



MEETING OF THE FULL ARTS COMMISSION

Monday, October 6, 2025

2 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Draft Minutes

President Collins called the meeting to order at **2:01 p.m.**

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Agenda Changes, Land Acknowledgment (0:07)

Commissioners Present

Charles Collins, President

Janine Shiota

JD Beltran

Seth Brenzel

Patrick Carney

Suzie Ferras

Jessica Rothschild

Debra Walker

Marcus Shelby

J. Riccardo Benavides (left meeting at 4:33pm)

McKenna Quint

Al Perez

Commissioners Absent

Nabiel Musleh

Lydia So

Staff Present:

Ralph Remington, Director of Cultural Affairs

Sarah Hollenbeck, Deputy Director of Finance and Administration

Ebon Glenn, Deputy Director of Programs



Veronica Limcaco, Acting Chief of Staff
Manraj Dhaliwal, Commission Secretary

Due to the anticipated volume of public comment, the time allocated for each speaker was 2 minutes instead of 3 minutes. No additional agenda changes were made.

President Collins welcomed new Commissioners McKenna Quint and Al Perez to their first full Arts Commission meeting and thanked them for their commitment to public service.

President Collins announced the public meeting instructions.

Commission Secretary Dhaliwal announced public comment instructions.

President Collins began the meeting by reading the Arts Commission's land acknowledgment statement.

2. Approval of the Minutes (7:25)

Commissioner Beltran, seconded by Commissioner Shiota moved to approve September 5, 2025, minutes.

There was no public comment.

The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-171: Motion to approve September 5, 2025, Full Commission minutes.

3. General Public Comment (8:26)

Public Comment

Camila Baum (Docomomo US Noca): read a letter from Robert Free of the Naua Tewa Tribe emphasizing Armand Vaillancourt's support for Indigenous activism during the Alcatraz Occupation and urged the

Commission to preserve the fountain as an action consistent with its land acknowledgment.

Connor Turnbull (The Cultural Landscape Foundation): Questioned the Recreation and Park Department's reported maintenance costs for the Vaillancourt Fountain and called for an independent audit to ensure transparency and accuracy in decision-making.

Ted Barrow (Docomomo / Artist): Described the Vaillancourt Fountain as a vital part of San Francisco's modernist heritage and cultural identity, urging its preservation as a symbol of creativity and civic freedom.

4. Director's Report (15:03)

Director of Cultural Affairs Ralph Remington shared highlights from recent Arts Commission activities and community events. He recognized Latino Heritage Month, and welcomed new Commissioners Al Perez and McKenna Quint. He attended several major events, including the SF Symphony Gala, the Cityside Park ribbon cutting with artist Ned Kahn's Canopy of the Sky, and the launch of the Big Art Loop initiative, which will bring large-scale temporary sculptures to public spaces across San Francisco.

Remington also announced new grant opportunities for local artists and organizations, upcoming community meetings about consolidating the City's arts agencies, and the opening of the Too Bright Disturbances exhibition at the SFAC Main Gallery. He reported on the Commission Streamlining Task Force. The report concluded with updates on public artworks, community outreach efforts, and the Commission's continued work to support the arts citywide.

There was no public comment.

5. Committee Reports and Committee Matters (30:55)

5.1 Civic Design Committee Report (31:02)

Chair Deborah Walker reported that the Civic Design Review Committee reviewed and approved three major projects: the Powell Street Improvements, featuring widened sidewalks, new paving, custom seating, and a “Golden Lantern” light feature; the Ingleside Police Station Replacement – Phase 1, which includes a new two-story building integrated with the historic 1910 station and enhanced landscaping for safety and accessibility; and the SFO West Utilities and Paving Project (Station BP), a durable, flood-safe utility building supporting the airport’s Westfield Campus. Commissioners praised each project’s design quality, community focus, and coordination efforts, and all three motions were unanimously approved.

There was no public comment.

5.2 Visual Arts Committee Report (33:28)

Vice President Jeanine Shiota reported that the Visual Arts Committee reviewed several projects, including the installation of a bust of former Mayor Ed Lee at City Hall. The Committee also approved two major public art proposals for SFO Terminal 3 West: one by Tamashi Jackson, featuring a vibrant collage of historical images and local materials, and another by Musse Sessay, titled *From Bridge to Bridge and Our Life In Between*. All projects were unanimously approved.

There was no public comment

5.3 Executive Committee Report (37:48)

President Collins reported that the Executive Committee held a brief but significant meeting, which included a Director’s Report

from Ralph Remington and a presentation by Mary Chu, Director of Civic Art and Public Art Programs. Chu proposed allocating \$550,000 from the Public Art Trust's Undesignated Funds to commission a new permanent artwork celebrating Filipino culture and identity in the Filipino Cultural Heritage District. The committee discussed the project's alignment with cultural equity and community engagement goals and unanimously approved the funding allocation, which was placed on the Consent Calendar for full Commission approval.

There was no public comment.

6. Consent Calendar (39:15)

President Collins introduced all items on the consent calendar.

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

There was no public comment.

The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-172: that this Commission does hereby adopt the following items on the Consent Calendar and their related Resolutions:

1. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-173:** Motion to approve the August 26, 2025, [Community Investments Committee Meeting Minutes](#).
2. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-174:** Motion to approve the September 15, 2025, [Civic Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes](#).
3. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-175:** Motion to approve the September 30, 2025, [Visual Arts Committee Meeting Minutes](#).

4. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-176:** Motion to approve the September 24, 2025, [Executive Committee Meeting Minutes](#).

Civic Design Review Committee Recommendations (September 15, 2025, [link to agenda](#))

5. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-177:** Motion to approve Small Project Review for Powell Street Improvements.
6. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-178:** Motion to approve Phase 1 Review for Ingleside Police Station Replacement.
7. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-179:** Motion to approve Conceptual/Phase 1 Review for SFO West Utilities and Paving Project (Station BP).

Visual Arts Committee Recommendations (September 30, 2025, [link to agenda](#))

8. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-180:** Motion to approve a sole source contract with Certified Tile and Stone, Inc. for fine art installation services for the Mission Bay School Public Art Project pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code Section 6.73, in an amount not to exceed \$31,756. The contractor's specialized qualifications, proprietary knowledge of the artwork and project site, and proven expertise in fine art handling make these services not reasonably available from another provider without risk of duplicative costs, delays, or potential damage to the artworks.
9. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-181:** Motion to approve a sole source contract with One Hat One Hand LLC for fine art installation services for the Pier 27 James R. Herman Cruise Terminal Plaza Public Art Project, pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code Section 6.73,

in an amount not to exceed \$20,473.75. The contractor's specialized qualifications, proprietary knowledge of the artworks, and proven expertise in fine art handling make these services not reasonably available from another provider without risk of duplicative costs, delays, or potential damage to the artworks.

10. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-182:** Motion to approve final design of bust including clay model of Ed Lee bust and final design of plaque on pedestal, including layout of text, material and attachment method for installation in City Hall.
11. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-183:** Motion to approve the conceptual design proposal by Tomashi Jackson for the Terminal 3 West C4C FIS East Art Wall Public Art Project, as recommended by the Artist Review Panel.
12. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-184:** Motion to authorize the Director of Cultural Affairs to enter into a contract with Tomashi Jackson for an amount not to exceed \$400,000 for the design, fabrication, insurance, and consultation during installation of a tile and glass mosaic artwork for the Terminal 3 West C4C FIS East Art Wall Public Art Project.
13. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-185:** Motion to approve the conceptual design proposal *From Bridge to Bridge and Our Life in Between* by Muzae Sesay for the Terminal 3 West C4C FIS West Art Wall Public Art Project, as recommended by the Artist Review Panel.
14. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-186:** Motion to authorize the Director of Cultural Affairs to enter into a contract with Muzae Sesay for an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 for the design, fabrication, insurance, and consultation during installation of a mosaic tile artwork for the Terminal 3 West C4C FIS West Art Wall Public Art Project.
15. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-187:** Motion to approve the final design of an artwork by Maria Belen Islas Cuellar (Belen Islas), in

collaboration with the Association of the Ramaytush Ohlone, for the San Francisco Main Library Temporary Atrium Mural Project.

Executive Committee Recommendations (September 24, 2025,
[link to agenda](#))

16. **RESOLUTION NO. 1006-25-188:** Motion to approve an allocation of up to \$550,000 from the Public Art Trust's Undesignated Funds to commission a new permanent artwork celebrating Filipino culture and identity in the Filipino Cultural Heritage District.

7. Vaillancourt Fountain
(40:30)

The Vaillancourt Fountain presentation was led by Mary Chu, Allison Cummings, and Eoanna Goodwin, providing background on the fountain's history, condition, and options for the future. Cummings explained that artist Armand Vaillancourt designed the fountain in the 1960s as part of Lawrence Halprin's Embarcadero Plaza, where it became both iconic and controversial after its completion in 1971. Goodwin reported that the fountain is now structurally unsafe, contains hazardous materials, and no longer functions due to failed mechanical systems. Restoring it would cost about \$29 million, compared to \$2.7 million to remove or \$4.4 million to store, and no funding currently exists for restoration. The City is reviewing safety options while continuing community outreach and long-term planning for the Embarcadero Plaza renovation.

Prodan Stater (Resident): Supported removing the fountain, arguing that restoring it for \$29 million is not a good use of resources compared to funding new art or community projects.

John D. “J.D.” Lumpkin (Downtown Worker): Favored replacing the fountain, saying the area should be redesigned to better serve residents and visitors.

Mary Jane Large (Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association - President): Supported removal, citing disrepair, safety issues, and the need for a more accessible public space.

Alec Bash (Gateway Tenants Association): Favored moving forward with the plaza renovation, describing it as a chance to create a more welcoming park for nearby residents.

Joel Koppel (Electrical Contractors Association): Supported revitalizing the Embarcadero area and replacing the fountain to promote downtown economic growth.

Kevin Souza (Resident): Opposed demolition, calling the fountain an irreplaceable civic icon that shaped their appreciation for public art.

Jack McCarthy (Board Member of Docomomo US NOCA): Opposed deaccession, arguing that the fountain’s deterioration results from deferred maintenance and that removal would waste a public investment.

Petra Marar (Board Member of Docomomo US NOCA): Opposed removal, saying the fountain embodies civic engagement and freedom of expression in San Francisco’s public spaces.

Anna Maria R Grone (Board member of Docomomo US NOCA): Argued that removing the fountain would violate state preservation and environmental laws and called for compliance with CAPA and CEQA.

Daniel Rabinowitz (Resident): Supported removing the fountain to allow the new Embarcadero Plaza design to move forward while possibly storing parts for future restoration.

Don Dickerson (Vice President of Fitness SF): Supported removal and redevelopment to create a new park that could host free community fitness programs.

Chris Keene (Friends of Embarcadero Bricks): Said his group originally sought to restore the fountain but shifted focus after failing to get engagement from the artist's team.

Bob Pullum (Board member of Docomomo US NOCA): Opposed demolition, urging restoration and collaboration between the artist, city agencies, and the public to reinvigorate the fountain.

Liz Waytkus (Docomomo US Executive Director): Advocated preservation, saying the fountain symbolizes San Francisco's bold and inclusive artistic spirit.

Ken Dupee (Resident): Supported removal, arguing the fountain no longer fits the site and prevents the creation of a vibrant, connected waterfront.

Kirk Essler (Resident): Opposed removal, saying the fountain is a powerful symbol of San Francisco's creativity that should not be lost to brutal bureaucracy.

Mark Gleason (Teamsters Joint Council 7): Supported redevelopment, emphasizing its importance for revitalizing the downtown economy.

Laura Kunkel (Resident): Opposed removal, calling the fountain and plaza vital public spaces that represent San Francisco's cultural character and freedom of expression.

Rich Freitas (National Park Service Landscape Architect): Opposed demolition, saying the city faces a maintenance issue—not a design flaw—and that the fountain remains significant.

Cord Struckmann (Architect/Board Member of Docomomo US NOCA): Opposed deaccession, questioning the accuracy of cost estimates and arguing the fountain is repairable and worth preserving.

Julian Lake (Bay Area Council): Supported removal, saying the fountain has outlived its purpose and redevelopment is key to revitalizing downtown.

Allegra Fisher (Resident/Artist): Opposed removal, recalling childhood memories of playing in the fountain and urging investment in preserving San Francisco's unique art.

Christine (Resident): Supported removal, citing public health and safety issues and arguing the fountain no longer serves families.

Curt Sanburn (Resident and Retired Journalist): Opposed demolition, calling the fountain a defining work of art that represents San Francisco's progressive and creative history.

Andrew Sullivan (Landscape Architect): Began speaking in favor of preservation before the meeting was interrupted by a medical emergency; discussion resumed later.

***Recess (medical emergency) from 4:04 P.M. – 4:33 P.M.
(2:03:38 – 2:32:29)**

Bruce Westland (Resident): Opposed removal, calling the fountain a distinctive and engaging public artwork that should be repaired and maintained.

Aaron Fenton (BXP Developer): Supported removal, saying the fountain is unsafe, contextually outdated, and its removal would enable creation of a world-class public park.

Claude Imbault (Downtown SF Partnership): Supported the park renovation project, noting his organization is helping raise private funds to connect the Embarcadero waterfront with downtown.

Howard Wong (Retired Architect): Opposed demolition, citing his experience restoring the Conservatory of Flowers and urging due diligence before removing the fountain.

Tita Bell (Chief of Staff to Office of Supervisor Danny Sauter): Spoke on behalf of the District 3 Supervisor supporting the plaza renovation, citing costs, safety, and lack of funding for restoration.

Camila Baum (Docomomo US NOCA): Concluded public comment by re-reading part of Robert Free's letter urging time for community fundraising and warning against corporate-driven redevelopment.

8. New Business and Announcements (2:48:20)

During New Business and Announcements, Commissioner Walker invited the public to attend the upcoming *Two Blocks of Art* event on Market Street, highlighting it as an opportunity to engage with local artists and arts organizations. President Collins announced the formation of the annual Nominating Committee, appointing Commissioners Shelby (Chair), Benavides, and Ferris, and shared new committee assignments: Commissioner Quint was appointed to the Visual Arts and Civic Design Review Committees, and Commissioner Perez to the Visual Arts and Community Investments Committees. No additional announcements or public comments were made.

There was no public comment.

9. Adjournment

(2:51:40)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Posted 10/20/2025, 11:30 a.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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