

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION**

November 10, 2015

Manhattan Beach City Council Chambers
1400 Highland Avenue
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Ramezani, May, Gill, Samuels and Dunn

Absent: none

Others present: Cultural Arts Manager, Martin Betz and Recording Secretary, Linda Robb

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Gill moved to approve the October 13, 2015 minutes as written.

Commissioner Dunn seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ayes: Commissioners Ramezani, May, Gill, Samuels and Dunn

Nays: none

Abstain: none

Absent: none

E. CEREMONIAL

None

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chairperson Ramezani opened the floor to audience participation.

Seeing none, the floor was closed.

G. STAFF ITEMS:

Cultural Arts Manager, Martin Betz presented the following:

Sculpture Garden reception date will be January 7th, 2016 from 4:00-7:00. There will be a tour of the pieces from 4:00-5:00 with the reception following. The Kellman piece will be installed in mid-December. The Patricia Vader piece needed to be moved to the Art Center as there were some concerns that the art piece was too close to the Veterans memorial for the Veterans Day event. Commissioner Ramezani inquired why it would be moved and if it went through City Council. Parks and Recreation Director, Mark Leyman stated that after the complaints were received, it was discussed with the City Manager's office and moved as a result. Commissioner Ramezani stated that the location went through a vetting process so she is surprised that the decision was made so quickly to move the piece. Commissioner Ramezani asked if the Veterans Parkway location will still be a location for future sculpture gardens and if whether or not the Commission would need to more carefully consider

whether new pieces convey the appropriate feeling with regards to the Veterans memorial. Mr. Betz stated that might be something to consider. Commissioner Dunn stated that perhaps the permanent location should be moved further away from the Veterans memorial. Commissioner Dunn asked about the cost to move the piece and whether or not it would hit the budget. Director Leyman stated that the labor was done by public works and would not affect the budget. Commissioner May stated that people will always complain about art so it must have been somebody important who complained. Commissioner Gill stated that the Commission should consider the fact that it has been moved and look at whether a new spot should be chosen. Commissioner Samuels stated that it has been moved to the Art Center so there should now be two locations at the Art Center.

Commissioner Ramezani asked if the Commission could receive some information on why the piece was moved and what procedures are followed to make the decision to move a piece. Director Leyman stated that the feedback received from community members was that the piece was not appropriate for the Veterans Day event. Commissioner Gill asked if the piece could be brought back after the event. Commissioner May stated that the Valley and 15th location is a very high-profile location and it would be great to have that location. Commissioner Dunn stated that the decision seems a little kneejerk and that the left hand doesn't really know what the right hand is doing. Director Leyman stated that he would share the Commission's comments with the City Manager. Commissioner May asked if it might be possible to have a permanent piece, possibly related to Veterans, at the location adjacent to the Veterans memorial.

Commissioner Ramezani inquired about the timing of the reception and asked that the Commission discuss the Sculpture Garden program. Mr. Betz agreed and stated that the Commission should take some real time to discuss the structure and timeline. Commissioner Dunn asked Mr. Betz to map out current locations and map out significant items around the locations. Commissioner May also requested to discuss the pots.

Commissioner Gill asked if there will be an event on November 14th for the Light Gate when the sun sets through the Light Gate. Mr. Betz replied that there is no event planned but there are two panels arriving soon to be replaced.

Commissioner Gill asked if the Light Gate had been cleaned. Mr. Betz reported that he had met with Keith Darling, Public Work Superintendent and they will be scheduling a one-off cleaning of the Light Gate and then work together to set a maintenance schedule for the Light Gate and Strand benches. That will be followed by an overall view of all public sculpture. Commissioner Ramezani asked if the maintenance schedule is considered when choosing an art piece. Mr. Betz replied that it has not been a consideration up to this point but needs to be considered for future pieces. Commissioner May asked if the maintenance would come out of the Public Art Trust Fund budget. Mr. Betz stated that it would likely come from that budget and ideally would be set up as an annual recurring cost. Commissioner Ramezani asked if the maintenance requirements have been considered in past acquisitions. Mr. Betz and Commissioner Dunn both stated that up to this point, the cost of maintenance had not been a consideration when choosing a piece. Commissioner Samuels stated that it was talked about with Light Gate but that the maintenance on that is minimal.

