



MEETING OF THE FULL ARTS COMMISSION

Monday, February 2, 2026

2 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Minutes

President Collins called the meeting to order at **2:05 p.m.**

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Agenda Changes, Land Acknowledgment (0:23)

Commissioners Present

Charles Collins, President

JD Beltran

Seth Brenzel

Patrick Carney

Suzie Ferras (left 0:00)

McKenna Quint

Nabiel Musleh

Al Perez

Debra Walker

Commissioners Absent

Janine Shiota, Vice President

Jessica Rothschild

Riccardo Benavides

Marcus Shelby

Lydia So

Staff Present:

Director of Cultural Affairs, Ralph Remington

Ebon Glenn, Deputy Director of Programs

Sarah Hollenbeck, Deputy Director of Administration and Finance
Veronica Limcaco, Acting Chief of Staff
Manraj Dhaliwal, Commission Secretary

Agenda Item 8 (New Business and Announcements) was moved before Agenda Item 2 (Approval of Minutes). No additional changes were made.

President Collins announced the public meeting instructions.

Commission Secretary Dhaliwal announced public comment instructions.

Commissioner Beltran began the meeting by reading the Arts Commission's land acknowledgment statement.

8. New Business and Announcements

(6:45)

President Collins announced the 2026 Arts Commission committee assignments, noting the annual review is intended to strengthen effectiveness and ensure commissioners gain broad understanding of the Commission's work. Collins also addressed significant community concern regarding the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts and directed staff and commissioners to prepare a detailed report for the March meeting. A subcommittee will be appointed to track accountability, assess responsibilities, and report on next steps related to the Center's future.

Commissioners shared updates and requests. Commissioner Beltran reported that San Francisco Art Week had its largest attendance and sales to date, reflecting strong public support for the arts. Commissioner Walker requested future agenda discussions on cultural center partnerships, merger planning, and charter reform, emphasizing the need for community involvement and transparency. Director of Cultural Affairs Ralph Remington announced he will step back from his role to support the transition to a combined arts and culture structure, with Deputy Director Sarah Hollenbeck

assuming additional responsibilities. He will remain in an advisory capacity through his planned retirement on June 30, 2026.

Public Comment(s)

Geoffrey Grier (San Francisco Recovery Theatre)

Spoke on behalf of the Black Theatre Collective, expressing frustration over a long-delayed \$500,000 funding allocation. He described repeated attempts to obtain clarity from multiple city departments and urged the Arts Commission to help resolve the issue so the organization can continue serving the community.

Ace Washington (Fillmore Corridor Ambassador)

Reflected on changes in city government and arts leadership, emphasizing the importance of this transitional moment. Expressed hope for stronger engagement moving forward.

Maria Jensen (Executive Director of SOMArts)

Urged the Commission to improve transparency by releasing meeting materials earlier to allow meaningful public review and participation. Jensen emphasized that San Francisco's arts ecosystem is actively contributing to the city's recovery but is being hindered by bureaucracy, delayed decisions, and reduced resources, and called for stronger coordination, leadership, and investment in existing cultural institutions.

Nancy pili Hernandez (Artist and Muralist)

Shared personal experiences benefiting from Arts Commission programs and spoke in strong support of the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts. She described the Center as a sacred community space and urged the Commission to ensure that its future stewardship remains community-led, protects its archives, and preserves its cultural and political legacy.

2.Approval of the Minutes (24:56)

Commissioner Beltran, seconded by Commissioner Musleh moved to approve January 5, 2026, minutes.

Public Comment(s)

Ace Washington

Questioned the approval of minutes that were not available for public review. Expressed concern about transparency and the lack of accessible records documenting prior meetings and public testimony. Urged the Commission to address why minutes are delayed or missing and to ensure budget and procedural issues are reflected accurately.

Erris Edgerly, Western Addition resident

Spoke about the importance of minutes in documenting discussions related to cultural centers and arts policy. Emphasized the need for community-driven processes, clear historical records, and continuity in decision-making, especially amid leadership and administrative changes. Raised concerns about how cultural center issues are reflected in official minutes.

Vinay Patel, Director of the Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center

Asked whether the minutes provide adequate context and understanding of the Commission's approach to cultural centers. Emphasized the importance of transparency, continuity, and community involvement in arts governance and requested clearer documentation of discussions and decisions.

There was no additional public comment.

The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-015: Motion to approve January 5, 2026, Full Commission minutes.

