

JOHN WAYNE AIRPORT ARTS COMMISSION
Airport Commission Room
3160 Airway Avenue
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Minutes of the Regular Meeting with Teleconference

July 2, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Kim Le called the meeting to order at 9:43 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chair Kim Le led the Pledge of Allegiance

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Kim Le, Vice Chair Victor Payan, Commissioner Susan L. Petrella, Commissioner Mary-Christine Sungaila

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT BY TELECONFERENCE:

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: N/A

STAFF PRESENT: Heather Bowling, Michelle Lai

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Le to motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Petrella seconded, and the minutes of the regular June 4, 2025 monthly meeting of the JWA Arts Commission were approved.

2. COMMISSION UPDATES

A. NEW COMMISSIONER SIR DANIEL WINN – INTRODUCTIONS AND ROUND TABLE

Heather welcomed the newest Commissioner, Sir Daniel Winn, and kickstarted a series of introductions from the other Commission members who shared their interests and backgrounds in the arts. Heather then introduced themselves as having been at the airport for 2 years, working to promote a space for BIPOC/queer/marginalized individuals and art as part of OC's authentic community. With 11 years of experience previously at Brea Gallery, Heather also brings their familiarity with government/county work to navigate through their curation at the airport. Commissioner Winn shared his background in studying reconstructive surgery before pivoting to the arts, where he has 35+ years of experience as an artist himself, curator, and gallery owner. As someone with a great deal of experience working with art in the public, he believed that he will have good insight as to what the public and/travelers may want, as well as various resources for sponsorships. Additionally, Commissioner Winn has been working as a filmmaker, allowing him to cross over to the Hollywood side of the arts. He emphasized his proactiveness and ability to know how to work through adversity. Rather than applying to become a Commissioner, he shared that Janet Nguyen had actually requested for him to join, and because he was raised in Orange County, he accepted the position in his desire to spotlight OC to help it shine, especially as a Vietnamese American himself.

Staff then opened the floor for a roundtable discussion about achievements and impacts from the last 2 years with this Commissioner. Commissioner Petrella shared some highlights of the program's accomplishments. Vice Chair Payan then posed the long-term question: How do we enhance the OC experience with visitors and residents? In order to understand how the Commission operates, Commissioner Winn conveyed his desire to focus on three major points, which included exhibitions, marketing, and financials. Staff assured the new Commissioner that they would be happy to answer or elaborate on any questions as they come up.

B. A LITTLE SAIGON STORY PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Heather created a bullet point list summarizing key figures and organizations for the Commission to reach out to for collaboration. They shared that this list was the clearest format to assign 'homework' for the Commissioners to reach out to each person/organization and obtain content for the exhibition. Commissioner Sungaila shared that she had contacts with the Nixon Museum, while Commissioner Winn knew Frank Jao. Commissioner Petrella requested information about how budgeting works for the Destination Gallery. Heather responded that typically the Destination Gallery is a partnership with organizations who are responsible for the design, production, and delivery of the finished exhibits. As a result, no budget is allocated for the Destination Gallery, aside from hiring art installers, so the best practice is to ask to borrow goods for the Little Saigon exhibition. Vice Chair Payan commented that the Commission's role is to see Heather's vision and try to help where they can.

Chair Le's goal for the Little Saigon exhibit is to drive tourism to Little Saigon by sharing a snapshot of its culture while simultaneously celebrating the rebirth and settlement of Orange County's Vietnamese development and influence. Heather also added that this was a good opportunity to feature a variety of the arts. Another point Vice Chair Payan brought up was answering the question of what roots have been set down in Little Saigon as a slice of Orange County community, what contributions have been made, and what is integral to the Orange County experience. Commissioner Winn wanted to highlight philanthropy and success of the Vietnamese community, especially in relation to the business, medicine, and technology.

Commissioner Winn also requested for the protocol for sponsorships. Heather answered that the best form of donation or sponsorships would be "in-kind" donations of materials to display in the exhibit, either existing or fabricated by the donor. Unfortunately, there is no revenue account for the Arts Program, and a separate conversation would need to be held with Heather's supervisors to educate them on the idea of sponsorships, especially because there was no precedent. To this, Commissioner Winn asked where the Arts money comes from if there isn't a revenue account. Staff explained that the Art Program is funded by JWA's revenue and is therefore a part of the airport budget. Commissioner Winn followed up asking for the protocol for getting money into the Arts Program, to which Heather explained that there was, once again, no precedent for this, and so this would be a big-picture coordination between their supervisors and Finance. Vice Chair Payan reiterated that this was an important opportunity to speak with their supervisors to push for the allocation of additional funds for Heather, while Commissioner Petrella added that data and statistics showing the economic impact of the exhibitions will highlight the need for extra budgeting. Commissioner Winn stated that by inviting important people, such as prominent artists, dignitaries, and business owners, to the Little Saigon exhibit, it will put pressure on supervisors to pay attention to the exhibition.

Chair Le and Vice Chair Le inquired about the possibility for a press event, to which Heather expressed hesitation for any outside performances. However, they did clarify that a press event could be coordinated to invite the airport director and any dignitaries, as well as a ribbon cutting with the airport's in-house photographer/videographer.

3. PROGRAM UPDATES

A. ONGOING PROJECTS AND REPAIRS

a. BROKEN GLASS IN TERMINAL A

One of the glass cases in Terminal A has cracked and was replaced, but unfortunately the glass panel then fell while Michelle was opening the case. Luckily no one was harmed. Additional repairs were made to the tracks, so the glass is now secure. Heather reiterated the need for constant follow ups to continue to have these projects moving

b. LED SWITCH OUT IN TERMINAL C

As a brief update, the LED lights switch out for Terminal C has been delayed.

Commissioner Winn shared his grave concern about the Terminal A Gallery not having any lighting. Vice Chair Payan then suggested that speaking to supervisors about improvements like the lighting may help to escalate the idea and bring attention to needed upgrades. Commissioner Winn proposed that a letter be written addressing this and other pending issues to help express support from the Commissioners to higher-ups. He also followed up asking what the best direct options to help Heather would be. Heather explained that the most helpful course of action would be showcasing successes as Commissioner Winn previously suggested, as well as emphasizing the importance of additional staffing, budgeting, and lack of utilization of wall space. The best way to approach this would be explaining prioritization of needs with clear justifications. It was decided that discussion for methods of escalating assistance for Heather should be on the agenda for the upcoming meeting.

c. NURSING MOTHERS LOUNGE MURAL

The contract for the mural has been signed.

B. LOCATION FOR NEXT MEETING TBD

4. UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS/ CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE EXHIBITIONS – AS TIME ALLOWS

A. VI SMITH GALLERIES

a. **TERMINAL A: LUCIANA ABAIT SOLO SHOW – ARTWORK PREVIEW**
July 18, 2025 – November 17, 2025

b. **TERMINAL B: TBD**
November 2025 – May 2026

c. **TERMINAL C: PERCEIVING THE DIVINE GROUP EXHIBITION – ARTIST PREVIEW**
August 8, 2025 – December 8, 2025

d. **PENDING CONCEPTS**
i. **LEGEND SAYS EXHIBITION**
ii. **MAKERS MARKET 2025**

B. COMMUNITY FOCUS SPACE

a. **CURATOR’S COLLECTION SHOW – ARTWORK**

This section was skipped for the sake of time.

5. CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

This section was skipped for the sake of time.

6. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Other Business – None

Items of Interest from the Public – None

7. ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING Chair Le adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Bowling