



MAR VISTA COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Marvista.org

Meeting Agenda for Education, Arts and Culture Committee

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Tuesday, December 9, 2025 From 6:30-8:30 PM Public Welcome

Windward School, 11350 Palms Blvd, Los Angeles, Ca 90066

Room 410: Adjacent to the Sawtelle parking lot

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1. CALL TO ORDER – 6:38pm

2. ROLL CALL AND EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS/CONFLICTS-OF-INTEREST - *roll call shall include each attending board member declaring any ex parte communications outside of their duties and conflicts of interest pertaining to items on or related to this agenda.*

3. WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Education, Arts, and Culture Committee:

Aaron Vanek – Chair – **no and no**

Deborah Poppink - Vice-Chair - **absent**

Emily Lin - 2nd Vice-Chair – **arrives 6:54pm; no and no**

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR DETAILS

4.1. APPROVAL OF November 2025 MINUTES – Vanek motions, stakeholder seconds, motion passes

5. CHAIR REPORTS - **None**

6. SPECIAL ORDERS – **NONE**

Vanek re-orders agenda for expediency.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THIS AGENDA - *The Brown Act provides for a “part of the meeting where the public can comment on any item of interest that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the local agency.” The MVCC is an advisory board to the Los Angeles City Council and, as such, its jurisdiction is restricted within Los Angeles and most importantly, the Mar Vista Community. Therefore, please keep public comments within the MVCC jurisdiction. Thank you.*

David Neptune, stakeholder and documentary filmmaker, presents making a street mural in residential Mar Vista. Residents design and paint a giant mural in their intersection as opportunity to connect with neighbors. He hopes to have enough neighbors to do this in spring or summer 2026. Semi-permanent, redone or retouched every 3-4 years. David showed presentation on process and examples from Portland.

A stakeholder presents a proposal for a Mar Vista Neighborhood flag.

8. STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS - NEW

8.1 *Presentation and Q&A discussion with Lisa Davis, the Community Arts Director for the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles—see supporting documents for slides and this website for general DCA*

info: <https://culture.lacity.gov/>

Lisa Davis does a presentation of departments within DCA plus the 2028 Cultural Olympiad. Director Emily Lin recorded the following dialogue, which was edited by Aaron Vanek for space and clarity.

Lisa Davis (Community Arts Division Director, LA's Dept of Cultural Affairs): *Education is my background, so that's why I love to come out and kind of teach people about what we're doing and how it all works. We have eight different divisions. So there's the grants division, there's community arts, which is me, and the cultural centers. There's performing arts division and the Public Art Division. We also have our administrative division, which helps us through, you know, supporting, through, like payment processing and things like that. They're not on here because so the backbone of what we do. Then we have our marketing division.*

[On the DCA website] you'll see all of our different neighborhood cultural art centers. There are three historic sites and seven galleries that are within my portfolio. We also have four what we call partner art centers, which means that Department of Cultural Affairs is in charge of the facilities themselves, like we care for the facilities, but they the facilities are run by a nonprofit organization.

And then we have four Proposition K centers in development. So one of the reasons I'm glad that you had me come out and speak is the Oakwood Vera Davis. It's probably not on the list yet because it's still being developed. So Oakwood Junior Art Center, also called the Vera Davis McKendon Junior Art Center, is, was funded by Proposition K funding, and it's still in renovation.

We're working on our four art centers that are like that all around the city. We have these community art centers which are very near and dear to my heart, because I didn't have the arts growing up. And these are affordable classes and workshops for a fairly low price.

We have six performing art venues, which are all rentable spaces. Two of them are open, I think, right now, and four of them are under construction.

McGroarty Arts Center is what we call a partner art center for the facility. It's a DCA managed facility. So if the air conditioning unit goes out, they contact me and I contact the people who fix it in GSD, which is General Services Division. But the programs are all run by this nonprofit organization, so all the programming is done by an outside organization.

And we find them through a request for proposals. So the Vera Davis, when it opens, we will put out a request for proposals. We've been having community meetings for this. And we'll have a third one, because community meetings are essential, just as a reminder for any of this, because this is taxpayer money. So you have to say, okay, well, what programming do you want to see at this art center? Right now, we're collecting information on what people want to see at the art center. Once we determine what that programming is based on community input, we will put up an RFP and requests for proposals, and then nonprofits can try and bid for that.

I mentioned the three historic sites. So Hollyhock House is one of our very well-known historic sites. Watts Towers is one of them. And then we have the Stone House, which is in Sun Valley. And then we have many, many galleries. Almost all of our art centers have gallery spaces, but our largest gallery space is the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery. It is at Barnsdall Art Park, and it's 10,000 sq ft. Exhibitions that come through are mostly Los Angeles artists.

Each art center kind of has its own unique identity, which is great, because each one is unique to its neighborhood.

So that's community arts. That's what I do, manage these art centers.

All of these are providing programming across the city. So that's why I got excited when you're talking about the mural program, because for me, we also have an outreach team. We want to have deep, meaningful arts engagement.

As you know, we're bringing it across the city. And with the Olympics, there's a huge push to activate all of the districts, right? We have 15 council offices, 15 districts that we would love to see activated for the Olympics. We're still working on how to work all that out, but I'm just thinking about, like, your murals, what you were talking about. If this is temporary versus a permanent, there are two different pathways for murals, so it's a temporary, it might be a little bit easier to navigate to do this as a block party and an activation and anything that's associated with the Games. Anytime you say this is for the Cultural Olympiad and the Games, there is money attached and there's more excitement attached to it. So right now, it's just a good way to try to get things through is to attach it to this bigger agenda that's happening.

Vanek: Questions so far for Lisa?

Davis: The Performing Arts Division is very similar to community arts, but we have rental venues, as I said, all across the city. The Warner Grand is one of them, the Vision Theater. These beautiful, historic theaters that will soon be open for emerging artists to workshop their pieces, but also as rental venues, which is kind of the only way that DCA makes any kind of money. So we're hoping to get more rentals. All right, so let's go back up to programs. There's the Grants Division, which is a great program. I think it's something like \$400,000 that's given out every year for grants. There's five grants that are available. Typically we open the grants process in July or August. They review all of the grant proposals. Our Grants division does an amazing job of educating people. I think this is something that's unique. If you have nonprofit organizations, or individuals that are looking for funding, if you fit into the criteria that's here, you can apply for funding. And our Grants Division typically will have a day where they sit down, and you can bring your proposal to them. And they can say, okay, here's where you're going to succeed, here's where you need to more work, you know, that kind of thing we'll actually walk through with you. So that's really unique.

Vanek: This follows the fiscal year, basically with July?

Davis: Yes, we are on the fiscal year. So everything opens July 1. And our grants, I think, in October they finalize everything, and then they award the grants in October and November. Were our grants hurt by the budget? Probably yes, because it was across the board. What I was focused on was staffing. Our staffing was significantly threatened. First of all, we had 24 positions that were up for elimination, but because of the community, not because of us, but because the community stepped up. People went to council and said arts are very important to us. And the community council members heard that. And also we were able to show them we had a lot of money in reserves. And so the combination of things where we were able to keep, restore all of our positions.

But it hurt us in other ways. Most of our programming is run by part-time people. And that budget was cut back significantly. So a lot of my services have been reduced right now. But I can't answer a lot of questions on grants because it's not my area.

Stakeholder: If the street mural thing could fall into, like a public space activation or something like that, is it awarded to nonprofits like that kind of organizing?

Davis: They give [grants to] individuals and, or nonprofit organizations. You can also try to see if it works. [Maybe] the neighborhood Council can apply on your behalf, or something like that. Look at the criteria. I think the public's base activation is a good one, and especially, again, going back to your idea of having a big community input is great and then having, you know, music and all that. I think, especially for the games, it's going to be a big draw. You're bringing people together to create something that's for your site. I was thinking about if you make it like games related.

