

## MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN ARTS BOARD

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, 18 February 2021

**Location:** Council Chambers, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra

**Time:** 1.00pm

The following members were present:

Clr John Wells - Chairperson  
Clr Mark Kitchener – (remotely)  
Clr Patricia White  
Ms Alison Chiam  
Dr Peter Lavelle – (remotely)  
Ms Jenny Thompson  
Mr Frank Howarth  
Dr Lynda Kelly  
Mr Stephen Buzacott  
Ms Christine Dunstan

Others present:

Bronwyn Coulston – Manager, Arts & Culture  
Karen Patterson – Manager, Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre  
Sarah Taylor – Libraries Manager (arrived 1.36pm)

### Apologies / Leave of Absence

An apology was received from Rob Crowe.

### Confirmation of the Minutes

**RESOLVED** (Christine Dunstan / Jenny Thompson)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Arts Board held on Thursday 26 November 2020 be confirmed.

CARRIED

### Declarations of Interest

Nil

## PRESENTATIONS

**AB21.1 Shoalhaven Regional Gallery Online Collection****HPERM Ref:  
D21/42216**

Bronwyn Coulston demonstrated the online collection interface that will be made public from March 2021.

She explained that work is ongoing in securing copyright permissions from artists and estates, so many of the works do not have photographs online. The Arts Board were asked to pass on any contacts for artists in the collection whose images are not online, so that permission may be sought.

Arts Board members commended the project as an excellent initiative.

## REPORTS

**AB21.2 2020 / 2021 Arts Board Grants program - Awarding of grants****HPERM Ref:  
D21/41801**

Bronwyn Coulston, Arts & Culture Manager, explained the background and the recommendations of the Panel, as set out in the report. The three programs – Professional Development Grants, A Sense of Place Grants, and the new COVID Response Performing Arts Grants – had attracted 10 applications in total.

\$47,568 is available, and the recommended disbursements account for \$37,420. The report provides options to use the unallocated funds. Finance staff have confirmed the COVID Response unallocated funds may be used as suggested.

The Board discussed the Schools Artist in Residence program. Alison Chiam asked whether the Artists in Residency allocation that was included in the 2020 announcement of local economy stimulus has been received. Jenny Thompson advised the submission has been forwarded to the Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts, and a Create NSW application is in train.

Bronwyn Coulston confirmed having discussed the lack of a RADO (Regional Arts Development Organisation) with Create NSW. Allocation has been made to regions without RADOs, including to Shoalhaven/Kiama. However, the funds cannot be disbursed through Local Government, but go straight to community arts organisations. There is no organisation in Shoalhaven/Kiama that could function as a RADO, and Create NSW are considering how best to manage funding.

Christine Dunstan recommended the COVID Response Performing Arts Grant should be given as a commission agreement, from the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre or from Council on its behalf, commissioning the author for \$15,900 to write a play. The SEC should become the commissioner. The author would provide three drafts for consideration by the SEC as commissioner. The SEC would then hold first rights for the licence agreement to produce the play. The Australian Writers Guild has a standard agreement.

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That:

1. The Shoalhaven Arts Board grants be allocated as follows:
  - a. Professional Development Grants
    - i. Anna Nangle - \$2,210
    - ii. Albatross Musical Theatre Company - \$2,710

- iii. Alaska Turner - \$3,000
  - iv. Jill Talbot - \$3,000
  - v. Natalie McDonagh - \$2,150
  - b. Sense of Place Grants
    - i. Annaliese Szota - \$8,450
  - c. COVID Response Performing Arts Grants
    - i. Alana Valentine - \$15,900
2. That the \$9,100 unallocated from the COVID Response Performing Arts Grants is moved to the Arts Reserve. Subject to endorsement of the Shoalhaven Arts Board the funds be released as appropriate to support the development and delivery of a public 'work in progress' The Anti-Nuclear Family performance or public reading.
3. That the \$10,000 unallocated from the grants program be split equally between supporting the Shoalhaven Family Festival (Arty Farty Party) and the Schools Artist in Residence Program.

**RECOMMENDATION** (Frank Howarth / Christine Dunstan)

That:

1. The Shoalhaven Arts Board grants be allocated as follows:
- a. Professional Development Grants
    - i. Anna Nangle - \$2,210
    - ii. Albatross Musical Theatre Company - \$2,710
    - iii. Alaska Turner - \$3,000
    - iv. Jill Talbot - \$3,000
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  - b. Sense of Place Grants
    - i. Annaliese Szota - \$8,450
  - c. COVID Response Performing Arts Grants
    - i. Alana Valentine - \$15,900
2. That the \$9,100 unallocated from the COVID Response Performing Arts Grants is moved to the Arts Reserve. Subject to endorsement of the Shoalhaven Arts Board the funds be released as appropriate to support the development and delivery of a public 'work in progress' The Anti-Nuclear Family performance or public reading.
3. That the \$10,000 unallocated from the grants program be split equally between supporting the Shoalhaven Family Festival (Arty Farty Party) and the Schools Artist in Residence Program.

CARRIED

**AB21.3 Shoalhaven Libraries - Update**

**HPERM Ref:  
D21/38581**

Note: This item was reintroduced later in the meeting following the arrival of the Libraries Manager.

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Shoalhaven Arts Board receive the Shoalhaven Libraries Update report for information.

**RESOLVED** (Frank Howarth / Alison Chiam)

That the Shoalhaven Arts Board receive the Shoalhaven Libraries Update report for information.

CARRIED

**AB21.4 Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre Update**

**HPERM Ref:  
D21/41502**

Karen Patterson, Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre Manager, advised of the status of the upgrade works. These include addressing compliance matters, remodelling the kitchen, improving accessibility, new foyer furniture, and audio and lighting upgrades. The first of the red cladding had just arrived onsite. The Visitor Information Centre has a popup presence in the Administration Building foyer, and the Encore Café is also operating there with a limited service. The project is on schedule.

The regular season launch is not being undertaken, just soft releases. Two sectors of the community are urging the resumption of performances: families, who are desperate to see *Bluey*, and the morning matinee audience.

The shutdown has been used as an opportunity to engage in community development. A census of live music will facilitate capacity building and professional development in that sector. Performers will be matched with non-traditional venues. At end of a 12-month project a Live Music Action Plan will be drafted. This will be brought to the Arts Board for recommendation to Council, leading to an ongoing commitment. Paul Green will be curator.

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That Shoalhaven Arts Board receives the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre report for information.

**RESOLVED** (Frank Howarth / Stephen Buzacott)

That Shoalhaven Arts Board receives the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre report for information.

CARRIED

Note: Sarah Taylor, Libraries Manager, joined the meeting at 1.36pm.

Note: Item AB21.3 - Shoalhaven Libraries – Update was reintroduced for discussion.

**AB21.3 Shoalhaven Libraries - Update**

**HPERM Ref:  
D21/38581**

Sarah Taylor, Libraries Manager, advised the architects' fourth design option for the Sanctuary Point Library has been well received, and will be presented to a Councillor Briefing next month. The design incorporates Indigenous arts and design features.

Note: This item was resolved earlier in the meeting.

**AB21.5 Shoalhaven City Art Collection - Acquisitions**

**HPERM Ref:  
D21/41973**

Bronwyn Coulston clarified that Tamara Dean is now represented by a new gallery, and the offer comes through the new gallery with tamara's support. It is a significant body of work, and consequently requires significant investment, and the Acquisitions Subcommittee recommended it be declined. It is a considerable risk to take on this size of collection, which may limit the ability to acquire a broader representation of the artist's work in future.

The works by Anna Glynn are very representative of the *Promiscuous Provenance* show. The acquisition will require accessing the Arts Reserve, but a healthy balance will remain.

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Shoalhaven Arts Board:

1. Decline the offer of a combined purchase and Cultural Gift Acquisition of works by Tamara Dean
2. Purchase the works 'Black Swan / After Port Jackson Painters' and 'Colonial Hybrid Reimagined from Raper - Gum-plant, & kangaroo of New-Holland 1789' by Anna Glynn from the *Promiscuous Provenance* exhibition

**RESOLVED** (Stephen Buzacott / Alison Chiam)

That the Shoalhaven Arts Board:

1. Decline the offer of a combined purchase and Cultural Gift Acquisition of works by Tamara Dean
2. Purchase the works 'Black Swan / After Port Jackson Painters' and 'Colonial Hybrid Reimagined from Raper - Gum-plant, & kangaroo of New-Holland 1789' by Anna Glynn from the *Promiscuous Provenance* exhibition

CARRIED

**AB21.6 Shoalhaven Regional Gallery - Update**

**HPERM Ref:  
D21/41975**

Bronwyn Coulston reported the investment in exhibitions has paid off in visitation and media attention.

