

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS AND SHEILA KUEHL

May 15, 2018

Transitioning the Arts Commission into County Department

On April 16, 2018, the Acting Executive Officer of the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) released the report by Cusick Consulting (Consultant) which presented findings and recommendations for strengthening the organizational structure of the Arts Commission. The ultimate goal of this coordination of comprehensive policy and programs related to arts and culture is to elevate the importance of arts as a key driver in enhancing the quality of life, education, and economy in the County.

The Consultant examined the organizational structures of arts agencies in San Francisco, New York, Houston, Dade County, and King County, researched and analyzed data collected from across the country, and conducted over 40 stakeholder focus groups, interviews, and meetings with leaders from County departments, community stakeholders, and creative economy and arts agencies.

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The options identified for strengthening the organizational structure of the Arts Commission include: creating a stand-alone, non-profit entity; forming a Joint Powers authority; merging the Arts Commission into an existing County department with a similar mission; remaining an Office of Arts and Culture within the Executive Office; or transitioning into a County department.

The Arts Commission is currently undergoing a dynamic transformation, including the recent hiring of the new Executive Director and the adoption and successful roll-out of several strategies identified in the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative. There is also increasing recognition of the value and multi-faceted contributions of arts and culture, and a growing focus on arts as a means to support the Board priorities in the areas of child welfare and protection and the fight to end homelessness.

If established as a County department with appropriate staffing and clear organizational mandates, the Arts Commission will be better positioned to work with other County departments and private enterprises which comprise the creative economy. With these collaborations, the new Department could expand how arts and culture are engaged to deliver innovative, vital programming and services, create pathways to careers in the arts, and enhance and improve educational experiences and opportunities for youth and young adults.

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The Arts Commission has operated in its present form since 1947; it is time that the arts be brought to the forefront and be given the opportunity to make an even greater impact to all those living and conducting business in the County.

WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Direct the Los Angeles County (County) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in conjunction with the Executive Officer of the Board of Supervisors, Executive Director of the Arts Commission, County Counsel, the Auditor-Controller, and the Director of the Department of Human Resources, to:

- 1) Move forward with the required steps to transition the Arts Commission into a County Department, retaining the Arts Commission as an advisory body to the new department, and begin the transition no later than July 1, 2018;
- 2) Develop a funding and staffing plan to include an appropriate executive team to support the Department;
- 3) Report back during FY 2018-19 Final Changes with a status update, including a timeline to implement key milestones with the goal of accomplishing this transition no later than FY 2019-2020;
- 4) Report back during FY 2018-19 Supplemental Changes budget phase with the CEO's recommended funding and staffing plan, the estimated cost, the fiscal impact of the transition, and sources of funding, including

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grant or philanthropic funds which may be available; and set aside funding in Provision Financing Uses for the plan during the FY 2018-19 Supplemental Changes budget phase; and

- 5) Provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on potential names of the new department, taking into consideration the broad reach of the arts in the economy, education, and delivery of social services.

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(RT/KY)