Stakeholder: The design could be or even Mar Vista identity related. Because, as we're thinking about bringing the international art audience here, you know.

Stakeholder: We're trying to let people know who we are. We're not just Hollywood, you know.

Davis: I think you have some really strong opportunities here. All right, I'm going to go back up. I'll talk a little bit about the public arts. There's a fraction that I now about the murals. This is really Yami's area. What I do know about murals is, if it is going to be a permanent mural, there is a very rigorous registration situation that has to be accepted by the commission, by the arts commission. I think there's a presentation that has to happen. The Arts Commission has to hear it and has to accept it. You want to follow the steps that Yami gave you for sure. But if it's temporary, I think there's a little more leeway.

Vanek: Lisa, thank you for this. What I'm thinking for this is that we go with the public event, a block party, and it ends with a mural. I think if we say we're doing an event with community and the result is going to be this thing, but it's that block party community building might be the avenue to go.

Davis: It makes sense to label that rather than the mural, because really, the mural is kind of secondary to the community connection, right? So there's all the things that Yami sent to you about the requirements for public murals, and they should be registered with this city. And the reason they say this is because you go through this process, you want it to be protected, and it becomes part of the registry. So, similar to we have also the City Art collection. I don't even know how many artworks we have, but there's a city art collection, so artworks by a very famous artist that should be on view somewhere at some point. But I think right now, we're still trying to organize it, because we hadn't had staff for quite a while. So there is somebody actually going through and looking at all of our different collections, like it's in the basement of city Hall, so they're going through and looking at everything and recording it like a library.

So they want to keep everything up to date and safe. That's happening with our city art collection and also with our murals. I know very little about the murals, but there's a special paint that they put on, anti-graffiti paint to make sure it stays protected. That's also something, a question that they would ask you is, like, what is your maintenance plan?

Vanek: I'm going through it for the DCRC, right across from Blueys at Venice and Beethoven. There's the whales and the vines are growing over it. We're trying to deal with it. And it's a registered mural to very famous artist. Because it's registered, the vines turn into a big, big deal. And it's because it's registered, but also because the city is partial owner of the building. It's a joint ownership. What I found out about murals is if it's registered, you can't just take it down. That's like a crime. So if someone has a registered mural on something, the owner can't paint that over, right? Because that just happened actually, at Village Carwash. If you guys know, at Venice and Centinela. There was the Big Bear mural. But the family that owned it had a new artist that repainted over it.

Davis: That's the extent to what I can share with you about the murals. There's also a tax percentage that goes to public art. Every time a building is built, 1% of the tax has to go towards art.

Vanek: The Del Rey Neighborhood Council came last time and they said, there's a 1% tax, and I saw it as a county thing. So a county has it, But apparently there's also a city one.

Davis: There's both city and county, both city and county and everything.

So that's what I can share about our murals, our public arts. And then I'm going to share with you the thing that everyone's excited about is the games. So the Cultural Olympiad, the term Cultural Olympiad, is actually owned by LA28, which is a nonprofit, that's in charge of the actual Cultural Olympiad. And there, it's a fundraising organization. And it's separate from the city. So because we're not in charge of the actual Cultural Olympiad, we're calling this the Cultural Program. It's kind of what we envision. We want people to give input on what the cultural program should be. This just got published a couple months ago, and so it's still in development and actually needs to go to council and get voted on and all this other stuff. But if you are an organization that's interested in participating—if you scroll down here, there's a little button that says, click here to get involved. So you click on that button, and there is a Google form that comes up. People are starting to populate this Google form, and we're right in the middle of hiring for the art manager position who will help us oversee this citywide event. We'll have an art manager, and an art associate, so we have two lead people who will look at all of the inputs, and then they're going to design the cultural program, which basically means they can say "I think this is the way it's going to happen." They might say, oh, your organization put in this idea. That's a great idea. Go ahead and do that. And we'll tag it with our cultural program stamp that will be separate than the Cultural Olympiad, again, because that's a different organization. We don't know yet what the Cultural Olympiad is going to be.

