

**Economic Development Board  
Creative Sonoma Update  
July 2023**

**Fire Memorial**

The Board of Supervisors approved the Fire Memorial Task Force at its meeting on July 11<sup>th</sup>. The 7 members include:

Alma Bowen (District 4) is recommended because of her 18 years as a 911 dispatcher, including the night the 2017 fires broke out, and her more recent work as Executive Director of Nuestra Comunidad, a community-based organization dedicated to improving the health, safety, and well-being of the community, in service of more resilient communities.

Cyndi Foreman (District 1) is recommended because of her 22 years working for local Fire Districts, including for Rincon Valley on the night of the fires. She currently serves as Division Chief/Fire Marshal for the Sonoma County Fire District.

Paul Lowenthal (District 4) is recommended because of his service as Division Chief Fire Marshal for the Santa Rosa Fire Department during the 2017 wildfires and beyond; he lost his home in the 2017 fires.

Margie Maynard (District 1) is recommended because of her over 35 years of experience in museum services including at the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art where she co-curated the 2018 Fire Exhibition telling the stories of the many artists and writers who were directly impacted.

Tammy Sakanashi (District 1) is recommended because of her professional experience working in health services, currently as Dean of Health Services at Santa Rosa Junior College; she lost her home in the 2017 fires.

Jessica Tunis (District 3) is recommended because of her years' long advocacy for a memorial honoring the lives lost in the 2017 fires, including her mother.

Pamela Van Halsema (District 4) is recommended because of her work as a community volunteer after the fires as well as her background in arts and museums. She is a current or former volunteer and/or board member of the Sonoma County Library, Coffey Strong, Santa Rosa Community Services, and the Community Resilience Collaborate. She previously worked in arts education positions for the Bay Area Discovery Museum and the Terra Museum of American Art and has a bachelor's degree in art history; she lost her home in the 2017 fires.

The first meeting of the Task Force is set for July 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Public Art Consultancy**

The Public Art Ad Hoc committee met in July to discuss final details of the proposed Public art Policy and Master Plan. We received feedback on the remaining key questions and guidance from the CAO that are strong enough for us to finalize drafts and bring them forward to the full Board of Supervisors in September. The Master Plan will be posted to the Creative Sonoma website with an encouragement for public feedback. We will have one more meeting of the Ad Hoc to review final drafts and board presentation materials.

## **Arts Education**

### Sonoma County Office of Education

Debbie Yarrow met with County Superintendent, Dr. Amie Carter, and Arts Education Alliance leaders. This first meeting with Dr. Carter established action items to move forward that include: connecting AEA leadership with Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) to support teachers and administrators, scheduling AEA presentations to convenings of both superintendents and school business officers and encouraging district teams to attend a Prop 28 summit in Oakland this fall. The AEA provided SCOE with visual and performing arts (VAPA) job descriptions to begin considering what VAPA leadership looks like. Dr. Carter was receptive and encouraging about the opportunities for participation by SCOE.

### Networking

The June AEA Mixer at Crooked Goat in Petaluma was successful with 31 attending including Francesco Lecce-Chong, Santa Rosa Symphony conductor and Dr. Eric Engdahl, Dept Chair of Teacher Education at Cal State East Bay with background in Theater. The next Mixer will be held on August 9 at Mitote.

## **Grants**

### Arts and Cultural Equity Fellowship Grants

The press release announcing the 2023 Cohort will be going out the week of July 10. 2023 Cohort members have all completed contracting and have received their grant payment; they met for the first time at the end of May to get to know one another. Professional development training topics will be developed this summer for either a series and/or day-long retreat this fall.

### ArtSurround

Most of the Artists have either completed or installed their projects and are listed on [www.creativesonoma.org//artsurround-projects/](http://www.creativesonoma.org//artsurround-projects/). The remaining projects will be presented and installed this summer and early fall.

Our last official monthly virtual meeting with the Advocates took place in June, and we had a fruitful discussion on the successes, challenges, and issues to consider for similar future projects. Our trainer for artists' 2 ½ day training last year, Springboard for the Arts, is still under contract to do some final work with us. We will be scheduling an online professional development training session with the Artists in August, to share lessons learned about working with their site advocates and in community engagement, along with exploring their successes and challenges. We will also be scheduling a celebration event in August-early September to bring all the Artists and Advocates back together in person. This will include a showcase (likely a slideshow or video) of all the projects accomplished, along with sharing impact results and future goals for any public art initiatives.