



*Donovan Richards
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*Anatole Ashraf
Chairperson
Debra Markell Kleinert
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January 13, 2026

Arts & Cultural Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

This meeting was teleconferenced using Zoom

Committee Members Present:

Karesia Batan, Chair
Eric Narburgh, Vice Chair
Kenny Greenberg

Committee Members Absent:

Anatole Ashraf
Lisa Charles
Stephen Cooper
Pia Rahman
Ryan Smith
Akello Thomas

Community Board Members Present:

Jolly Patel

Arts & Cultural Affairs Public Members Present:

Edjo Wheeler

Community Board 2 Staff:

Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager

Guests:

Edjo Wheeler, Culture Lab
Molly Kurzius, MoMA PS1
Andre Irving, Cucala Dance

Karesia Batan, Chair of the Arts and Cultural Affairs Committee, welcomed everyone to the committee meeting.

Ms. Batan shared that community board applications are now open and encouraged interested individuals to apply. She added that she hopes artists join the Arts and Cultural Affairs Committee, as it is critical to have artistic representation in civic engagement.

- Ms. Batan, the Chair, shared that since community board applications are open, the Arts and Cultural Affairs Committee, along with other CB2 committees, wants to engage more with the community and do outreach to inform residents about the Community Board and its committees. She added that organizations that would allow the Engagement Committee to table at public-facing events, to reach out to her.

MoMA PS1

Molly Kurzius of MoMA PS1 provided the following update:

- MoMA is marking its 50th anniversary and will offer free programming in celebration.
- MoMA PS1 received a generous grant that will fund free admission for all visitors for the next three years.
- On February 21, 2026, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, MoMA will bring back Neighborhood Night, featuring Ayoung Kim's immersive video installation exhibition. Council Member Julie Won will co-host the event with MoMA. Programming will include free food and drinks from local establishments, as well as family workshops and DJs.
- On February 28, 2026, MoMA will host Family Festival, a one-day event for about 1,000 children and families. The event will feature workshops throughout the museum, as well as other opportunities for families and children to engage with the exhibitions.
- With MoMA's 50th anniversary celebrations continuing into April, and with 2026 being a Greater New York Year, MoMA will celebrate New York artists. Fifty-five artists will be featured in Greater New York, with the list to be announced in the coming weeks. An exhibition celebrating these artists will open to the public on April 16, 2026.
- On April 18, 2026, there will be a block party to celebrate MoMA's 50th anniversary and the opening weekend of Greater New York, featuring face painting, exhibition tours, building tours, community partners, and food vendors.

Culture Lab

Edjo Wheeler of Culture Lab provided the following information:

- Culture Lab will reopen on February 5, 2026.

- Culture Lab partnered with LIC Partnership and launched a newsletter where arts and cultural organizations can share their programming information. It is free to join, and organizations are encouraged to become members of LIC Partnership. Membership allows organizations to have their information distributed to residents of buildings with ties to the LIC Partnership, including City Lights and TF Cornerstone.
- Culture Lab's first show following its reopening will be Modern Ink. The exhibition will be held as part of the Chinese New Year and will feature six Chinese artists working with ink.
- On February 5, 2026, the exhibition Stories Behind Their Names: Queens Women in Action, in partnership with the Queens Memory Project, will be on display through Women's History Month.
- On February 13 and February 14, 2026, Culture Lab will host Twist & Tease - A Valentine's Cabaret Burlesque Experience, in partnership with The Cabaret Burlesque, to celebrate Valentine's Day.
- The exhibition Rooted Artist of LIC will run from April 2, 2026, to June 1, 2026, and will celebrate artists who helped make LIC an arts mecca. Culture Lab is seeking artwork by both contemporary and past artists, including Chuck Baker and Tony Vaccaro, to highlight their contributions to LIC.
- Once Culture Lab reopens, free jazz concerts will be held every Friday night in the front gallery.
- Edjo suggested creating an email list for individuals interested in being invited to art openings in the community. Mr. Narburgh, the Vice Chair, supported the idea as it will promote art and culture activities and help build community across the entire district.

