



May 11, 2023

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER

The May 11, 2023, meeting of the Culture, Arts and Heritage Commission (CAHC) was called to order at 12:36 p.m. by CAHC Vice Chair C.A. Richardson in Aspen Community Room at Vancouver City Hall and via Microsoft Teams. Reid and B. Richardson entered at 12:50 p.m. Gall and Rafferty were absent.

Staff Present

Stacey Donovan, Cultural Services Manager
Kirsten Hull, Support Specialist
Dave Perlick, Interim Director
Melody Burton, Marketing Manager
Stephanie Obotette, Administrative Assistant
Katherine Stokke, Management Analyst
Tricia Juettemeyer, Assistant City Attorney

Guests

Jim Kalvelage, Opsis Architecture
Lesley Bane, Framework Planning
Steve Nelson, Opsis Architecture
Bill Blake, AMS Planning
Susan Law, Urban Forestry Commission

Donovan introduced the Commission's new attorney, Tricia Juettemeyer.

ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by C.A. Richardson, seconded by Mercado, and approved unanimously to adopt the minutes from April 13, 2023 as presented.

ITEM 3: VACANCY UPDATE AND AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

Hull gave an update on the recruitment process to fill the seat vacated by Alicia Nilo in January 2023. The application is open now and will close on Friday, June 2. At that point, a subcommittee of CAHC will review the applications and make a recommendation on candidates to advance to interviews conducted by the City Council subcommittee responsible for the appointment.

This item was revisited after quorum was met and the following motion and vote occurred:

Motion by B. Richardson, seconded by Harrington, and approved unanimously to form an ad hoc subcommittee to review applications for the vacant seat. Committee will consist of Mercado, Reid, and B. Richardson with C.A. Richardson as an alternate.

ITEM 4: VANCOUVER ARTS HUB PROJECT RECOMMENDATION

Burton gave an overview of the community engagement process to date. 907 surveys have been submitted and 113 individuals have signed up on the project email list. Burton highlighted outreach tasks

completed so far, including a Be Heard Webpage, news release and subsequent interest from local media, individual commission outreach, email and social media campaigns, and tabling at community events, among others. This first phase of public outreach shows strong support for both the arts hub concept and for the City to invest in providing arts and culture opportunities for the community. Burton noted a recent concern from artists emerging in the comments; they are wondering if this facility will truly be entirely dedicated to the arts, or if it will end up being shared with multiple community uses by the time it opens.

Nelson summarized recent modifications to the floor plan based on the revenue forecasting model. The exhibit space has moved to the north side of the building so that the building will appear activated from the roadway. The amount of circulation space has been reduced in favor of increasing the amount of active space. While the floor plans show individual studios, the economic model looks at square footage per usage overall.

Blake presented a summary of research into the operations of comparable facilities. A variety of centers were studied, emphasizing publicly accessible data and a mix of old and new facilities. All facilities studied engage in some level of arts education, most have studios for artists, and most rent out space for private events. Blake highlighted three facilities in particular, the Torpedo Factory in Arlington, Virginia; Davis Arts Center in Davis, California; and Studio Two Three in Richmond, Virginia.

Blake highlighted the key data points used for the economic assumptions in the operating model and forecast, and then described various policy and procedural considerations that modify the results. The model anticipates a very active hub, with lines of business including classes, camps, studios, rentals, memberships, and retail. Types of memberships could range from studios to coworking or maker spaces with lockers. Other facilities have found the most success when using term limits and a juried process for their studio memberships to ensure a balance between stability and turnover in the studios.

In this model the facility would be City-operated, and classes would be the main driver of revenue. Studio rentals, while important programmatically, do not contribute significantly to the revenue. Cost recovery would be 71%, with \$1M in revenue per year and \$1.4 M in expenses. Staffing and building-related costs make up the majority of the expenses.

B. Richardson suggested creating a “supporter membership” option that incentivizes a higher membership price with complimentary benefits like free participation in events or classes, discounts, etc.

Reid asked why the Torpedo Factory alternated between City and non-profit management. Blake indicated that the vision for the facility has evolved over time based on the subsequent economic development of the neighborhood surrounding it. This has created a dynamic between prioritizing uses that drive tourism and uses that support artist development.

Reid and B. Richardson suggested transitioning the center from a City-run facility to a non-profit “Friends Of” group, specifically formed for this facility. A non-profit could diversify options for operating funding through grants and donations that the City would be ineligible for. Perlick noted that the cost recovery currently proposed in the model is consistent with other city-run facilities but agreed that a non-profit model could be a further improvement.

Mercado expressed appreciation for the work and excitement for the project overall. Harrington agreed, adding that the financial and operating model for the facility will aid her conversations with artists and

ensure they are realistic about what the facility can achieve. C. Richardson requested more information about comparable facilities and Blake offered to supply his research.

Motion by Reid, seconded by Mercado, and approved unanimously to support the updated findings from the Vancouver arts hub study as presented with the building use concept and operating framework, and to forward a recommendation to City Council to accept the study findings and continue work on this project.

ITEM 6: CULTURAL SERVICES REPORT

None presented.

ITEM 7: PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Reid provided feedback on the Vancouver Art and Music Festival, stating that from an outside perspective the festival does not appear unified as one event and that some participating organizations stand out more than others in their advertising. Donovan offered to connect with Reid directly to look into her specific concerns. Reid additionally gave a brief update on the Creative Arts District application, stating that the local committee will meet with ArtsWA soon to receive guidance on how they can strengthen their application.

ITEM 8: PUBLIC COMMENT

Susan Law of Vancouver's Urban Forestry Commission suggested that the Culture, Arts & Heritage Commission and Urban Forestry Commission collaborate to propose a solution to the Main Street Promise project's concerns about the Silva Bolds-Whitfield plaza and fountain at Main and 13th Street. Law gave a short summary of the Urban Forestry Commission's discussion with the Main Street Project team including the operational issues of the fountain and highlighted the plaza's use as an active and ongoing commemoration of the Silva Bolds Award recipients, the newest recipient to be honored in 2023. Law suggested a joint meeting to address the issue.

ITEM 9: OPEN DISCUSSION

None presented.

ADJOURNED

This meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m.