



Robert Bickel, Chair  
Ranjini Venkatachari, Vice Chair  
Kenn Costanzo, Committee Member  
Dinesh Govindarao, Committee Member  
Robert Maser, Committee Member  
Andre Nguyen, Committee Member  
Diana Iliaiev, Alternate Member  
Naina Shastri, Alternate Member

## Arts Advisory Committee Agenda

**Dougherty Station Community Arts Center  
Art Studio 1  
17011 Bollinger Canyon Road**

**June 17, 2026  
7:00 PM  
Regular Meeting**

*Agenda Questions: Contact Parks & Community Services at (925) 973-3321*

- 1. Call To Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Public Comment**

At this time, members of the public are encouraged to address the Committee on any item not already included in tonight's agenda. Comments should not exceed three (3) minutes. During public comment, members of the public are permitted to address the Committee on items that are not on the agenda and are within the Committee's jurisdiction.

Comments from the public may also be submitted by email to [achow@sanramon.ca.gov](mailto:achow@sanramon.ca.gov). No Committee action can be taken at this meeting on issues raised during Public Comment. Written Public Comment emails must be submitted to the email above prior to the commencement of the meeting. Comments received by email will not be read aloud; however, they will be forwarded to the Committee for their consideration. If you wish to make your comments heard, you must participate in the meeting.

- 3. Committee Business**

3.1 Minutes of the Arts Advisory Committee Meeting – May 20, 2026

3.2 New Youth Poet Laureate Program Discussion  
*Presented by Adam Chow, Recreation Supervisor*

3.3 Art Advisory Committee Feedback on the 2026 Art & Wind Festival  
*Presented by Adam Chow, Recreation Supervisor*

#### 4. Adjournment

*This agenda is posted in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2(a). To make a request for disability-related accommodation to participate in the meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office 48 hours in advance of the meeting at 925-973-2539, or [cityclerk@sanramon.ca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@sanramon.ca.gov).*

#### **Attendee Conduct**

There will be zero tolerance for any person addressing the Committee making profane, offensive and disruptive remarks, or engaging in loud, boisterous, or other disorderly conduct, that disrupts the orderly conduct of the public meeting. Specifically, it is important for all speakers to adhere to the following guidelines for participation in this meeting:

- a. No profanity or obscenity
- b. Refrain from personal threats or attacks.
- c. Refrain from hateful epithets and demeaning language based on any person's race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or disability.
- d. Respect all people that are present.

At the discretion of the Committee Chair, a speaker may forfeit speaking time for any of the following reasons:

- a. Exceeding the allotted time to speak;
- b. Yelling, screaming, or other behavior that renders this Committee unable to continue the meeting;
- c. Excessive profanity or slander; Specific threats or "fighting words" that incite violence; or
- d. Speech that is outside the subject matter jurisdiction of the Policy Committee or the specific agenda item in which you are speaking.

**While the City of San Ramon upholds the First Amendment rights of all participants, we do not accept or endorse offensive or hateful comments made during our meetings. We celebrate the diversity of our community and strive to maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.**

City of San Ramon  
Arts Advisory Committee Meeting  
May 20, 2026  
Regular Meeting  
DRAFT

1. **Call To Order/Roll Call**

Chair Bickel called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

**Present:** Chair Robert Bickel; Committee Members Kenn Costanzo, Rob Maser, and Andre Nguyen (arrived 7:22 PM); Alternate Diana Iliaiev.

**Absent:** Vice Chair Ranjini Venkatachari; Committee Member Dinesh Govindarao; Alternate Naina Shastri.

**Also in attendance:** Adam Chow, Parks & Community Services Recreation Supervisor; Steven Cox, Recreation Supervisor; Andrea Wedewer, Office Technician; Sridhar Verose, City Council Member; Will Doerlich, Parks & Community Services Commissioner; and Kaashvi Patil, Teen Council Member (arrived 7:26 PM).

2. **Public Comment Or Written Communication**

The committee received a written communication from Suhani Goyal.

3. **Committee Business**

3.1 Approval of April 15, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes

Member Costanzo's motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of April 15, 2026, was seconded by Member Maser. The motion passed 4-0-3-0. Vice Chair Venkatachari and Member Govindarao were absent. Member Nguyen arrived after the vote.

3.2 San Ramon Art & Wind Festival Update [Verbal]

Presentation given by Steven Cox, Recreation Supervisor.

