



City Council

Special Recognition - Poetry Reading from the City of Olympia Poet Laureate Sady Sparks

Agenda Date: 1/7/2020
Agenda Item Number: 2.B
File Number:20-0013

Type: recognition **Version:** 1 **Status:** Filed

Title

Special Recognition - Poetry Reading from the City of Olympia Poet Laureate Sady Sparks

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive the poetry presentation. Reading only; No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a presentation of poetry from Olympia's Poet Laureate Sady Sparks.

Staff Contact:

Stephanie Johnson, Arts Program Manager, Parks, Arts & Recreation, 360.709.2678

Presenter(s):

Stephanie Johnson, Arts Program Manager
Sady Sparks, Olympia Poet Laureate

Background and Analysis:

Part of the work of Olympia's Poet Laureate is to present a poem at the first City Council meeting of each year. In January 2019, Olympia Poet Laureate, Sady Sparks, kicked off the opening City Council meeting of the year with her poem, "Eating Out of Season." Since that first official engagement, Sparks has worked to fulfill the goals of the Poet Laureate program:

- Promote poetry as an art form
- Expand access to the literary arts
- Connect the community to poetry
- Promote poetry as a community voice that contributes to a sense of place

In 2019, she:

- Conducted four community workshops: two on the topics of “Love” and “Writing in Season,” one in association with the Olympia Poetry Network, and one with the Olympia Zine Fest.
- Designed and conducted **Instant Poetry** at the Spring Arts Walk, coordinating fifteen poets and five typewriters, to put personalized poems in the hands of 200 (estimated) community members. To return in April 2020.
- Conducted a similar **Poetry Pop-Up** at the Capital Mall during the Holiday season.
- Read poems at the opening of the downtown Pump Track and new trail opening to Priest Point Park.
- Participated in six community poetry readings including the first ever Laureate Fest, celebrating all five Washington State Poets Laureate.
- Hosted a family-oriented New Year’s Poetry Open House at Harbor House.

Sparks’ term ends in December 2020. In addition to continuing her work of championing poetry in our community for her final quarter as Poet Laureate, she will also help facilitate the transition of the successor Poet Laureate for the next two-year term.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

None known.

Options:

N/A

Financial Impact:

Funds for the Poet Laureate’s two-year appointment have already been approved.

Attachments:

None