- *Terra Within* achieved significant coverage and strong feedback from visitors.
- *Wonder + Dread* and *Truth in Fire* both attracted strong media attention, including a substantial review in *The Weekend Australian* for *Wonder + Dread*.
- Visitation is down slightly overall, but daily visitation is up, over 100 a day; this may be attributed to wet summer.
- School holiday activities and artist workshops have been booked out.
- *Promiscuous Provenance* is at the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum until late March, before moving to Hawkesbury.
- New shows opened a week ago: *New Horizons* (the annual HSC show) and an installation by Lizzy Buckmaster Dove.
- Two joint programs are being conducted with Sydney Living Museums in association with the Meroogal Women's Art Prize. There will be an education launch alongside Meroogal in March to engage with the community more and increase visitation across both sites.
- The Administrative Officer position is shortly to be filled.
- Tap and Pay: This runs on the Quest Payment System; it takes a set donation amount per tap, which is currently set to \$6. At present only about 2% of visitors are making donations. There is an option to implement a front of house staff position to improve customer experience.

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Shoalhaven Arts Board receive the Regional Gallery report for information.

**RESOLVED** (Clr Wells / Christine Dunstan)

That the Shoalhaven Arts Board receive the Regional Gallery report for information.

CARRIED

## GENERAL BUSINESS

### AB21.7 Shoalhaven Arts Foundation Seed Funding

Alison Chiam proposed that Council be asked for seed funding for the Shoalhaven Arts Foundation to initiate work on its Constitution and formation of the legal entity.

Clr Wells set out the background to the Foundation. Clr White clarified there had been a Councillor Briefing, but the application for funding was not included in the budget.

Bronwyn Coulston explained the funding is required to cover the costs of an administrator and part time development manager, IT setup, CRM, website, marketing, banking and accounting systems, and office space, as well as registration and legal costs. Coffs Harbour has a similar project where the entity was established with just the legal requirements in place, but no financial support to get it operational. It remained without activity for several years until the council provided funds for staffing etc, then donations began to accrue. Solely funding the legal requirements will not meet expectations or allow the proper resourcing, promotion and activation of the Foundation.

Frank Howarth advised he had been involved in the Coffs Harbour project, and clarified they had established one incorporated company but only activated two of its three objectives – Arts and Culture, and Environment. Their intention was to set up one entity to cover multiple activities. Frank recommended ensuring any chosen legal vehicle is correct for the purpose.

#### RECOMMENDATION (Clr Wells / Alison Chiam)

That Council consider a funding allocation in the 2020/21 budget or a quarterly budget review of \$150,000 to facilitate the drafting of a Shoalhaven Foundation Constitution that could support the Arts and other objects (such as Economic Development opportunities and Environmental outcomes), its business registration and name, securing charitable status, and obtaining an Australian Business Number to facilitate the Foundation's pursuit of funding for the Arts and other objects in the City of Shoalhaven.

CARRIED

### Berry Museum

Stephen Buzacott declared an interest in this topic, in that he has been asked to produce drawings for the Museum. The Berry Museum is seeking funding for security; the building has remained closed during COVID. They have asked for professional assistance in grant application writing.

Bronwyn Coulston advised Council's Museums Advisor, Margot Jolly, can be asked to assist. Grants funding bodies do not usually support operational matters such as staffing. Shoalhaven Arts Board Grants are also project-based.

The Australian Museums and Galleries Association has been running online training in grant applications. There are also some private foundations who will fund staff positions but these are subject specific.

Regional Tourism and Bushfire Recovery Grant funding is available but there are conditions to be met.

Lynda Kelly noted that staff at a community bank in Southern Highlands are encouraged to apply to work in community organisations – is there a similar community bank in the Shoalhaven?

## **Placemaking**

Frank Howarth asked how cultural placemaking is being taken into account in the Nowra Riverfront Advisory Taskforce and Nowra CBD Revitalisation Strategy Committee.

Anthony Body, of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, chairs the Riverfront Taskforce and could be invited to present to the Board via Teams. Councillors are not members.

With regard to the recommendation to the Nowra CBD Committee to use vacant premises, Cllr Wells advised this was not successful. Cllr White explained that the Committee had used its funds to invite Kylie Legge of Place Score to workshop activation and to write the placemaking grant for Junction Court. A significant project on the Nowra CBD is now in train, under Council's City Futures Directorate. This will go out for consultation.

**Action:** Kylie Legge (Place Score), Robert Domm (Director, City Futures) and Gordon Clark (Strategic Planning Manager) to be requested to present to the Arts Board on CBD placemaking strategies.

## **Regional Arts Development Organisation (RADO)**

Alison Chaim reintroduced the subject of a RADO for the Shoalhaven following an earlier discussion. Bronwyn Coulston noted that she has been in discussion with Create NSW on this matter, and they are keen to present to the Arts Board on the opportunities and benefits of a RADO for the Shoalhaven / Kiama District

**Action:** Create NSW to be requested to present to the Arts Board on the future of RADOs and potential establishment of one for the Shoalhaven / Kiama District.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 2.58pm.

Clr John Wells  
CHAIRPERSON