3.3 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Arts & Eats Update [Verbal]

Presentation given by Adam Chow, Recreation Supervisor.

3.4 San Ramon 5-Year Cultural Arts Plan Priorities Review

Presentation given by Adam Chow, Recreation Supervisor.

4. **Adjournment**

Chair Bickel adjourned the meeting at 8:33 PM.



## Arts Advisory Committee Staff Report Item No. 3.2

**Date:** June 17, 2026

**To:** Arts Advisory Committee

**From:** Henry Perezalonso, Director  
Adam Chow, Recreation Supervisor

**Subject:** San Ramon Youth Poet Laureate Discussion

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**Recommendation:**

Review past youth poetry opportunities and consider if this is an appropriate time to implement a San Ramon Youth Poet Laureate.

**Background:**

A San Ramon Youth Poet Laureate program has been brought forth and considered by the Teen Council and Arts Advisory Committee on a number of occasions. Parks and Community Services and San Ramon's Poet Laureate have implemented various programs over the years which have each been discontinued due to low participation by the teen community.

In 2017, a proposal by Vidhima Shetty was received by the Teen Council outlining a Teen Poet Laureate Program. Staff conducted preliminary research regarding Teen Poet Laureate programs in the Tri-Valley and presented the information to the Arts Advisory Committee for a recommendation. The Arts Advisory Committee reviewed this on February 21, 2018, and recommended that the Teen Council start with a bi-annual poetry contest. The Arts Advisory Committee did not feel there was a need for a Teen Poet Laureate position at that time, since there were already limited opportunities for the current Poet Laureate to be involved in civic activities, the program would be limited to one youth and not involve a large number of youth, and the staff did not have the capacity to oversee the program due to other priorities. The Arts Advisory Committee's recommendation for a youth poetry contest enabled more teens in San Ramon to participate and share their poetry. Ultimately, the contest received few entries and was discontinued by the Teen Council.

In 2021, an email was sent to City Staff by Satarupa Chakravarty, who could not participate in the National Youth Poet Laureate Program since she does not hold a Youth Poet Laureate title. She encouraged the city to establish a Youth Poet Laureate title so that youth would be

eligible to participate in the national program. With the research and results from a few years earlier, City Staff decided not to pursue the program.

In 2024 and 2025, the City hosted a series of Voices Open Mic events for teens in partnership with Poet Laureate Emerita Jenyth Jo. The Poet Laureate held a workshop prior to the open mic events and worked with teen poets to create and develop poems that could be read during the open mic portion. The events had fewer than 10 youth at each, mostly singers and musicians, with a few poets.

Currently, San Ramon youth have the opportunity to participate in poetry contests through the PTA Reflections program and the Contra Costa County Office of Education Poetry Out Loud program. Both programs are conducted annually.

On May 20, 2026, Suhani Goyal submitted a public comment requesting that the San Ramon Youth Poet Laureate position be considered. Several Arts Advisory Committee Members requested that this item be added to the agenda.

**Fiscal Impact:**

A Youth Poet Laureate Program is not budgeted for FY 2026-2027. The fiscal impact of a Youth Poet Laureate Program would depend on the scope of the program. The program may incur staffing, facility, publicity, and supply expenses.

Due to existing staff workload and resource commitments, implementation of a Youth Poet Laureate Program would require reallocating staffing resources from other approved programs, projects, or strategic priorities.

**Alternative Option(s):**

There are no alternative options.

**Next Steps:**

The next steps, if any, will be determined through the committee discussion.

**Attachment(s):**

A. Suhani Goyal Written Public Comment from May 20, 2026

**From:** Suhani Goyal [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2026 12:09 AM  
**To:** Adam Chow <achow@sanramon.ca.gov>  
**Subject:** Arts Advisory Committee Meeting (5/20) — Written Public Comment: Proposal for a San Ramon Youth Poet Laureate Program

**\*\*\*| EXTERNAL EMAIL: Think before you click and do not open attachments unless you know they are safe. |\*\*\***

To the San Ramon Arts Advisory Committee,

My name is Suhani Goyal, and I am a student at Dougherty Valley High School, a teen poet, and a San Ramon Teen Council member, though I am submitting this proposal as an individual community member and not as official communication on behalf of the Teen Council.

I am writing to strongly urge the Arts Advisory Committee to explore the establishment of a San Ramon Youth Poet Laureate program.

Poetry has shaped nearly every part of who I am. When life feels overwhelming, poetry is the place I return to. It has given me a voice when I did not know how to speak and a sense of purpose when I felt uncertain about where I belonged.

Over the years, I have published multiple poetry collections and individual works, participated in literary events, and been invited to perform poetry at civic action events attended by elected representatives. Through these experiences, I have seen firsthand how poetry can create conversations that statistics, presentations, and policy discussions alone often cannot.

I deeply admire the work that Jaz Sufi has done as San Ramon’s Poet Laureate, especially through poetry workshops and outreach efforts across San Ramon and at independent spaces like The Quirky Crow Bookstore. These programs have shown that poetry can bring people together across generations and backgrounds.

However, I believe there is still a missing piece in San Ramon’s arts infrastructure: a meaningful avenue for youth literary leadership.

At a time when the committee itself is actively discussing youth engagement as a central goal, I respectfully ask the committee to consider what genuine youth engagement looks like. True engagement is not simply inviting young people to attend events. It is trusting them with responsibility, visibility, representation, and leadership.

A Youth Poet Laureate program would do exactly that.

I understand that the concept of a Youth Poet Laureate was discussed previously as a potential collaboration between the Teen Council and the Arts Advisory Committee, but that the proposal was ultimately replaced with a poetry competition. While competitions certainly provide recognition, they are fundamentally temporary. A Youth Poet Laureate program would offer something much more impactful: sustained civic participation.

Unlike a competition that ends after awards are distributed, a Youth Poet Laureate would serve as an ongoing ambassador for youth expression, literacy, and civic connection. The role could include public readings, community workshops, mentorship opportunities with the city Poet Laureate, appearances at civic and cultural events, and collaboration with local schools and libraries. Most importantly, it would send a powerful message to young people that their voices are not only welcomed in San Ramon, but valued.

This proposal is not simply about poetry. It is about representation. It is about creating a city where young people are encouraged to contribute intellectually and artistically to public life. It is about recognizing that youth perspectives are not future assets alone, but present ones.

Recently, while attending a writing awards ceremony, I spoke with many teens as well as English teachers from SRVUSD, and there was strong consensus that San Ramon should have a Youth Poet Laureate program. There is clear interest, talent, and need within our community.

San Ramon already has the foundation necessary to make this successful: a respected Poet Laureate program, passionate educators, engaged students, thriving arts programming, and talented young writers eager to serve their community. Establishing a Youth Poet Laureate would not be creating something entirely new; it would be building thoughtfully upon work the city has already begun.

As someone who has experienced personally how transformative poetry can be, I know that programs like this can change lives. Sometimes all it takes is one invitation for a young person to realize that their voice matters.

I hope San Ramon chooses to extend that invitation.

I would be more than willing to submit a more in depth proposal if the committee chooses to follow up or add this as an agenda item to be discussed at the next meeting. Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued commitment to the arts in our community.

Sincerely,

Suhani Goyal



## Arts Advisory Committee Staff Report Item No. 3.3

**Date:** June 17, 2026

**To:** Arts Advisory Committee

**From:** Henry Perezalonso, Director  
Adam Chow, Recreation Supervisor

**Subject:** Arts Advisory Committee Feedback on the 2026 Art & Wind Festival

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**Recommendation:**

Provide feedback regarding the Art & Wind Festival from the attendee experience.

**Background:**

The Art & Wind Festival is one of the City's signature community events that brings residents and visitors together through arts, entertainment, recreation, and community engagement. Following the conclusion of each festival, staff conduct an internal evaluation process to identify successes, opportunities, and considerations for future planning efforts. As part of this process, feedback from the Arts Advisory Committee is being requested, given their unique arts perspective. Staff is seeking input on opportunities for operational efficiencies and small but meaningful improvements that could enhance the overall festival experience and support the continued success of future events. Committee input will be compiled alongside feedback collected from staff and other stakeholders to help inform future event planning and operational improvements.

**Fiscal Impact:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

**Alternative Option(s):**

No alternative options are presented, as this item is informational in nature and intended to gather feedback

**Next Steps:**

Feedback received from the Committee will be incorporated into the overall post-event assessment and used to help inform future event planning and operational improvements.

**Attachment(s):**

None