

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

**Minutes of the Special Meeting with Teleconference**

October 29, 2025

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Kim Le called the meeting to order at 9:51 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:** Commissioner Daniel Winn

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** N/A

**STAFF PRESENT:** Heather Bowling, Michelle Lai

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Le motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Petrella seconded, and the minutes of the regular September 3, 2025 monthly meeting of the JWA Arts Commission were approved.

**2. COMMISSION UPDATES**

**A. COMMISSION GOALS MOVING FORWARD**

Heather reminded the Commissioners that moving forward, all future agenda action items will need to be submitted to Chair Le, who will be taking over the agenda, a week before the next meeting; agenda items cannot be changed after being posted. Commissioner Winn inquired if Joel will be an interim curator in the meantime, to which Heather clarified that Joel will not be as he has no backgrounds in art, and that a new curator will likely take some time to be hired due to the airport's current hiring freeze.

Section 5 in the agenda is currently the most up to date list of the status of exhibitions, except for Regolith artists and Pacific Symphony offering indefinite extensions to their exhibits.

Commissioner Winn expressed his concerns about the responsibilities around the deinstallation of artwork once the exhibitions end and its coordination. Heather reiterated that Joel will be responsible for everything Heather has handled in the past until now, as well as handling the coordination with Crozier for deinstallation of art exhibits. If the artwork is not handled responsibly, then it will be the Commissioners' jobs to urge Joel to prioritize the artwork, or escalate the issues to Eric Freed, Komal, or Charlene. If deinstallation with Crozier gets booked, Michelle has experience with installation/deinstallation, and can supervise the art handlers, as needed.

What will happen now that the closing dates for the exhibits are rapidly approaching is that Chair Le suggests forming an ad hoc committee of curators. Vice Chair Payan makes a motion, which Heather clarifies can only be a suggestion, for Kim to be able to kickstart this ASAP. Commissioner Petrella asks if deinstallation can be on the agenda for the upcoming meeting, and there was a thought about Chair Le rescheduling next week's meeting so there is more time to add agenda items. Heather also shared that borrowing exhibitions in collaborating with existing shows, museums, etc, may be an easy way to find exhibition materials. Commissioner Winn shared that he has access to various galleries if Commissioners need help with connecting and collaborating.

Vice Chair Payan shared some praises about Heather's fantastic job working at the airport, citing examples such as an increased diversity of artists being shown, increased quality of artwork shown as

well as foot traffic, and establishing policies and procedures. Heather mentions sending information regarding the mentioned policies and procedures, and sharing the sentiments, as they started with scratch as well. Artists seem to share similar sentiments. Vice Chair Payan also adds that he feels that it is not a coincidence that the airport has won the JD Powers award for the past 2 years, and he feels that the Arts Program has been integral to the airport experience even if there has not been real recognition in that, as Heather shared.

The Commissioners went around the room sharing their goals for the future:

Commissioner Winn, being fairly new as a commissioner and still absorbing information, shared wanting to just continue assessing and contributing whatever is needed from the more veteran commissioners.

Commissioner Sungaila wants the JWA Arts Program to be a world renowned program with permanent art in the airport as well as continued local engagement of the arts.

Vice Chair Payan wants to continue maintaining the same diversity of artists and wants the arts program to be treated as an actual program with the same attention and care as other programs. He also made a comment about the need for more funding for increased staffing.

Chair Le shared that for her small goal, she would like to execute the Little Saigon exhibit, and a larger goal would be to secure more funding for the arts program by improving visibility.

Commissioner Petrella wants more recognition for the arts program so that art and culture continue to have platforms.

### **3. PROGRAM UPDATES**

#### **A. ONGOING PROJECTS AND REPAIRS**

Joel will need to facilitate ongoing projects and repairs, and Heather hopes that the Commissioners will hold Joel accountable to resolve repairs to set up the next curator for success. For example, in Terminal C, the lights in the first 3 cases are already out again. Vice Chair Payan requests that this is an action item for the next meeting.

Commissioner Sungaila asked about the permanent art installation across from the Ducks Bar, which Heather explained that after construction takes out the concession stands, there will be a blank wall, which is the provided space for a possible future art installation. It is in the air however, due to a lack of budgeting information, lack of structure, and over all delays. There are only emails exchanged about the space with no formal documentation, which Heather will forward to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Winn expressed his disappointment in hearing that Heather will be leaving, sharing that Heather's work was incredibly impactful. When Commissioner Winn inquired about what the Commissioners should implement or do in this interim, Chair Le suggested David Michael Lee, a former commissioner and artist who would have experience in the area. As a note, Commissioner Winn firmly but politely rejected his own responsibility and involvement in a potential ad hoc curator committee. There was a brief conversation concerning installations/deinstallations happening during the day as a liability, and Commissioner Winn asked if it was possible to request policy change for that concern., which Vice Chair Payan recommends adding as a goal to push for.

Little Saigon and Curator's Collection (now Commissioner's Collection) was added as an action item. As a reminder, action items are subjects proposed as a formal recommendation to the airport as something that Commissioners want to be done. Commissioners can hold the airport accountable for the completion of action items, but ultimately the facilitator (now Joel) is the individual who is responsible for helping make it happen.

Michelle is also working on baggage claim poster designs. Michelle will be sending minutes to Joel/Kim for future meetings.

#### **B. CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA MURAL INSTALLATION AND EVENT**

Heather emphasized having the mural installed at the children's play area. At the moment the soft foam wall décor needs to be detached, but the project manager is saying no. At Vice Chair Payan's questioning, Heather suggests that the Commissioners help the project stay on track by suggesting deadlines, and to put that on next week's agenda. Michelle will have continued contact with Heather as needed, but she personally has no experience working with the mural project.

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

Commission to consider and discuss future exhibition proposals, concepts, and submissions, vote for recommendation to JWA Administration.

#### **A. VI SMITH GALLERIES**

- a. TERMINAL A: MAKERS MARKET 2025**  
November 20, 2025 – January 31, 2026

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

- c. TERMINAL C: TBD GROUP EXHIBITION**  
December 2025 – June 2026

#### **B. COMMUNITY FOCUS SPACE**

- a. MARISSA SAYER SOLO SHOW – ARTIST PREVIEW**  
December 17, 2025 – April 13, 2026

#### **C. DESTINATION GALLERY**

- a. A LITTLE SAIGON STORY EXHIBITION**  
October 2025 – February 2026

### **5. CURRENT EXHIBITIONS – FOR REFERENCE**

Staff to provide status and updates regarding currently installed exhibitions and respond to Commission comments/questions, if any.

#### **D. VI SMITH GALLERIES**

- a. Terminal A: Luciana Abait: Paths of Departure**  
July 18, 2025 – November 17, 2025
- b. Terminal A: Regolith, an abstract sculpture exhibition**  
May 2025 – November 2025
- c. Terminal C: Perceiving the Divine group exhibition**  
August 8, 2025 – December 8, 2025

#### **E. COMMUNITY FOCUS SPACE**

- a. The Curator's Collection – rescheduled install**  
August 13, 2025 – December 16, 2025

#### **F. DESTINATION GALLERY**

- a. **Pacific Symphony Exhibition**  
June 13, 2025 – October 13, 2025

**6. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

Other Business – None

Items of Interest from the Public – None

**7. ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING** Chair Le adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Bowling