Cucala Dance

Andre Irving of Cucala Dance shared the following updates:

- On January 24, 2026, Cucala Dance will have a dance social.
- On Valentine's Day, they will host Meet Someone or Bring Someone, an hour-and-a-half class followed by a mixer with beer and wine.

Chair Updates

Karesia Batan, the Chair, provided the following information:

- Applications for Discretionary Funding for the City Council are open and will close on February 18, 2026. On January 28, 2026, at 6:30 PM, Council Member Julie Won will host a webinar in partnership with the non-profit Help Desk to inform arts organizations about the application process.
- The application for Discretionary Funding for the City Council requires notarized documents. The Chair added that there are multiple sources from which to obtain funding, including delegations, caucuses, and council members, if programming is based in other council districts. She recommended that individuals schedule a

budget appointment with a council member they are seeking funding from to learn more.

- Long Island City Walk & Talk to Build a Strong Parks System will take place on January 24, 2026. At the event, attendees can discuss upcoming park projects that stem from the OneLIC Plan, as well as a continuous waterfront. Attendees at the event may learn more about the next steps of OneLIC and make arts and culture requests.
- Council Member Won released a call for budget delegate volunteers as part of the participatory budgeting process. Mr. Narburgh, the Vice Chair, shared that he previously served in this role and explained that delegates help gather ideas from the community through a survey and review funding suggestions. He noted that delegates help narrow down the suggestions and that serving as a budget delegate is a great way to learn what the community is identifying as its priorities.
- On January 26, 2026, from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM, We the People: An Assembly of New York Artists will be hosted by the Hunter College Office of the Arts at St. Mark's Church-in-the-Bowery. Artists are encouraged to sign up to listen and contribute to a discussion related to the sector. The Chair added that important figures will be present at the event to listen to feedback, and that information will be shared with the Mayor's Office, Governor's Office, and the New York City cultural community.
- Queens Community Board 2 will host a meet-and-greet on January 15, 2026, at Focal Point Brewing. The Chair encouraged meeting attendees to invite others to the event so they can learn what it is like to serve on the Community Board.
- Ms. Batan, the Chair, invited meeting attendees to the January 21, 2026, Land Use Committee meeting, where developers of the former Bliss Theater site will provide a presentation on their plans.
- Dirk McCall de Paloma of Sunnyside Shines provided a list with contact information for property owners and storefront operators at sites in the district that could be used for murals. The Chair added that there are some sites for which Mr. Paloma was unsure who to contact and that she would appreciate it if committee members reached out to property owners or identified who to contact for specific sites. She encouraged committee members to reach out to her if they are interested in helping. Mr. Narburgh shared a two-pager with persuasive points explaining the benefits of hosting a mural.
- Ms. Batan added that perhaps the Arts and Culture Committee can work with Small Business Committee to help with the mural outreach initiative. Once interested sites are identified, the committee can determine a process by which to connect muralists and building owners of the mural sites. The goal is to have this set up by spring so artists can work in time for the warmer weather.
- Queensboro Dance Festival will take stewardship of the bulletin boards that will be installed in Memorial Plaza in Woodside. The Chair noted that there may be an additional location for a bulletin board but will continue to discuss it with Parks.

Vice Chair Updates

Eric Narburgh, the Vice Chair, provided the following information:

- The Historic District Council’s Survey will continue to gather data on buildings, collections of buildings, and places in Sunnyside and Woodside that may have artistic, cultural, or historic significance and could be candidates for preservation. The survey will close at the end of January 2026. The Vice Chair encouraged meeting attendees to provide feedback and to encourage others to participate as well. He added that if individuals are unsure whether a location has already been landmarked, to submit it for preservation regardless. The link for the survey is: <https://forms.gle/v98eDTrF8Bhb5gXz7>.
- New Yorkers for Culture and Arts is convening with city council members, including the Speaker Menin, on January 28 at 4 pm. The event will provide artists and arts supporters with an opportunity to engage with city council members.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rafael Nava