3. General Public Comment
(30:26)

Public Comment(s)

Vinay Patel, Director of the Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center

Spoke about the importance of Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts and expressed concern over its closure. Emphasized that community-serving arts organizations are struggling while public discussion about arts

recovery focuses primarily on downtown. Urged the Commission to support neighborhood-based cultural institutions.

Ace Washington

Raised concerns about a denied or questioned funding application, stating that his residency and organizational qualifications were misunderstood or incorrectly reviewed. Requested an opportunity to present documentation to commissioners and asked for reconsideration of the funding decision.

Angelica Rodriguez, Independent Archivist and Curator

Shared her experience as a former staff member of Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts and expressed disappointment over the lack of communication regarding its financial crisis. Emphasized the importance of preserving the Center's archives and asked how community members can assist in their protection and stewardship.

Vin Seaman, former employee of SF foundation and Queer Cultural Center and community organizer

Spoke critically about the broader decline of arts institutions in San Francisco and stated that current systems are failing artists and cultural organizations. Expressed disappointment in the Commission's handling of Mission Cultural Center and urged commissioners to engage directly with affected communities and institutions.

Ani Rivera, Executive Director of Galería de la Raza

Expressed strong concern over the treatment of Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts and the impact on Latino cultural institutions. Emphasized the importance of leadership, transparency, and accountability, and urged the Commission to provide clear information and active support to ensure long-term community stewardship.

Erris Edgerly, Western Addition resident

Highlighted parallels between challenges facing Mission Cultural Center and African American cultural institutions. Emphasized the need for community inclusion, cross-cultural solidarity, and Commission support to preserve cultural centers amid redevelopment pressures.

Geoffrey Grier (San Francisco Recovery Theatre)

Criticized the arts funding and application process as overly bureaucratic

and disconnected from artists' realities. Reiterated concerns about missing funds previously allocated to the Black Theatre Collective and urged the Commission to resolve the issue and better support working artists.

There was no additional public comment.

5. Director's Report

(49:00)

Director of Cultural Affairs Ralph Remington highlighted recent achievements and updates across Arts Commission programs. He announced that San Francisco International Airport's Harvey Milk Terminal 1 received UNESCO's Prix Versailles award for the world's most beautiful airport in 2025, crediting the Public Art team for integrating high-quality, accessible artwork throughout SFO. He also noted several recent public art installations and exhibitions, including *Moving San Francisco* at City Hall, *Dream Jungle* at the SFAC Main Gallery, new permanent artworks at Pier 27 and Herz Recreation Center, and the successful completion of San Francisco Art Week.

Director Remington addressed the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, explaining that the Arts Commission was notified of the organization's voluntary financial insolvency. He affirmed the City's commitment to the future of the site and stated that the Arts Commission, the Mayor's Office, and District 9 Supervisor are working with community partners to plan for long-term stewardship, including a major seismic and life-safety renovation anticipated to begin in 2027. He emphasized that efforts are underway to safeguard the Center's cultural legacy, programming, and archives.

Additional updates included the launch of the search for a new Executive Director of Arts and Culture to oversee the Arts Commission, Grants for the Arts, and the Film Commission under a unified structure; recent recommendations from the Commission Streamlining Task Force; upcoming calls for public art opportunities; and key staffing changes, including the departure of the Director of Galleries and Public Programs. He closed with reminders about upcoming events, deadlines, and required ethics filings for commissioners.

Public Comment(s)

Vin Seaman, former employee of SF foundation and Queer Cultural Center and Community Organizer

Thanked Director Remington for his service but questioned how the Arts Commission was surprised by the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts' financial insolvency, given required financial reporting and oversight. Expressed concern about loss of trust, lack of communication, and public statements framing the situation as a lease violation. Urged commissioners to engage directly with the community.

Unnamed Speaker

Criticized the focus on international recognition such as the “most beautiful airport” award, suggesting it felt disconnected from the current crisis facing cultural centers.

There was no additional public comment.

5. Committee Reports and Committee Matters
(1:18:36)

5.1 Civic Design Committee Report
(1:18:41)

The Civic Design Review Committee reported on its review of the Phase 2 and 3 design updates for the SFO West Utilities and Paving Project (Station BP), a new electrical substation supporting the SFO Westfield campus. The committee reviewed site constraints, circulation, floodplain considerations, landscaping, lighting, materials, and color, noting that the design refined the previously approved concept and elevated a utilitarian building through thoughtful detailing and use of native, low-water plantings. Commissioners expressed support for the project and unanimously approved it, emphasizing the role of civic design review in ensuring high-quality design and integration of public art in public infrastructure projects.

