

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: May 7th, 2024

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**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**From:** Nzuzi Mahungu, Planning Technician  
**Subject:** Receipt of Notification of Request to Suspend Recruitment for Upcoming Vacancy on Public Arts Committee

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council receive the report about an upcoming vacancy on the Public Arts Committee. City Staff recommend postponing opening recruitment until the City Council has given direction on the future of the Public Arts Committee.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Public Arts Committee (PAC) was established to set a fee on certain large commercial or industrial construction projects in Sebastopol to be used for Public Art in the City. The Public Arts Committee is a five-member panel and will have one opening due to the resignation of one its members, Marghe Mills-Thysen. City Staff recommends not opening recruitment until the Council has given direction on the future of the Public Arts Committee.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:**

The Public Arts Committee, or the PAC, was established in May of 2011 by the City Ordinance amending the Municipal Code to set a fee on commercial or industrial projects in Sebastopol to be used for Public Art in the city. Under this provision, Public Art, totaling 1% of construction costs, can be commissioned by the project owner and approved by the PAC, or 1% of construction costs is to be paid by the owner into a Public Art Fund. The PAC uses that fund to develop Public Art projects for the City. Artwork installed on municipal property is also vetted by the Public Arts Committee.

Due to the current fiscal climate, the Council has approved considering merging and/or eliminating various Boards and Committees. The Public Arts Committee is being considered as a candidate to become a citizen-led group instead of a city-sponsored group. A decision has not yet been made, so City Staff recommends waiting until then so that the Council decides on the Committee’s future.

Committee member Mills-Thysen’s is resigning on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and her term officially ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. City Staff recommend that if recruitment opens that this vacancy be filled until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, which will coincide with the rest of the Committee members. If recruitment is authorized, City Staff will initiate the public application process for the upcoming vacancy. Applications will be available on the City website and at City Hall. Notice of the vacancy will be published and the application period will be open for approximately six weeks. Staff would agendize the interviews and appointments for a future City Council meeting after the application deadline.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:**

Staff recommends as there has no been no decision as of the writing of this Staff Report, that the recruitment be postponed. However, if the Council directs opening the recruitment, preference will be shown to City residents and persons who own a business or work in the City; however, qualified candidates from the greater Sebastopol and Sonoma County area will be considered. In making appointments, the City Council shall consider the following categories:

1. Active members of a City-based, art focused, registered nonprofit organization, entity or facility.
2. Persons with experience in the public art field as either an artist, installer or designer.
3. Members of the general public.
4. A member of the Design Review Board.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommended action tonight.

**OPTIONS:**

Staff recommend postponing opening recruitment until the City Council has given direction on the future of the Public Arts Committee.

If Council chooses option 1 or 2 below, than this item will need to be pulled from the Consent Calendar.

1. Authorize Staff to open recruitment and create a new term that will end on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, coinciding with the other members on the Public Arts Committee.
2. Authorize Staff to open recruitment to complete the term of the resigning Committee member until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and then reopen recruitment in 2025.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Public Arts Committee Member’s Marghe Mills-Thysen Resignation  
Marghe Mills-Thysen’s follow up email

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 4/23/24

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 4/23/24

The proposed action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date: 5/1/2024

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:  Yes  No  N/A

Account Code (f applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 5/1/2024

City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 5/1/2024

## Re: Public Art Committee discussion on potential committee transision

M.MILLS-THYSEN

Wed 4/10/2024 12:14 PM

Mutual respect, support, kindness and honesty can make us wonderfully effective, strong, energetic and inventive. That's what I've seen connect and empower this team. We are propelled by individual and shared visions, by the desire to offer our best to our community-city-county-country-planet, etc., and by the curiosity, enthusiasm and response around us.

When the PAC's 3rd Commission selection is complete, expected on May 14, after twelve years that will be my last meeting in the PAC.

Thank you again to all the current dedicated, hard working and inspired members of this terrific lively and effective committee.

Thank you to the excellent city staff and council members who have and who continue to support Public Art in Sebastopol and the work of its important Public Arts Committee, and to past and future PAC members.

Thank you for including me and for your interest, dedication and leadership.

**Strongest wishes for good works,**

*From your outgoing outgoing ex-committee chair and soon to be ex- member,*

Marghe Mills-Thysen

## Re: PAC Term Extension

M. Mills-Thysen

Wed 5/1/2024 11:03 AM

To:Nzuzi Mahungu <nmahungu@cityofsebastopol.gov>

Hi Nzuzi,

My hope was that the new member would be involved in the new commission work and installation and the CSC opening work and ceremony. Perhaps you can tell the council that having a new member sooner rather than later would be better for at least these reasons.

To start getting the word out about the availability and setting up interviews should not require the specific categorization. The PAC has already made it's preference known and folks sincerely interested in serving on Public Art can understand and allow for the situation.

Please communicate this from me to them. Thank you.

Marghe Mills-Thysen