

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
AND SHEILA KUEHL**

**JUNE 27, 2017**

**Establishing the Arts Commission as a County Department**

In 1947, exactly seventy years ago, the Los Angeles County (County) Arts Commission (Commission) was established to support art programs throughout the County. Throughout the decades, the Commission’s role has expanded to include innovative and meaningful programs including: leadership in arts education by working with school districts throughout the County to develop and implement a strategic plan to integrate arts into K-12 public schools; administering the Civic Art program where artists are aligned with capital projects to bring aesthetics and programming to the community in which the project is located; and overseeing the iconic Arts Internship Program, where to date, over 2,000 college and university students participate in a paid internship for ten weeks during the summer in arts organizations and venues throughout the County. The Commission staff also produces the Emmy Award-winning Annual Holiday Program, which is presented to the public at no cost, as well as administers the free summer concerts throughout the County each year. The Arts Commission also reviews and awards grants to various organizations through the Organizational Grant and the Community Impact Arts Grant programs.

Given these successes, after seventy years, it is appropriate to evaluate if the organizational structure of the Commission should be changed to improve the delivery of services, function more efficiently, and hold staff accountable. Presently, the Commission is comprised of 15 volunteer Commissioners appointed by the Board of Supervisors (Board),

- MORE -

**MOTION**

SOLIS \_\_\_\_\_

KUEHL \_\_\_\_\_

HAHN \_\_\_\_\_

BARGER \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS AND SHEILA KUEHL  
JUNE 27, 2017  
PAGE 2**

employs 24 budgeted staff with an annual budget of \$12.9 million, and has used consultants or contractors to fulfill tasks and complete projects.

In her letter to the Board dated June 16, 2017, the Chief Executive Officer states that the primary advantage of restructuring the Commission into a stand-alone Department is that the Board would have direct oversight in guiding its direction and policy. The Board should have a more direct role as the impact of the arts on the lives of residents in the County is significant, especially as an economic driver. Careers in the creative industry include jobs in entertainment, architecture/interior design, digital media, fine and performing arts, and publishing and printing, to name a few.

According to the 2017 Otis Report on the Creative Economy, in 2015, the total creative economy output in the Los Angeles region was \$190.3 billion, including 759,000 jobs, and \$56.9 billion in wages earned. As a County Department, the Arts Commission may be better positioned to work with other County departments, such as the Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services, Department of Business and Consumer Affairs, Public Library, and the Health Agency, to expand its reach and maximize the impact of the arts.

The Board should explore various structural and organizational configurations of the Arts Commission and consider elevating it as a County Department to reflect the importance and value of arts not only in the daily lives of the residents, but also as an economic tool with the potential to improve the quality of life for all.

**WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

Instruct the Executive Officer of the Board of Supervisors to retain a consultant to:

1. Conduct an in-depth review and study to explore, identify, formulate and recommend whether the County should proceed in reorganizing the Arts Commission, including the option of establishing the Arts Commission as a stand-alone County department;
2. Determine how the reorganization would be accomplished and the purview and responsibilities, if a separate County department is recommended;

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS AND SHEILA KUEHL  
JUNE 27, 2017  
PAGE 3**

3. Assess possible ways that the Commission or a new department might work with the creative industries in the County in collaboration with key arts stakeholders to enhance the development of opportunities for collaboration, innovation, economic development, and job creation;
4. Recommended roles for the Commission in relation to a possible department;  
and
5. Provide a written report responding to the above directives within 120 days.

###

(DJ/RT)