



Harini Krishnan, District 1
Stephen Seymour, District 1
Kimberly Gordon, District 2
Elizabeth Stone, District 2
Laura McHugh, District 3
VACANT, District 3
Jeanne Heise, District 4
Edward Sweeney, District 4
Samaruddin Stewart, Dist. 5
VACANT, District 5

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REGULAR MEETING OF THE ARTS COMMISSION
Wednesday, September 16, 2020 — 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

LOCATION: ZOOM MEETING

MINUTES

1. **Roll Call** – Roll Call and introduction of guests.
Commissioners present: Sam Stewart, Harini Krishnan, Jeanne Heise, Stephen Seymour, Kimberly Gordon, Edward Sweeney, Laura McHugh, Elizabeth Stone
Staff present: Robin Rodricks, Commission Director; Juda Tolmasoff, Chief Legislative Aide
Christina Fall, Legislative Aide
Guest speaker: Irma Zoepf, CEO of The Zbridge
2. **Agenda Amendments**: NONE.
3. **Oral Communications**: NONE.
4. **Discussion Item**:
 - a. Facilitated discussion of the Commission's role and work on equity and social justice led by Irma Zoepf, *The Z-Bridge*:

Director Rodricks provided an update on the progress of the Office of Equity and Social Justice: the Equity and Social Justice Index will be completed at the end of September; no date for the official opening of the office has been set. She then introduced the facilitator and guest speaker, Irma Zoepf to lead a discussion on IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equality, accessibility) and social justice, and the Commission's direction on this work.

- Introductions: Ms. Zoepf had all attendees introduce themselves, which district s/he represented, and how long s/he had served on the Commission.
- Review goal of the session and logistics (5 min)
 - To create a space to start the conversation on the topics of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI), and Social Justice
 - To agree on what it means for the Arts Commission to engage and advance social justice
 - To start the discussion on how it will be reflected in the Strategic Plan and the following goals and actions

- Group Agreement: Ms. Zoepf advised discussion guidelines to be follows:
 - Safe place
 - Assume best intentions
 - Be present
 - Be respectful
 - Contribute, participate, all voices heard
 - Ask, don't assume

Commissioner Krishnan added the agreement of being mindful to give space and take space in the spirit of inclusion.

- Presentation of Equity, Social Justice and other concepts:

Ms. Zoepf asked the Commissioners why we are having a discussion on equity and social justice today:

- Commissioner Krishnan stated we are addressing systemic racism and its effects, and to be in alignment with the County's development of an Office of Equity and Social Justice.
- Commissioner Seymour stated we are addressing this topic because of the specific issues and INCIDENTS that have led to this awakening; it is important to keep this conversation alive to lower divisions, so that people listen to each other.
- Commissioner McHugh stated art touches everyone, whether the person is a maker or not; art is an easy way to introduce information for people to respond to at their own level.

Ms. Zoepf then presented a slide deck that described concepts of social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and the challenges faced when working on these issues.

- Exercise / Breakout groups

Ms. Zoepf split the attendees into two groups to discuss three questions:

1. How do you view/see the role and work of the Commission in addressing equity and social justice in SMC?
2. How do you see these concepts affect the mission and work of Arts Commission?
3. What are some actions you would like to see from the Art Commission related to Equity and Social Justice?

- Reflection/sharing

Each breakout group reported on their discussion and answers to the questions, which included

- Platforms for online communication of events and activities.
- Proactively supporting artists and arts organizations.
- The Commission has an obligation to lead the discussion on IDEA.
- Address trauma by supporting organizations that work on this issue.
- Elevate our diverse organizations, not only black voices, but AAPI and Pilipino as well.
- Grants need to be re-thought and ranked in the work that the applicant does for equity justice.
- More recognition and funding to those organizations who serve the underserved.
- Systematize the grants and outreach to those communities.
- Communication: work on ways for outreach and listening; get better at asking the right questions.

- Work on accessibility.
 - How can the Commission model IDEA
 - Work on building a diverse Commission by working with Supervisors.
 - Ensure that the Commission's IDEA work includes all communities, i.e., the Disabled, LGBTQ.
 - Bring artists to the table.
 - Work with the office of community affairs and utilize U.S. Census data to identify underserved communities.
- Take away's and next actions/steps from Arts Commission
 - Diversify the makeup of the Commission.
 - The Commission should lead IDEA work by example.
 - Listening to the various communities, rather than taking charge.
5. **Adjournment:** The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:40 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 21, 2020, 3:00 – 4:30 PM – via Zoom.