There was no public comment.

5.2 **Visual Arts Committee Report** **(1:24:20)**

The Visual Arts Committee reported on several newly completed and upcoming public art projects across the city. Highlights included the SFPUC Millbrae Operations Center public art plan, which proposes two major opportunities: a large exterior sculpture at the main entrance and a series of pedestrian-scale artworks along El Camino Real, with themes centered on water stewardship, ecological context, and community engagement. The committee also presented the completed *Zawa Zawa Buzz Buzz* mural by artist Haruno Sato at Mission Bay School, created in collaboration with students and marking the Arts Commission's first public art partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District.

Additional presentations included new public art installations at San Francisco International Airport and Pier 27. At SFO, eleven two-dimensional artworks by local and national artists were installed in the Terminal 2–3 Connector, complementing an existing sculptural work and showcasing a wide range of media. At Pier 27, *Mareas* by Anna Teresa Fernández, the artist's first permanent SFAC commission, was unveiled as a large-scale sculptural gateway inspired by tides and movement across the Bay.

The committee also highlighted *Reflection and Projection* by Sanjay Vora at the newly opened Herz Recreation Center in McLaren Park. The interactive installation uses mirrored and enamel tile surfaces to reflect visitors and surroundings, celebrating belonging, inclusion, and community connection. Commissioners discussed safety, visibility, and site integration and expressed strong support for the projects and the continued expansion of high-quality public art throughout San Francisco.

There was no public comment.

5.3 Executive Committee Report (1:33:43)

The Executive Committee reported on its January 14, 2026 meeting, which included a Director's update and an overview of the Arts Commission's proposed fiscal years 2026–27 and 2027–28 budget priorities presented by the Deputy Director of Finance and Administration. Commissioners acknowledged the challenges of developing the budget amid citywide restructuring, potential departmental consolidation, and evolving community needs. The committee emphasized the importance of clear communication, coordination, strategic planning, and transparency as staff continue to refine and prepare the Arts Commission's proposed budget for Commission review and approval.

There was no public comment.

6. Arts Commission FY 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 Draft Budget (8:20)

Staff presented the proposed Arts Commission operating and capital budgets for fiscal years 2026–27 and 2027–28 within the context of a significant citywide structural deficit. The City is facing an estimated multi-year budget shortfall, and departments were directed by the Mayor's Office to prioritize core services, reduce ongoing general fund spending, and improve operational efficiency. The Arts Commission received a directive to reduce its ongoing general fund budget by \$400,000 annually, which staff incorporated into the proposed budget. Hotel tax revenue, the Commission's largest funding source, is projected to remain relatively flat over the two-year period, limiting opportunities for program growth.

The proposed operating budget reflects a slight decrease in FY 2026–27, followed by a modest increase in FY 2027–28. Funding sources include hotel tax revenues, general fund support, charter-mandated Symphony

allocations, and interdepartmental work orders. Hotel tax revenues primarily support Community Investments, while general fund resources support administration, galleries, civic art selection, and vendor programs. Public art projects funded through the Art Enrichment Ordinance are not included in the operating budget, as those funds are generated directly from other departments' capital projects.

Staff also presented capital budget requests for cultural centers, galleries, and the City's civic art collection. Capital requests include funding for critical accessibility and maintenance projects at cultural centers, as well as significant investment needed to address the backlog of conservation and restoration needs for the City's public art collection. Commissioners discussed funding structures, Prop E allocations, long-term maintenance needs, and the impacts of budget constraints on cultural institutions.

Public Comment(s)

Vinay Patel, Director of the Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center

Asked why cultural center funding was reduced despite projected increases in hotel tax revenue. Expressed concern about the long-term sustainability of cultural centers under continued budget reductions.

Dania Cabello, Board Member of SOMArts and Artist

Spoke as an artist and educator, emphasizing that cultural centers are essential infrastructure for artists and communities. Stated that funding cuts directly reduce paid opportunities, programming, and public access, and urged the Commission to prevent further cuts to cultural center budgets.

Jena McRae, Managing Director of SOMArts Cultural Center

Described the operational impacts of a prior 10% funding reduction to SOMArts Cultural Center, including staff layoffs, reduced programming, and elimination of benefits. Requested stability in cultural center funding and greater transparency regarding reallocations.

Woody Hanson, Co-chair SOMArts Board

Spoke as a board co-chair for SOMArts, highlighting the center's role in supporting grassroots arts and serving as a fiscal sponsor for artists and organizations. Warned that further cuts and a reimbursable grant model

could create severe cash-flow challenges and urged the Commission to provide transitional support and funding stability.

Maria Jensen (Executive Director of SOMArts)

Reported on the cumulative impacts of funding cuts and facilities issues at SOMArts, including deferred maintenance and repeated repairs. Raised concerns about lack of dialogue, accountability, and the expectation that centers maintain the same level of services despite reduced funding, and requested deeper engagement with Commission leadership.

There was no additional public comment.

The motion was denied.

14 authorized Commissioner seats; majority of votes needed to pass (8)

Ayes: Charles Collins, JD Beltran, Patrick Carney, McKenna Quint, Nabil Musleh, Al Perez, Debra Walker

Nays: Seth Brenzel

7. Consent Calendar
(1:46:00)

President Collins introduced all items on the consent calendar.

Commissioner Brenzel, seconded by Commissioner Beltran moved to approve all consent calendar items.

There was no public comment.

The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-017: that this Commission does hereby adopt the following items on the Consent Calendar and their related Resolutions:

1. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-018:** Motion to approve the January 29, 2026, [Civic Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes](#).
2. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-019:** Motion to approve the January 21, 2026, [Visual Arts Committee Meeting Minutes](#).
3. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-020:** Motion to approve the January 14, 2026, [Executive Committee Meeting Minutes](#).

Civic Design Review Committee Recommendations (January 29, 2026, [link to agenda](#))

Action

4. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-021:** Motion to approve Phase 2/3 Review for SFO West Utilities and Paving Project (Station BP).

Visual Arts Committee Recommendations (January 21, 2026, [link to agenda](#))

Action

5. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-022:** Motion to amend **RESOLUTION NO. 0906-24-380** to approve a new location so that new motion reads as: Motion to approve *East Cut Beale Tile Stairway*, a mosaic artwork design by Wilma Wyss. The mosaic will be installed on Privately-Owned Public Open Space at 388 Beale Street in District 6. The design includes 49 stair risers, measuring approximately 6 in. tall by 8 ft. wide each, a total of 172 sq. ft. The artwork is funded by a Community Challenge Grant and will not become part of the Civic Art Collection. The artwork will be maintained by the Embarcadero Lofts HOA.
6. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-023:** Motion to approve *Whispers of Waste*, a sculpture by Zulu Heru at India Basin Waterfront Park, at the intersection of Griffith Street and Hudson Ave. The sculpture is composed of scrap metal, industrial parts, and cement. The sculpture measures H13 ft. by W5 ft. The sculpture will be installed for one year and will be maintained by Big Art Loop and will not become part of

the Civic Art Collection.

7. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-024:** Motion to approve the Project Plan for the SFPUC Millbrae Operations Center Improvements Public Art Project.
8. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-025:** Motion to approve as installed the completed artwork titled *ZAWA ZAWA BUZZ BUZZ*, 2025, by Harumo Sato for the Mission Bay School Project at 1415 Owens Street. The artwork is a porcelain enamel tile, approximately 330 sq. ft., installed on the East entrance of the Mission Bay School. The artwork is owned by SFUSD and will not become part of the Civic Art Collection.
9. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-026:** Motion to approve as installed 2025.1-2025.11, eleven two dimensional artworks purchased for SFO Terminal 3 Connector, located in the public connector corridor between SFO Terminals 2 and 3.
10. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-027:** Motion to approve as installed the completed artwork titled *Mareas* by Ana Teresa Fernández located at Pier 27 James R. Herman Cruise Terminal Plaza on The Embarcadero between Chestnut and Lombard streets. The artwork is composed of Tnemec-painted stainless-steel tubing and polycarbonate resin tiles and measures 13'-3 ¾" high by 26'-9 ¾" wide by 6'-10 7/8" deep.
11. **RESOLUTION NO. 0202-26-028:** Motion to approve as installed the completed artwork titled *Reflection and Projection* by Sanjay Vora located at Herz Recreation Center, 160 Mrs. Jackson Way between Visitacion and Sunnydale avenues. The artwork is composed of mirrored stainless steel and porcelain enamel tiles on steel framing and measures 7'-11 ¾" tall by 9'-11 ¼" wide.

9. Adjournment

(1:48:20)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Posted 02/13/2026, 3:10 p.m., msd

Archives Available

A recording of this meeting will be available online after the meeting at the following address:

https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=147.

Language Accessibility

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