



# Poet Laureate: Program Review

2021-2023

Jeff Fallis, Poet Laureate

Athens-Clarke County, GA

8.14.23

# Presentation Agenda

- Introduction to Poets Laureate
- Purpose
- Program timeline
- Selection Criteria
- Eligibility
- Budget
- Sample Duties
- Scope of Work
- 2021-2023 Program Review

# What is a Poet Laureate?

- A poet laureate is a poet appointed to, or regarded unofficially as holding, an honorary representative position in a particular country, region, or group.
- Dates back to 17<sup>th</sup> century England
- In the US, the poet laureate is appointed by the Library of Congress and dates back to 1937.

# Purpose of Poet Laureate Program:

ACCGov views the Poet Laureate position as a means to further enhance the profile of poets, poetry, and literary arts in our community and beyond. The Poet Laureate is expected to bring poetry to segments of our community that have less access or exposure to poetry: seniors, youth, schools and more. The Poet Laureate will be a creative person with the demonstrated ability to enact their vision. The Poet Laureate will make several guest appearances during the term, promoting poetry throughout the community.

# Program Timeline:

- Initial planning with ACAC: 2019-2020
- Call for Poet Laureate January – March, 2021
- Applicant info session: February 16, 2021
- Applicant review & selection: April 2021
- Two year term begins & public announcement: August 30, 2021

# Expectations & Goals

- The Poet Laureate will serve for a two-year term and will be provided an honorarium of \$2,000, funded in annual installments.
- A contract will be derived with expectations detailed as to the public benefit required of the position, which will be jointly determined with the final applicant and review committee.
- The expectation is that the position will foster appreciation and expand awareness of poetry in the county. The Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Arts Division will support the Laureate in planning and promotion but activities must be accomplished by the chosen candidate.

# Selection Criteria:

The Poet Laureate will be reviewed and chosen on the basis of the four criteria (percentage weights included) with an emphasis on celebrating and highlighting poetry in Athens-Clarke County:

- Excellence in craftsmanship, as demonstrated by submitted original poems and/or book(s) (25%)
- Providing a vision for the position. How will your work within the community elevate, celebrate and create awareness of poetry. Please convey your vision for the position with details of planned outreach and collaborations. (25%)

# Selection Criteria (cont.):

- Professional achievement in the field of poetry. Merit shall be proven by publication and/or performance credits either in small press or large press publications [self published work will not receive credit]; also, awards or recognition such as grants, fellowships, prizes, and/or other recognition. (25%)
- A history of actively supporting the visibility of poetry and/or the arts in Athens area neighborhoods and literary communities through readings, publications, promotion of events, public presentations and/or workshops and other types of teaching and literary community involvement. This includes the minimum one year residence or more in the Athens area with intent to remain in the Athens area for the two year term. (25%)

# Eligibility

- 2021: Established Athens-area poets 18 years and older. Must be an Athens-Clarke County Resident.
- Proposed expansion for 2023: Established Athens-area poets 18 years and older. The Athens area includes the following counties: Athens-Clarke County, Oconee, Barrow, Greene, Jackson, Madison, Hall, Banks, Franklin, Hart, Elbert, Wilkes, Morgan, Walton and Oglethorpe. Must not be currently employed by Athens-Clarke County (including part-time, contract labor and seasonal/temporary employment)

# Program Budget

- \$1000 per year for two years (\$2000 total) based on an expectation of 40 hours per year of planning & engagement
- Additional \$1500 per year for programming expenses
- Example programming expenses: printing and graphic design, poetry books, event refreshments, education materials, etc.

# Sample Duties:

- Give public readings and workshops that are free and open to the public, including visits to schools, local events, public meetings, etc.
- Champion the art of poetry and the spoken word in the community in person and on social media.
- Encourage appreciation of the literary arts and creative expression by a wide-range of county residents, including youth.
- Celebrate the community's cultural heritage.
- Attend literary and other cultural events in the county as appropriate.
- Provide updates as requested.

# Contracted Scope of Work:

- Public readings, appearances, and preparation for events – 20 hours
- Educational workshops and preparation for workshops – 10 hours
- Social media (promotion and information about PL position and events) – 5 hours
- Grant writing, contract preparation, committee work and meetings --- 5 hours

# Jeff Fallis 2021-2023

Activities & Events



August 30, 2021

Press Release announcing local poet and educator, Jeff Fallis, as the inaugural Poet Laureate



September-November 2021

Pop Up Park Events with Leisure Services

## December 4, 2021

Afternoon reading on the Lyndon House porch.  
Jeff read a few of his original poems and  
shared favorites from other poets.





April 10, 2022

Afternoon reading at the ACC Public Library on Baxter Street.

## April 2022

For the month of April (National Poetry Month), a selection of Jeff's poems were printed and displayed in the windows of downtown businesses.





April – June, 2022

Poems by Mail, where you can request a poem from Jeff via an online form. Poems were mailed both locally and across the country

July 29, 2022

Jeff Fallis was the special guest at DA Gonzalez's annual retreat





August 5, 2022

Jeff opened the Arts Division's biennial Arts Summit by reading a poem he wrote for the occasion about the historic Morton Theatre titled, "The Process of Hauntings". Video can be found on the ACAC YouTube Channel



## December 2022

Jeff recorded several videos of poems read on the locations that inspired them. These were shared on social media and uploaded to the ACAC YouTube channel.

## April 2023

For National Poetry Month, we launched Dial-a-Poem! Call 762-400-POEM to listen to a selection of original poems read by our Poet Laureate. We had calling cards and stickers made to spread the word. We also brought back Poems by Mail due to its popularity.



April 1, 2023

Poetry projections at the Flight of the Fireflies  
Lantern Parade at Dudley Park.





April 18, 2023

Jeff Fallis wrote a poem for the ACC Mayor & Commission, titled "City of Quartz", which was read at City Hall at their monthly Agenda Setting Session. Video can be found on the ACC YouTube Channel.



April 29, 2023

Jeff hosted an afternoon reading in Boulevard Woods Park, featuring local poets, Shamala Gallagher, Misha Cahnmann Taylor and Ed Pavlic.



June 14, 2023

Jeff Fallis wrote a special poem to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oconee Rivers Greenway titled "Oconee Ode" which was read by Arts Division Administrator, Stephanie Raines, at Sandy Creek Nature Center

## Next Steps

Poet Laureate  
2024-2026

- Call for new Poet Laureate: Fall 2023
- Selection & Contracting: Fall 2023
- Announce: January 2024
- Events: April 2024