



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE ARTS COMMISSION

**Wednesday, January 14, 2025
1 p.m.
City Hall, Room 416**

Draft Minutes

President Collins called the meeting to order at **2:07** p.m.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Agenda Changes, Land Acknowledgment (0:10)

Commissioners Present

Charles Collins, President
JD Beltran
Debra Walker

Commissioners Absent

Marcus Shelby
Janine Shiota, Vice President

Staff Present:

Ralph Remington, Director of Cultural Affairs
Ebon Glenn, Deputy Director of Programs
Sarah Hollenbeck, Deputy Director of Finance and Administration
Manraj Dhaliwal, Commission Secretary
Veronica Limcaco, Acting Chief of Staff

President Collins asked for any agenda changes and no changes were suggested.

President Collins announced the public meeting instructions.

Commission Secretary Dhaliwal announced public comment instructions.



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

2. General Public Comment **(6:05)**

Public Comment(s)

Geoffrey Grier with San Francisco Recovery Theatre (SFRT) urged the Commission to review its grant/application and review processes, stating concerns about overreliance on machine-readable triage that may exclude longstanding community artists and underserved groups, and calling for deeper attention to personal narratives and community participation.

Ace Washington described difficulties with address verification in an Arts Commission application process, requested that staff review and correct the verification issue, and stated he would submit additional information in writing.

There was no additional public comment.

3. Director's Report **(13:14)**

Director Ralph Remington returned to report key updates: the Board of Supervisors on Jan 13 upheld the Planning Department's exemption for the Vaillancourt Fountain and removal work is planned to begin in February; he reminded commissioners to complete Form 700 filings by April 1. He highlighted upcoming events — the Moving San Francisco exhibition opens Jan 15 (on view through June 18), Mareas (Pier 27) will be unveiled Jan 16 at noon, and Dream Jungle opens Jan 29. There was no public comment.

Remington also announced organizational changes: Dr. Martina Ayala departed as Executive Director of the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts (Dec. 15, 2025) with Broderick Haight Consulting managing the transition; Carolina Aranibar Fernandez left the Arts Commission and Jackie Im is acting Director of Galleries & Public Programs until a

permanent hire is made.

4. Arts Commission FY 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 Budget Priorities (29:37)

Deputy Director of Finance and Administration Sarah Hollenbeck presented an overview of the Arts Commission's budget priorities for fiscal years 2026–27 and 2027–28, noting that this meeting was the first of two required public budget hearings. Rather than presenting a final proposed budget, staff focused on explaining the budget timeline, overall budget climate, and guidance received from the Mayor's Budget Office. The Arts Commission is currently in the department phase of the budget process, with a proposed budget scheduled to come before the full Commission in February, before submission to the Mayor and later review by the Board of Supervisors.

Hollenbeck explained that the City is facing a significant two-year budget deficit of more than \$930 million, driven by rising salary and benefit costs and slower revenue growth, along with uncertainty around federal funding. In response, the Mayor has directed departments to focus spending on core services, reduce the structural deficit, and identify efficiencies. Departments were instructed to eliminate discretionary programs, avoid adding new positions, reduce vacancies, explore shared services, and propose near-term investments that could lower long-term costs. Unlike prior years, departments have not yet been given specific budget cut targets, and staff are awaiting further directions from the Mayor's Budget Office.

Commissioners acknowledged the complexity of developing a budget amid simultaneous citywide changes, including streamlining, potential departmental consolidation, and evolving community needs. They emphasized the importance of coordination, strategic planning, and transparency as staff continue to develop the Arts Commission's proposed budget, with additional discussion and details expected at the February full Commission meeting.

Public Comment

Geoffrey Grier with San Francisco Recovery Theatre (SFRT) urged the Arts Commission to take an active role during the budget and merger discussions rather than waiting for external decisions. He emphasized that the arts are a significant economic driver for San Francisco and encouraged stronger collaboration across departments to protect and strengthen arts funding during the budget process.

There was no additional public comment.

5. New Business and Announcements **(53:40)**

Commissioners highlighted upcoming arts activities, including San Francisco Art Week and the public art unveiling at Pier 27. Commissioner Walker also requested future agenda items and joint meetings with Grants for the Arts and the Film Commission to discuss departmental consolidation, budget impacts, and collaborative strategies to support the changing arts sector.

There was no public comment.

6. Adjournment **(58:35)**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Posted 01/20/2026, 2:05 p.m., MD

Archives Available

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



<https://www.sf.gov/meeting/march-27-2024/executive-committee-meeting>

Language Accessibility

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