

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

October 21, 2019

City Hall – City Manager’s Conference Room
1400 Highland Avenue
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rubino called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM.

B. PLEDGE TO FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Bennett, Manna, May, Ryan, Taner, Chair Rubino

Absent: None

Staff present: Martin Betz, Cultural Arts Manager, Eilen Stewart, Arts Supervisor, Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary (remote)

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 16, 2019

It was moved and seconded (Chair Rubino/May) to approve the minutes as submitted.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Bennett, Manna, May, Ryan, Taner, Chair Rubino

Noes: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

E. CEREMONIAL - None

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit) - None

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

19/1021.1 Discussion of 2020-21 work plan

Cultural Arts Manager Betz noted that this is the first of three meetings in which the Commission will be discussing the upcoming 2020-21 Work Plan. The goal is for the Commission to make its recommendations to the City Council at the January 6, 2020 City Council and City Commissioners Joint meeting.

Chair Rubino noted she’d like to add two projects to the Work Plan projects list: a proposed new “Night Market” and performances at the Art Center. Cultural Arts Manager Martin Betz noted he will also be adding others tonight. Chair Rubino suggested, in order to proceed in an orderly and efficient manner, and it was agreed, to follow the following protocol tonight: each project will be presented by the Commissioner who made the proposal, and then clarifying questions will be asked but opinions will be reserved until a future meeting. This will also give time for everyone to be about to think about the project in between meetings. It was clarified that the December meeting will be the last opportunity to discuss the recommendations.

Mr. Betz initiated discussion regarding the proposed Work Plan projects including status:

Category 1 (those completed by Dec. 31, 2019) include the Community Arts Grant (MB to send link), Public Art Conservation Assessment (completed, staff going through now), Murals in MB (should be done by Dec 31), Light Gate Glass Replacement (completed – a reception will be Nov 14, 4-6 pm); and the Utility Box Beautification Phase 1 (currently is being organized with the installers and artists/designers).

Category 2: (Projects in Progress) including: Sculpture Garden: City management wants to see as part of the Work Plan and the CAC is proposing continuing current operation and format, and new name (three suggested), but City Council wants in the Plan so it will have an opportunity to make changes.

In a brief side discussion, Cultural Arts Manager Betz noted he wants to fully develop the Work Plan and itemize all projects in advance of the joint meeting, and will share via emails with the Commission. Mr. Betz also clarified: that the Work Plan doesn't relate directly to the Parks Master Plan – which is a long range plan and commissioners can apply for a grant (in the grants program) but they would need to recuse from a vote then about it, and in practical terms, this would be a problem if a majority of the Commission were to participate.

Category 3: 2020-2021 Work Plan Item Presentations

- Marketing Campaign: Commissioner Ryan presented, explaining: would be for all projects that would be completed by 2020; is multi-faceted and would include: 1) a video of all public art in MB and could be put on the landing page of the City's website; 2) brochures to be available at City Hall, describing each of the public art pieces/artist so that they can be used in a self-guided tour of city art.; and 3) a talking presentation that incorporates both the video and brochures – to be used in a Commission outreach campaign in front of City service or other organizations (Rotary Club, Leadership Manhattan, etc), showcasing accomplishments and future plans of the CAC.

Input: Suggestions and comments from other Commissioners included: a recurring tour (timing tbd) could be led by a Commissioner, similar to a docent program (Manna); making City residents a first priority in terms of audiences, but also include the schools and also have an events component (e.g. at the Nov 14 Light Gate event) whereby all the arts programs are promoted, and at these events, media involvement to be expanded; and that the promotion (press releases, etc.) come entirely from the Cultural Arts Division so as to more fully “own” the cultural arts program (Taner). Manager Betz stated he likes the idea of the Cultural Arts staff doing the promotion; staff can also make a “dog and pony show” which can be taken to presentations.

In brief side discussion, the Commission talked about the annual pumpkin race, and it was clarified that participation as a Commission would be up to the Commission.

