



City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,
Oceanside, California 92054

Staff Report

File #: 25-1103

Agenda Date: 12/3/2025

Agenda #: 13.

DATE: December 3, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: Library & Cultural Arts Department

TITLE: **APPROVAL OF THE O'ARTS: OCEANSIDE POET LAUREATE PROGRAM**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff and the Arts Commission recommend that the City Council approve the O'Arts: Oceanside Poet Laureate Program.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The proposed O'Arts: Oceanside Poet Laureate Program is in alignment with the O'Arts: Master Plan for the Arts and helps fulfill Goal 1: Strategy 3, supporting economic development through the expansion of arts and cultural programming, and Goal 3: Strategy 2, increasing visibility and resources for local artists within Oceanside.

The idea to create a Poet Laureate Program was originally brought to the Arts Commission through public comment at the April 7, 2025 regular Arts Commission meeting. Subsequently, the Arts Commission discussed an Oceanside Poet Laureate Program at the June 2, 2025 regular meeting, and requested that staff pursue establishment of the Program. The Commission subsequently approved the creation of the O'Arts: Oceanside Poet Laureate Program at the October 6, 2025 regular Arts Commission meeting.

An artist, residing in Tri-City North County San Diego (Oceanside, Carlsbad, Vista), will be selected through a competitive process to become the City's inaugural Poet Laureate, serving as an ambassador and advocate for poetry, spoken word, and the literary arts. The Poet Laureate is expected to produce engaging and conceptually strong original works inspired by, and in response to, Oceanside as a richly diverse community. The Poet Laureate will elevate appreciation of the art form through public readings and civic events. They will also create art to celebrate the city and make poetry more accessible to residents in their everyday lives.

The Poet Laureate will serve a two-year term and will receive \$10,000 (\$5,000 per year). The Poet Laureate will work with City staff and project partners to:

- Give a minimum of two (2) public readings per year that are free and open to all, these may include visits to schools, events for young people, public presentations, poetry open mic events, etc.
- Offer a minimum of two (2) instructional workshops per year

- Create at least one original piece of literary art per year inspired by or related to a theme or topic integral to the City of Oceanside

Additionally, the Poet Laureate will:

- Schedule and serve as the point of contact and promoter for events, workshops and performances
- Collaborate with other city and state Poet Laureates when possible
- Serve on the selection panel for the next Poet Laureate

A Request for Qualifications will be posted in spring 2026, and a panel appointed by the City will review and evaluate the applications using a pre-determined selection criteria.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Arts Commission account 912138000501 will have an available balance of \$93,944 in consideration of \$75,000 that has been committed to the 2025-26 Arts & Culture Grant Program. The Poet Laureate Program will cost \$10,000 over two years, \$5,000 in FY 2026-27 and \$5,000 in FY 2027-28; therefore, sufficient funds are available.

Description	Account	Amount (\$)
Temp Agencies/Individuals	912138000501.5310	10,000

COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT

In its advisory capacity to the City Council, making recommendations on the development and promotion of cultural arts related activities in the community, the Arts Commission recommends establishment of the O'Arts: Oceanside Poet Laureate Program. As previously noted, the Arts Commission approved the creation of the O'Arts: Oceanside Poet Laureate Program at its October 6, 2025 meeting.

CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS

Does not apply.

Prepared by: Kris Moralez, Senior Librarian
Reviewed by: CJ Di Mento, Library Director
Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Staff Report
2. Oceanside Poet Laureate Program Request for Qualifications Draft