Commissioner Dunn stated that she to like to discuss a plaque for the Light Gate and better identification and explanations for Sculpture Garden. Mr. Betz stated that plaques with the QR codes will be available for the Sculpture Garden. Director Leyman stated that this would be a perfect item for a work plan. The Commission could discuss and decide to standardize the signs and how they might look. Director Leyman suggested looking through the storybook pages on the website to see the public art. Commissioner Dunn requested that a plaque for Light Gate be put on the agenda for the next meeting and for Mr. Betz to request a short statement regarding the piece from the artist. Director Leyman stated that if it is a City Council directive, it can be added to the agenda but if it is not, it may be added to the staff report to request the City Council to allow it on the agenda.

Director Leyman reported that City Council has an initiative to develop and adopt a Strategic Plan for the City. As part of this process, the Commission workplans will fall in line with the Council's strategic plan. Following the strategic plan, the commissions will put together a workplan. The workplan will streamline the process of communication. Ideally, the commission will develop a long range plan that may be reviewed and edited annually. The plan would be developed by the Commission and presented to the City Council. The City Council would then approve those items that they would like the Commission to work on for the next year. This will create a roadmap for what the Commission would like to work on and accomplish over the year with the City Council's support. Director Leyman would like for the Commission to think about ideas to develop. Commissioner May asked how the workplan would affect the items that are currently being discussed. Director Leyman stated that those items would continue to move forward until the workplan is developed and completed. Director Leyman stated that any Commission ideas that need attention before the workplan is developed could be submitted to City Council for consideration. Commissioner Ramezani stated that she hopes that this work plan will allow the Commission to actually execute some of their ideas instead of just talking about their vision. Director Leyman stated that there would be a timeline associated to each project on the workplan. Mr. Betz recommended looking at the workplans for the arts commission of other cities (Beverly Hills, Santa Fe and West Hollywood, for example). Commissioner May suggested visiting some of the other local cities for direction. Director Leyman stated that a big part of the workplan should also be professional development. Commissioner Ramezani stated that this could help with tracking of projects. Commissioner Dunn stated that there is a disconnect between the decisions that are made and the goals of the Arts Commission; this is a good opportunity to try to close the gap. Commissioner Gill stated that in the end the Commission is here to help and is not an authoritative body but there should be some system in place that when there is art involved in a project, that someone from cultural arts needs to be involved. Commissioner Ramezani stated that such a process in place, will give more weight to the Cultural Arts Manager position in that he would be checking off that he has reviewed the project. Director Leyman stated that he would pass along the feedback of the Commission.

Mr. Betz reviewed the budget which showed an increase of \$81,000.

Commissioner Ramezani opened the floor to public comment.

Ann Pitts, resident, stated that the Light Gate really does need a plaque. She asked that the Commission do whatever it can to remedy this oversight.

The floor was closed to public comment.

H. COMMISSION ITEMS:

Commissioner May announced that Don Spencer who lives in town, is a phenomenal artist. She would like to consider placing a sculpture of a volleyball player in the corner of the South parking lot of the pier. Commissioner May stated she would like to showcase more local talent. Director Leyman stated that it would need to be a Council directive. He added that the consideration of new art and procedure to do so would be a good thing to put on the workplan. Mr. Betz stated that part of the workplan should be to examine how to engage the community to bring those types of ideas to the Commission for consideration. Commissioner Dunn stated that maybe the Commission could make a plan to expand the City art collection and put a process in place to do so. Commissioner Gill asked if the Commission could just decide what to procure instead of putting out an open call to artists. Director Leyman stated that would be based on City Council direction.

Commissioner Dunn announced that the Skirball Cultural Center launched a controversial Ansel Adams collection of photographs from World War II; a private collection of photos taken at Japanese internment centers. The show will continue through February 21st.

Commissioner Ramezani suggested holding an annual exhibit for local artists at the Art Center. Mr. Betz stated that three out of the six annual exhibits at the Art Center showcase local artists.

Commissioner Gill announced that Janet Jones of the Parks and Recreation Commission has put forward a proposal to bring cultural events to the library. Director Leyman stated that when the proposal actually takes shape, it may be appropriate for the Cultural Arts Commission to weigh in and that this may be a good opportunity for the different commissions to collaborate and communicate.

Commissioner May asked if the Commission would have any input into what art shows are held. Director Leyman stated we will find out as we move forward; there is currently no specific direction.

Commissioner Ramezani stated that if the liasons for the other commissions could communicate with each other when issues that affect multiple commissions arise, it would be helpful.

I. GENERAL BUSINESS:

none

J. ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Gill moved to adjourn. Commissioner Dunn seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ayes: Commissioners Ramezani, May, Gill, Samuels and Dunn

Nays: none
Abstain: none
Absent: none

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM.