



Council Agenda Report

To: Mayor Grisanti and the Honorable Members of the City Council

Prepared by: Kristin Riesgo, Community Services Deputy Director

Reviewed by: Jesse Bobbett, Community Services Director

Approved by: Steve McClary, Interim City Manager

Date prepared: August 3, 2021 Meeting date: August 23, 2021

Subject: Malibu Poet Laureate Appointment

RECOMMENDED ACTION: At the recommendation of the Malibu Arts Commission, approve the nomination of Ann Buxie to serve a two-year term as the Malibu Poet Laureate beginning September 1, 2021.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funding in the amount of \$2,000 for the Malibu Poet Laureate annual stipend was included in the Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 in Account No. 100-4012-5107-00 (Malibu Arts - Contract Personnel).

WORK PLAN: This item was included as Item 7g in the Adopted Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

DISCUSSION: In 2017, the Council approved the City's first Poet Laureate to help promote the literary arts in Malibu. The Poet Laureate serves as the poetry liaison for the City and Malibu Library, works with local schools to enhance the literary arts, and hosts an annual Poetry Invitational. Past selections include:

- 2020-2021: Dr. John Strueloeff
- 2019-2020: Ellen Reich
- 2017-2019: Ricardo Means Ybarra

Since the Poet Laureate program was established, several additional poetry-related programs and events have been added, including open mic poetry programs, poetry writing workshops, and Arts in Education workshops. The program has also provided a platform for artist collaborations, visual artists, dancers, and musicians at various events.

The City began its search for the fourth Poet Laureate through a community nomination process, which opened on April 5, 2021. The nomination period closed on May 21, 2021, resulting in five applications. The Poet Laureate Selection Committee reviewed and discussed the applications and unanimously recommended Ann Buxie as the 2021-2023 Malibu Poet Laureate (Attachment).

On July 27, 2021, the Malibu Arts Commission accepted the nomination and recommended Council approval of Ms. Buxie as the Malibu Poet Laureate. Ms. Buxie has hosted Tales by the Sea since 1995, a program for literary artists to share their stories. Soon thereafter, she expanded the program to include poetry readings at By the Sea events. Her passion for community engagement led to the creation of the City's Malibu Poet Laureate program, and she has assisted with other successful poetry programs, such as Caffeinated Verse, Poetry Stones at City parks, and Verse About Town while serving on the Poet Laureate Committee. If approved as the Malibu Poet Laureate, Ms. Buxie plans to generate interest in poetry by focusing on Malibu's mission to preserve its ecological relationship with the land by calling on local poets to help foster that mission. She seeks to enhance the Arts and Education program by emphasizing various collaborations with visual and literary artists.

The Council is asked to approve the nomination of Ann Buxie as the City's fourth Poet Laureate. She would serve a two-year term from September 1, 2021 to September 1, 2023, and would be compensated \$2,000 annually for her duties.

ATTACHMENTS: Malibu Poet Laureate Selection Committee Letter of Recommendation

June 18, 2021

Dear Malibu Arts Commission and Malibu City Council,

After several weeks of deliberation, the Malibu Poet Laureate Selection Committee has come to a unanimous decision for the City of Malibu's fourth Poet Laureate: Ann Buxie. We wish to formally submit her nomination to you now for your approval.

In our review process, we focused primarily on two aspects of each application: the quality of the written poetry and the evident potential for the applicant to serve as an ambassador of poetry for our City of Malibu. While we had a number of strong applicants, Ann stood out for both her thoughtful and detailed poetry and her already tremendous contributions to the poetry community in Malibu, in particular her co-founding and ongoing support of Poetry by the Sea and the Malibu Poet Laureate position, as well as her dedication to hosting and organizing a variety of literary events in our community for many years. We hold no reservations about this nomination, and each of us feels excitement about the events and activities that lie ahead.

We have contacted Ann to request her formal acceptance of this position (pending final approvals by the Commission and the Council), and she has accepted.

On behalf of the Poet Laureate Selection Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Struloeff", written in a cursive style.

John Struloeff

Chair, Malibu Poet Laureate Selection Committee

Full Selection Committee Membership:

John Struloeff, Chair and Representative of Pepperdine University

Ellen Cohen, Community Member

Ricardo Means Ybarra, Inaugural Malibu Poet Laureate (2017-19)

Lotte Cherin, Representative of the Malibu Arts Commission

Harriet Pollon, Representative of the Friends of the Malibu Library