We're still waiting for to hear from LA28. So if you're interested, anyone follow LA28, LinkedIn, Instagram and all that stuff. They have been putting out tons. They put out stuff like merch, they're in the fundraising mode right now. So there's a lot of information out there, and they're just starting to ask for volunteers. I feel like the groundwork is being laid. But in terms of what I've been seeing from the mayor's office and from the executive management team who put together the Cultural Framework, it will largely be focused on neighborhood activations. So what we can do to make sure that people know how cool Mar Vista is, how Venice is separate, how these different places are amazing in their own right. Again, we have the international audience coming to us. So there's when there's a cool program going on, and there's a break in the action of the sports, they're

going to come and see what's going on here.

And the Cultural program technically started when Paris passed the baton to us. So at the end of summer 2024. We did a kick off event, and there will be a few more as we're trying to figure out what's going on. But from what I'm gathering the biggest kickoff is going to start in summer 2027, and then there will be active programming happening all through the year of 2027, leading up to the summer of 2028. We had an envoy that went to Paris to learn from the Paris Olympian folks. And what we learned is that very little action happens during the games because of the games [playing]. So it's the months beforehand when, like, the action should really be taking place. So for my programming, for instance, I'm really going to focus on March, April, May and June. The kickoff for the Olympics is July 14, I think. Those four [preceding] months is when people will be coming to the Olympics; the athletes will be coming in and start to train. So we should be thinking about what public activations could be.

In the springtime is when we can really shine and show people and invite people in to Los Angeles.

That's what's been given to the Council for review, so that, you know, if there is additional funding, we can grow bigger.

Here's what it could look like, and then it'll go out from there. Our website is not the best. When we're thinking about the council districts, the activations, if you look at something like the Lunar New Year, which is run by the Performing Arts Division, it's these street festivals, which I think will be a good kind of blueprint for what the street activations will look like for the Cultural Olympiad. There's different events happening all across Lunar New Year, across eight districts. And I think that's it right now.

Vanek: Do you have questions?

[stakeholder question not captured by AI]

Unidentifiable speakers talking nearly simultaneously: I think probably the best route is through your council office. These are going to be more like projects that are festivals, whereas yours is more it's going to be a permanent thing, right? These are temporary kinds of celebrations. But what would be really cool I would love to see is if and when the flag, if accepted and approved. You could do some kind of really cool [festival] and this would maybe, or maybe not be with the Cultural Olympiad. You could work with David to have a kick-off event to launch your design.

You guys talk, because a cultural event would be a street painting of the neighborhood's flag, so it's a big ceremony party. So the street gets together and paints the mural, but it's their flag. That becomes interesting now, because you get like Venice or Palisades, and then maybe they do like the flag at a couple intersections. Or something like that, right? And if you thought like that, if you got a bunch of those together, you could do that in March 2027. It's like it becomes a whole big citywide event. If more neighborhoods would have the different flags, then it's more along the lines of the Olympics, right? With all of their different flags. So it's a little mini Olympics, a little mini Olympics. Each neighborhood paints their own flag. All across the city, all these big painting parties.

A little treasure hunt for people. If they want to go and find each of the flags, they can go to each neighborhoods, you know, a street hero, and like little pictures or whatever.

It'll be like, oh, this neighborhood feels like this. I don't know if residents are going to want people to be coming to their neighborhood in big numbers, but it's sort of like CycLAlvia.

Vanek: Or it could be connected, like PorchFest. Porchfest was Last month, it's a national organization.

