

Poet Laureate Nomination Policy & Process

Madison Arts Commission
City of Madison Department of Planning and
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*Pursuant to Resolution Recognizing the honorary position of Madison Poet Laureate.
Legislative File ID 08212, Adopted 1/8/2008*

Purpose

- To celebrate and recognize the position of the Poet Laureate, and what the Poet Laureate contributes to the vitality of the City's culture.
- To appoint a Poet Laureate who is formally honored for her/his civic contribution to Madison through public participation in Madison's literary community.
- To affirm that the Poet Laureate shall serve as a representative and advocate for diverse poetry communities that exist within our City, and thereby give voice and a public face to the importance of poetry.

Poet Laureate Selection

Subsequent to new appointments, a four-week period will be open to any organization or member of the community that wishes to nominate a poet for this position. The nominations may involve consultation with members of the literary arts community and other constituencies that the Poet Laureate may help to serve or represent. The current Poet Laureate, along with members of the Madison Arts Commission, will review all nominations at a noticed public meeting of the Madison Arts Commission. The retiring Poet Laureate will forward their recommendation for a successor, rationale for their recommendation, and supporting documents to the Mayor's office about three months prior to her/his retirement.

Based on the recommendation of the Poet Laureate, the Mayor shall appoint a new Poet Laureate for a term of four years.

If the Poet Laureate is not able to complete a full term, the Mayor's office shall accept nominations for a replacement. The replacement Poet Laureate will serve a full four-year term.

Selection Criteria

The specific criteria for the appointment of the Poet Laureate are based on her/his involvement and commitment to the Madison poetry community, literary excellence, and continued pursuit of the craft.

Those who wish to submit nominations shall submit evidence of the merits of their candidate that shall include the following types of information:

1. Evidence that the candidate has an established presence as a productive public poet in Madison and has a history of advocacy for poetry.
2. Evidence that the candidate possesses a large body of work, whether published, self-published or unpublished.
3. Selections from the candidate's works.
4. Personal and professional references for the candidate.
5. Evidence of the candidate's current residency in Madison.
6. Evidence that the candidate will be available for the four-year term in Madison.
7. Evidence of established relationships that will enable the Poet Laureate to further develop the community partnerships necessary for effective service.

Duties and Requirements

The City of Madison requests that the Poet Laureate will:

1. Give a reading at a special event at the beginning of the four-year term.
2. Attend city, library and school functions as needed.
3. Share a poem that will be published on the MAC website.
4. Ensure the sustained success of the Buslines program and all other new City of Madison initiatives related to promoting poetry.
5. Write a summation of her/his impressions and experiences during their term as Poet Laureate (including workshops, readings, judging of competitions, publication, etc.). Providing this document prior to their retirement will help to improve, adjust or adapt the parameters of the post and/or the appointment process. It will also be used by the Mayoral liaison or the Madison Arts Commission Administrator to appropriately recognize the accomplishments of the poet while serving as Poet Laureate.
6. Consent to create an “occasional poem” (an “occasional poem” denominates a poem written in honor of a special occasion) or perform a reading, upon request from the City or other Madison organizations.
7. Work to ensure that a qualified poet is appointed as her/his successor.

This position is voluntary, and the person serving as Poet Laureate shall not be considered a City employee or a City official.