



Meeting Minutes

Arts Commission

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

4:00 PM

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

PRESENT

Members: M. Alto (Chair), J. Bateman (EP), P. Brent (EP), D. Cavens, Sharie Epp (EP), G. Lemon, C. Plant (EP), K. Roessingh (EP), C. Smart

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

AAC: J. Verano (EP), chair

EP – Electronic Participation

The meeting was called to order at 4 pm.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Chair Alto invited commission members to ground themselves in a Territorial Acknowledgement. It is appropriate for us to reflect on the opportunities we have because of the stewardship of these lands and waters by the Lək'wəḡən People, the Songhees and the Xwsepsum (Kosapsum – traditional name of the Esquimalt) Nations.

2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED by Member Cavens, SECONDED by Member Smart,
That the agenda for the September 25, 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 June 26, 2024 be adopted
as circulated. CARRIED**

Arising from the minutes, it was noted that we have not received a response from our letter to Minister Popham regarding the BC Arts Council's Regional Areas policy.

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Alto noted that the Performing Arts Facilities Select Committee met on September 4th and has charged staff to return to that committee with options for both a regional and a sub-regional arts service, which could have a significant impact on our work.

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

Chair Verano noted that the AAC did not meet in September, but there are two updates. Staff put out notices to recruit new AAC members, and we received a record amount of applications (19) and a strong pool of candidates. There is a meeting next week to choose three people to appoint. We are also looking forward to the Operating Grant adjudications. Those of us who like hard copies receive a gigantic binder to review, and we meet on November 30th to do that work. Finally, members were encouraged to take advantage of any invitations or tickets that come, to see the exhibits and shows that our work has helped make happen.

Chair Alto commented that she was at the launch of the Vital Signs report yesterday, and it was noted that Arts & Culture received one of the highest, and the only increase in support of all of the categories that they canvas. Thank you for the work that you do.

6.2 Manager's Report (verbal)

C. Gilpin noted that this is one of the years that we have both annual and multiyear applicants to Operating Grants. The 10 largest organizations are doing a full application and receiving a full evaluation this year.

In View Royal, on September 3rd, Councillor Rogers made a notice of motion to have View Royal consider changing its level of participation. It will probably be discussed at their Oct 1st meeting. Staff have prepared a presentation on the benefits of View Royal staying at its current level.

Motion arising

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Smart,
That the Commission endorses the Chair and staff to make a presentation at
the View Royal council meeting where the Arts Service is discussed. CARRIED**

6.2.1 Outreach Report (attached)**6.3 Grow Forward Capacity-Building Program**

C. Gilpin explained that a key point of the new strategic plan was to increase support for mentorship, planning, and capacity-building. There was a full evaluation of the Incubator Grants. The proposed Grow Forward program would replace Incubator and would roll out in phases: a pilot version in spring 2025 and then recruit funding partners so that we can launch a full version in 2026. Aspects of this program were modeled on the Future Focus program developed by Calgary Arts Development, which was very successful, and attracted funding partners.

Recommendations:

1. That the Incubator grant program is replaced with a new expanded capacity-building program

- called *Grow Forward* to be launched as a pilot program in spring 2025.
2. That, starting in 2025, the Projects, Short Series and Extended Programming grant program allow applications from arts non-profit organizations that are incorporated at any time before the grant deadline.
 3. That staff actively recruit external funding partners for the full version of *Grow Forward*, which has a tentative launch date of spring 2026.
 4. That staff bring a program evaluation of the *Grow Forward* pilot program back to the Arts Commission in fall 2025 along with more details on the launch of a full version of the program informed by the review of the pilot version.

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Chair Alto,
That this item be referred to the Arts Advisory Council for their October meeting and to ask them to provide input in time for the October Arts Commission Meeting. CARRIED**

6.4 2025 Budget for Arts and Culture Support Service

At their May 8th meeting, the CRD Board agreed to budget planning guidelines, which included limiting core service impacts to a 3% increase. The CRD pools facility costs (lease, utilities, etc) for the entire organization and then attributes a portion to each department based on occupancy space. There is some money for increases to grant budgets, but the majority goes to administrative costs. N. Chan explained that our budgets have not grown in line with inflation, and that the AC could choose to give more support to fewer organizations. C. Gilpin reminded the Commission that our grants are investments to create impact, not subsidies based on need.

Paul Brent left the meeting at 6 pm.

In response to questions, N. Chan clarified how the budget planning process works.

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Cavens,
The Arts Commission recommends the Committee of the Whole recommend to the Capital Regional District Board: That the 2025 Arts & Culture Support Service Budget be approved as presented. CARRIED**

6.5 Communications and Outreach Plan Update

C. Gilpin introduced this as another piece of the strategic plan, giving credit to A. Gibbs, our community outreach coordinator, as she helped to develop this plan, which will inform a lot of her work over the next four years.

**MOVED by Member Lemon, SECONDED by Member Plant,
That the 2024-27 Communications and Outreach Plan be approved as presented. CARRIED**

In response to the question about how we are communicating with the wider public, it was noted that we have 800+ newsletter subscribers, and we have an increasing number of Instagram followers. Staff is taking impact report stories and news items from our arts organizations and pushing them through our social media accounts.

6.6. Data Initiative Focused on Regional Impact of Arts Funding

C. Gilpin noted that this began with a discussion at the May 22nd meeting of the Arts Commission. What staff are recommending is to collaborate with existing organizations that already have data available that we are not leveraging at this time. We would collect aggregate geographical data without identifying personal information, complying with FOIPPA. Some of the larger organizations with data would include: Victoria Symphony, Pacific Opera Victoria, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, and the Victoria Conservatory of Music.

**MOVED by Member Lemon, SECONDED by Member Smart,
That staff collaborate with arts organizations through data sharing agreements
to gather aggregate audience participation data and report back on findings at
the annual check-in on the Arts Service's strategic plan scheduled for January
2025. CARRIED**

7. New Business

Chair Alto noted that if there is an Arts Commission meeting in November, we will need to appoint an acting chair, as she will be traveling to one of Victoria's twin cities: Napier, New Zealand.

8. Correspondence – Thank you letter from Ian Rye, CEO of Pacific Opera Victoria

9. Adjournment

**MOVED by Member Cavens, SECONDED by Member Lemon,
that the September 25, 2024 Arts Commission meeting be adjourned at
5:31pm. CARRIED**

Chair

Recorder