Basically, they have people open up their porches or their backyard patio to musicians or comedians and they'll just perform for two days. It's like eleven to five, Saturday and Sunday. It was November first and second, so there was like 20 in our area. There was a map, and you just show up, and there was like six or seven performers for half an hour each day, and you just watch, like, a free acoustic guitar. And then you go somewhere else, and there's a comedian and someone else was a magician.

But it was so cool, because it was all in the community. Volunteers open up their porch, and then musicians come and play for people for half an hour. It's a free thing in neighborhood. You get neighbors talking to each other. You meet your neighbors in such a city that's so big, 9 million people.

Stakeholders: You know, I didn't know so many of my neighbors for years. We come from Italy, and we've been here since 2008. And the difference between living in Europe and living here is what I suffer the most. I

don't know the neighbors. It's so hard to socialize. It's so helpful to get neighbors together, to help each other, to know each other. It just calms so many things down.

Vanek: Do you have any questions or comments for Lisa?

David Neptune: Well, I have a few questions. I'm curious too, about some of your venues, like the theaters and things like that. My father's a musician, and he lives in Japan, however. So the next time that he's here, most likely in the summer, I'm starting to try and put together some concerts locally here in LA. But it's so difficult. And I don't know, I'm curious how you guys work with artists. You know, I would also be performing, so I would be a local artist, kind of collaborating with outside artists. And in the summer, actually, he's probably going to bring one or two musicians, world class musicians from India as well.

Davis: For DCA, I'll point you to the few. There's a program if you go under calls, we have to do calls for proposals for any contract we do. Like Lunar New Year, she has a need for many, many artists, right? And many performers, artists of all kinds. So she'll put out a call, and I think so right now. Any call that's needed or at the time is going to be under here. So I would, first of all, sign up for the newsletter, because anytime a call comes out, you would be notified. But it's the same thing, like a call is a request. So for Lunar New Year, she needs a bunch of different artists. And so she'll say, okay, here's my criteria, put in a bid.

In terms of venues, she has a few that you would rent out. It's less expensive than the other venues, because they're city run. I don't know what the pricing is, but I can check.

You want to contact Nicki Genovese, the Performing Arts Division Director at nicki.genovese@lacity.org

Here's my email: lisa.s.davis@lacity.org

I'm also on the website too.

There are two venues open right now. One is at Barnsdall Park, which is a 300 seat theatre. The other one is called the Taxco Theatre, which is up in Canoga Park. It's a very small venue. It's beautiful. I think it's a hundred seats. And that just opened. It's a fantastic venue, and it's really for people like workshopping artists, but also folks who need a smaller and more intimate space. But you can contact Nicki about renting one of those venues. I'm sure she has a list of venues that she could refer.

Vanek: Fantastic. Any other questions. Comments?

I'm just thinking of next steps for the street mural project. If there's anything that would make sense, I guess I know the block party idea is really great. That would be basically applying for a grant for something like that. If you wanted funding for it, put together a proposal.

But that funding is, I think, I like August, so it's not the right timing. But you can also look at the county for funding too.

Davis: Well, you have proposals in August to consider. I could be wrong about that. We can check it out while we're on the website. And then the other thing is, I was just thinking about, I know you're talking about using paint, but it would be kind of cool to do it with chalk. Like, you could do some pilot projects with schools nearby with chalk.

David Neptune: We've talked to the folks in Portland who have done it, to find out what their process is. I've been chatting with them, and they have a pretty clear process. They even changed some laws, so that this can be done much easier, because there's a whole history there. It has been almost a couple decades now that they've been doing this, and they actually have a whole section on their site about street murals.

There's a great story about how they did it without permission and the city called the cops on them, and when the cops got there, they said, oh, this is great if you ever have a problem, make sure the city calls us first, and we'll back you up.

Vanek: Other comments or questions? I'll adjourn, but we could still like, you guys should talk about any other comments. So I motioned to adjourn.

Emily Lin: Second.

Vanek: Thank you. Okay. Great. Thank you.

9. ADJOURNMENT 7:47pm - Vanek motions, Emily seconds

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