It was concluded that all the above suggestions for the marketing campaign will be incorporated and Manager Betz will look into costs etc. which will be added to the final December staff report.

Chair Rubino also suggested that social media campaign be added to this program, acknowledging

that in prior discussions some issue was raised. Commissioner Ryan suggested that there be a Cultural Arts tie in with the City's overall social media program and she also emphasized that there should be a financial aspect – a focus made on getting financial support for products such as the video and brochures. Chair Rubino asked if the CAC could have its own landing page, and Manager Betz noted that perhaps on the Cultural Art page on the City website; he will look into this. Commissioner Ryan noted that, if the video can't be on the main landing page, perhaps a “hot button” with a link to the video can be embedded. Mr. Betz stated he believes that the CAC can use the Cultural Arts Division webpage perhaps using an “umbrella name”.

Chair Rubino asked if could go backwards and discuss the MB Art Center façade/grounds improvements as she thought this project had been missed in earlier discussion. Manager Betz noted that it had been nominally covered.

- Development of art projects in collaboration with North End BID. Mr. Betz presented, noting that the BID is very interested. The project is to engage with the North End BID as a starting point, even if it only means including in a first or second phase of utility box wraps.

Input: Suggestions included: invite representative(s) of the BID to the next CAC meeting (Taner); include in possible collaboration, BID input on a city welcome sign on Highland at 45th Street (May). It was also questioned whether the collaboration should be over ideas other than the utility box and murals projects in the North End since those two projects are already on the list of those to be continuing (Ryan).

Discussion: On outreach to the BID, Mr. Betz has been talking to its reps and he will be meeting with them to discuss various ideas. He clarified that the City would be funding because financial sharing would be too complicated; and noted further that opportunities to apply public funding include involving the City public parking structure on Highland/Rosecrans and some sidewalks. This could be expanded to the Strand/El Porto Parking lot and adjoining open spaces (Taner). It was noted that there could be difficulties in using the area near the Strand and El Porto Parking Lot for public art installations since this may require permits from the Coastal Commission (Manna) and these locations are near residences (May).

On collaborating on a Highland Avenue welcome sign: Manager Betz noted that this may be already covered in the city-wide wayfinding project which is still active. He will invite the BID to the next meeting. This will start out as very broad and then get specific for example, come up with three specific projects to work together on.

On the question raised on the topics to discuss with the BID, Manager Betz stated that he suggested the utility box and murals projects because these are likely to continue, and for now this provides a way to engage with the BID and shows those who live in the north end that their local group has sanctioned the projects. This is just a starting point to discuss and could also be not included in the Work Plan.

- Develop RFP to address the issues of conservation and preservation: Manager Betz presented, noting that this is mainly “housekeeping” - almost a Phase 2 of the Assessment project. The Public Art Assessment will identify items that will need to be repaired, or may be

decommissioned. This project will provide resources for staff to identify possible contractors to do that work. Staff felt it should be a Work Plan item to give clarity to it and make sure it gets supported and done and emphasized it is expected to require significant staff time.

Input: None

- Discussion on mandated events to be held during exhibitions at the Art Center (new).

Manager Betz gave a brief background, noting that in the staff planning process it was noted that there is an administrative mandate from the Cultural Arts Manager to have performance events during the art exhibits that could be out-sourced and paid for by the Public Art Trust Fund. As a Work Plan project, this involves the CAC creating a series of events that would be hosted at the center during an exhibition.

Input: **Commissioner May** asked if this was along the lines of the figural drawing now being done or be a borrowing of an art collection. **Manager Betz** stated this would be beyond the figural drawing but could involve a visiting art collection such as the Gardena High School Art collected by graduation classes over several decades. **Commissioner Ryan** stated her preference for something experiential (e.g. the dome concept wherein one can experience art) but acknowledged it will take a long time to build a facility that will serve as a suitable performing arts venue' however this should get interest going and could involve putting up a stage, perhaps if the stage requires more space, the event could be at the Joslyn Center?

Mr. Betz iterated this involves the CAC putting together a group of events under an umbrella and should be specific enough so that staff can figure out funding and staffing.

Chair Rubino agreed this this is the best way to get performing arts interest and support going; then later a larger venue can be planned, as per the Parks Master Plan. **Commissioner Taner** suggested considering these events in a broader way for more flexibility. Instead of 2 events per exhibit, do say 6 per year and include in the marketing campaign (maybe call the art series "6 Events" and CAC could provide assistance to supplement staff. **Chair Rubino** sees this as a way to reboot an effort similar to that tried with Library – it failed due to finding that the Library had low night time staff resources.

Manager Betz feels there could be possible pushback in that there already is a grants program involving the CAC.

Mr. Betz also responded to a request, that there is \$1.3 million in the public art fund and he will send out the spread sheet immediately as it has just been updated. **Commissioner Ryan** asked if a report could be given regularly to the CAC and Mr. Betz agreed to do this. Commissioner Ryan stated she would like the report to not only state a balance, but also what is happening to the money while it is sitting. Manager Betz noted that he expects some of the fund will be spent on the Catalina Classic.

- Arts in the Park Discussion:

Chair Rubino presented and noted that the concept of "Night Markets" has become popular. This item could be similar and have not only an art show but food trucks, and the Chamber could be

involved.

Input: Various venues and areas were suggested, including Downtown (**May**) and this could involve the Metlox area, and then expanding to other city areas could involve the entire City (**Taner**). Suggestions outside of Downtown included Polliwog Park, Marine Avenue Park. Going back to Downtown, Bruce's Beach park on Highland is also a possibility. Pushback from residents including at Bruce's Beach and around Polliwog Park was mentioned. **Mr. Betz** stated he thought Marine Avenue Park may be an excellent location. He thinks all options should be on the table, but notice and input from residents should occur for all.

WRAP UP:

Chair Rubino stated her goal is after tonight, to provide a summary of all ideas mentioned tonight to other Commissioners and she will send a larger description of the Night Market event to Manager Betz and she and he will meet to organize and discuss all pertinent item, which will include the Art Center Improvements. All ideas will be addressed in a staff report provided at the November CAC meeting.

H. STAFF ITEMS

Cultural Arts Division updates – no report

City Council updates

Manager Betz explained Mark Leyman and or Jessica Vincent will be coming to the CAC in November and will be presenting on the Parks Master Plan. It was discussed that there will be an opportunity for the Commission to give input.

Commissioner Manna noted that he may not be available for the November 18 CAC meeting as he has a commitment for a Leadership Manhattan event and Director Leyman may have the same conflict; Mr. Betz explained that if this occurs, he expects that Recreation Services Manager Jessica Vincent will attend.

Manager Betz reported that the artist proposal submittal deadline for the City Hall Lobby project is November 24; the proposals are tentatively scheduled for December 9th for the APPC (Art is Public Places Committee), with City councilmembers Napolitano and Hadley invited to join in deliberations; the APPC recommendation will tentatively be presented to the CAC at its Dec 16 meeting.

Manager Betz also reported that there has been a request to move the Dragon Tales sculpture from the current location (Veteran's Parkway around Valley/Second Street) to another location (either Veteran's Parkway at intersection of Marine/Valley, or at the MBAC); this will be before the city council on November 5th.

I. COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Bennett informed that the Mira Costa "Art Night" will be October 25th, at the High School by the art room/quad from 5-7 p.m. Some items will be available to be purchased, including buttons, and t-shirts made by printshop students.

Commissioner May informed that she has proposed an Altered Books project to the high school which was well received, will be done in the Spring, and shown in the public library. She also noted that the Downtown Brewery Art Walk is happening very soon.

Chair Rubino: the Getty in Brentwood is having a performance by internationally known performance artist Martin Creed. And, Getty Malibu will have Medusa the Musical (Deaf West Theater Group) in its smaller capacity indoor theater November 16th.

J. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:13 P.M, Chair Rubino moved to adjourn, with no objection it was so ordered - to the regular meeting of November 18, 2019 at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue.