

COUNTY OF NEVADA
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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March 16, 2017

Honorable Board of Supervisors
Eric Rood Administrative Center
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

DATE OF MEETING: March 28, 2017

SUBJECT: Resolution accepting the establishment of a Nevada County Poet Laureate Program and the nomination and designation of the poet laureate by Nevada County Arts Council, Molly Fisk, for the term of April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution.

FUNDING: None

BACKGROUND: The California Arts Council (CAC) was established in 1976 by Governor Edmund Brown for the purposes of advancing California through the arts and creativity. The CAC offers various grant programs, initiatives and resources to advance their mission which includes the State-Local Partnership (SLP) program which fosters cultural development through partnership between CAC and a local art agency that is designated by a county Board of Supervisors to serve the county's citizens. This enables the designated agency the ability to leverage grant opportunities for general operating support and technical assistance. The County has designated or contracted with local organizations to partner in the SLP as far back as 1983 and currently has designated the Arts Collaborative of Nevada County (DBA Nevada County Arts Council) as Nevada County's State-Local Partner per Resolution 16-335.

Moreover, Poet Laureate Programs exist across the Country, at the state level and in various California counties. The first state poet laureate was Ina Coolbrith, who was named Poet Laureate of California by governor's proclamation in April, 1915. Subsequent governors named various individuals poet laureates who would hold the title for life. In 2001, the Legislature established a formal California Poet Laureate position through the passage of AB 113. Under this law the CAC provides the Governor with recommendations for the position who hold a two-year term. Their role is to advocate for the art of poetry across the state, to inspire an emerging generation of literary artists, and to educate all Californians about the

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influential poets and authors. On April 1, 2017, our current State Poet Laureate, Dana Gioia, will be coming to Nevada County as a part of his 58-County Tour Across California and will be Nevada County Art's Council's keynote speaker for the 1st Annual Sierra Poetry Festival.

Moreover, County Poet Laureate Programs exist in an estimated 14 counties across the state, which include the counties of Kern, Lake, Lassen, Los Angeles, Marin, Napa, Orange, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, and Ventura. The central mission of the poet laureate is to promote literacy and an appreciation of poetry. As such, the Nevada County Arts Council, is requesting that the Board of Supervisors adopt by Resolution the establishment of a Nevada County Poet Laureate Program and accept the nomination and designation by Nevada County Arts Council of Molly Fisk as the inaugural Nevada County Poet Laureate for the term of one year from April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018.

The Nevada County Poet Laureate position duties include:

- a) In collaboration with Nevada County Arts Council, publishing poetry during their term
- b) Creating and reading poetry for community events and in coordination with the Nevada County Community Library when applicable
- c) Posting poetry to the Nevada County's designated Partner to the California Arts Council website
- d) Promoting the love of poetry in people of all ages
- e) Assisting in the orientation and training of the next Nevada County Poet Laureate
- f) Assisting in developing the role of the County's Poet Laureate during the program's first year, and – to this end – consultation on the creation of a Poet Laureate Operating Manual/Handbook, for use by future generations
- g) Representing the County in gatherings of other Poet Laureates for the purpose of promoting and advancing poetry, literacy, arts and culture

The appointment of a Poet Laureate shall initially be for a one-year term. Prior to the end of any existing term, Nevada County Arts Council will nominate and designate a poet laureate for the next upcoming term. Specifically, the Nevada County Literary Arts Committee will solicit nominations and organize a selection panel for appointment to the post. Interested individuals will be required to submit i) a completed application, ii) four original poems, iii) a resume including a list of published poetry and iv) a statement of intent should they be selected. County staff will participate in the selection process with the Nevada County Arts Council in a limited capacity to provide feedback and County perspective where needed. Once a nomination and designation has been made, the Nevada County Arts Council will submit the name of that individual to the County for acceptance by the Board of Supervisors. The Nevada County Arts Council will base its selection on qualifications that include the nominee's body of written work, honors, awards, and other forms of recognition, and the nominee's ability to promote poetry, literacy, arts and culture within the County of Nevada. Nevada County shall not fund the Nevada County Poet Laureate Program or provide the Poet Laureate with any stipend or other reimbursement for travel, conferences or time. However, Nevada County Arts Council will offer its Poet Laureate a stipend of \$2,000 during the program's inaugural year in order to better launch and establish the role regionally. Acceptance of that nominee by Nevada County will enhance the community by increasing the public's appreciation and awareness of poetry and by providing the County with an additional

means of promotion through the use of poetry.

Heidi Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Hall,
Board of Supervisor, District 1