Arts Advisory Council addressed these questions.

**MOVED by Member Cavens, seconded by Member Lajeunesse,  
That the 2024 Incubator Grant recommendations be approved as presented,  
and that the 2024 Equity Grant recommendations be approved as presented.  
CARRIED**

Motion Arising

**MOVED by Member Plant, seconded by Member Smart,  
That staff report back with options for additional feedback to be provided on  
grant applications.  
CARRIED**

#### **6.4 IDEA 2024 Grant Recommendations**

C. Gilpin outlined that IDEA stands for Innovate, Develop, Experiment, and Access. This granting program received 20 applications, the highest number in the past five years, and 10 were new applications, again a good sign of successful promotion and outreach.

S. Donaldson thanked her colleagues on the adjudication team and said that one highlight was a successful application from the Victoria Hospice Society who applied for a palliative care music therapy program.

**MOVED by Member Cavens, SECONDED by Member Lajeunesse,  
That the 2024 IDEA Grant recommendations be approved as presented.  
CARRIED**

#### **6.5 CRD Arts & Culture: 2023 Impact Report**

C. Gilpin mentioned that staff have been creating an Impact Report since 2018, previously each June, and this year we set the goal to prepare it by May. Kudos to Abby Gibbs who is the project lead and gathered all of the information for the report. The presentation highlighted the impact of Equity grants, the strategic plan, and that audiences are back in big numbers. Stories submitted by organizations show the positive impact of the service.

In response to the presentation, the following items came up during discussion:

- Staff intend to mail hard copies to all councils and electoral area directors and email a pdf to every elected official's publicly available email address.
- Chair Alto suggested that, after sending the reports out, we could offer to come to councils to provide information only, not with an ask or expectation.
- Member Plant asked if the chair and staff could do a 10 minute presentation to the CRD Board in June and there was agreement with this.

- The best data we have that shows that people from non-participating regions do benefit from the service comes from reports from the Royal and McPherson Theatre Society about ticket buyers, as well as pre-pandemic data from the Belfry.
- Member Plant asked if we can compel grant recipients to collect data, and Chair Alto said that we could have a larger discussion in June about data collection.
- Member Donaldson shared that, pre-CRD, the Professional Arts Alliance & City of Victoria did exit surveys and solicited information and learned that 44% of the Victoria Symphony audience came from Saanich – and that helped to build the argument for a regional combined service.

**MOVED by Member Lajeunesse, SECONDED by Member Cavens,  
The Arts Commission recommends to the CRD Board that staff distribute the  
CRD Arts and Culture: 2023 Impact Report virtually through the CRD website  
and as physical copies to all councils and electoral area directors to raise  
awareness about the positive impact of the Arts and Culture Support Service  
throughout the capital region. CARRIED**

Chair Alto suggested adding to the June agenda that when we do the presentation to Board, it would be useful for the Commission to consider whether another road show would be useful. Member Lajeunesse recommended reminding municipal staff of any road show visits so that it makes it onto the agenda.

Member Cavens asked the AAC members present for their input on our granting programs and levels of funding. C. Gilpin recommended increasing budgets in a strategic way according to the strategic plan. When we review current grant programs or propose new ones, it would be a good time to allocate funding in a strategic way.

Chair Alto invited participants to reflect on the two questions from the last slide:

**What from the report stands out as something we should highlight more in our communications?  
What trends you are seeing in the impact of CRD arts funding or in the arts sector itself?**

Some responses included:

- highlight the breadth of projects that are being funded
- affirmation that audiences are bouncing back
- N. Chan recommended that in distribution of the report, accompany it with more information about how to join, some of the costs/benefits.
- everyone benefits from a service that only 70% of region funds
- highlight the positive economic impact

C. Gilpin noted that Impact Report stories and quotes will become individual posts on social media. Some councillors offered to connect their communications people with A. Gibbs.

**7. New Business**

**8. Correspondence** – two letters of thanks from grant recipients were received.

**9. Adjournment**

**MOVED by Member Lajeunesse, SECONDED by Member Smart,  
That the May 22, 2024 Arts Commission meeting be adjourned at 5:34 pm.**

**CARRIED**

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Chair

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Recorder