



**DATE:** April 23, 2024

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Director of Library Services

**SUBJECT:** Adopt a Resolution Affirming the Appointment of a New Hayward Poet Laureate and Establishing Protocols for the Selection of Hayward Poet Laureates Effective April 23, 2024

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts a resolution (Attachment II) to establish Leticia Guzman as the Hayward Poet Laureate from April 23, 2024, through March 31, 2026 and to establish protocols for the selection of Hayward Poet Laureates moving forward.

### **SUMMARY**

Based on the success of the Hayward Poet Laureate Program (“Program”) since its inception in 2015, Hayward Public Library staff was directed by the Mayor to create a competitive process by which future Poet Laureate appointments would be made with the approval of the City Council. Following the application process and the review of written and video material, Leticia Guzman has been selected to be the next Poet Laureate of Hayward and shall serve in this capacity through March 31, 2026. Leticia shall receive a stipend in the amount of \$1,000 for the entire 2-year tenure.

### **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

The City Council established the Hayward Poet Laureate Program in 2015 to raise awareness of the power of poetry and other forms of literature. The title of Poet Laureate of Hayward has been held by the same person since the inception of the program. At Council’s direction, HPL staff established a competitive process to select Hayward Poet Laureates moving forward. Using the newly established protocol, an application process was open from March 12, 2024 through March 22, 2024 to find the next Poet Laureate of Hayward.

As detailed below, the protocol established requirements for the application process and for prospective candidates and identified duties to be performed by the Hayward Poet Laureate. The newly established has been successfully used to make a qualified selection for the

Hayward Poet Laureate role, and HPL staff requests that the process be replicated for future selections.

### Application Requirements

Submit between three (3) and five (5) original works of poetry demonstrating commitment to, and mastery of, the art and craft of poetry in any style or form. Submit a brief paragraph not exceeding 300 words describing why applicant wants to be Hayward's Poet Laureate and who or what inspires them to write poetry. Submit a video no longer than five (5) minutes of one poem read aloud as if to a large audience. Submittals must not include gratuitous violent or sexual content, hate speech, or slander.

### Candidate Requirements

Selected candidate must be willing to fulfill the Poet Laureate duties. Candidates must live within the city limits of incorporated Hayward at the time of applying and during their tenure as Poet Laureate if selected. Candidates must be 18 years of age or older as of April 1, 2024. Selected candidate must be willing to submit a W-9 form to the City of Hayward in order to receive stipend.

### Poet Laureate Duties

Promote creativity and appreciation of poetry and the literary arts. Write at least two (2) poems annually dedicated to Hayward or major occasions or current events affecting Hayward residents, as and when mutually agreed upon. Attend between one (1) and four (4) City of Hayward and/or literary events annually and read or otherwise perform their poetry at these events and may attend additional events at their discretion. Create and share original content (such as poems, videos of poetry readings, etc.) for the City of Hayward's social media platforms or other forms of marketing and/or outreach, as mutually agreed upon. Act as an ambassador representing the City of Hayward in the local literary arts community and representing poetry in the wider arts community. Represent the City in a professional and positive manner while in their official role as Poet Laureate.

### Selected Candidate: Leticia Guzman

Leticia Guzman was selected from a field of applicants to be the next Poet Laureate of Hayward because of the quality, range, and breadth of her poetry, her experience with inspiring future poets and working with youth, as well as the quality and confidence of her delivery in the video that was submitted.

## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

This agenda item relates to the Council's Strategic Initiative to Enhance Community Safety and Quality of Life by Implementing Community Enrichment.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The appointed Hayward Poet Laureate shall receive a \$1,000 stipend for their 2-year tenure to help defray the cost of travel and materials and to recognize the significant contribution of time and service the Poet Laureate makes to the Hayward community. This stipend is included in Mayor and Council operating budget.

*Prepared by:* Melissa Burkley, Management Analyst I

*Recommended by:* Jayanti Addleman, Director of Library Services

Approved by:



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Kelly McAdoo, City Manager