

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

June 14, 2016

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

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson May called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Dunn (till 7:45), Gill, Manna, Prigozhin, Chairperson May

Absent: None

Staff Present: Martin Betz, Cultural Arts Manager, Eilen Stewart, Ceramics and Program Supervisor and Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary.

Chair May welcomed the two new commissioners Leon Prigozhin and Fred Manna and invited them to introduce themselves, after which Commissioner Dunn, Gill and Chair May gave brief introductions.

Commissioner Leon Prigozhin moved to the States from Russia as a teenager; his background is in painting and professionally he is an architect; he graduated from Southern California Institute of Architecture (SciArc).

Commissioner Fred Manna recently completed 2 terms on the Parks and Recreation Commission, is an avid arts participant and is very eager to join the Commission and help advance the goals of the Commission and grow the City's arts programs.

Commissioner Nancy Dunn stated this is her fourth year serving on the Commission, prior she graduated from Leadership Manhattan Beach. Her background is in entertainment marketing, is a big picture thinker and she very much would like to grow the arts in Manhattan Beach.

Commissioner James Gill noted that he occupies the "business chair" on the Commission, is a financial advisor, and a third generation Manhattan Beach citizen. He enjoys photography and design. His pet project is exposing a mural in the City Hall and generally wants to contribute as much as possible to the City's art programs.

Chairperson May noted she is a third generation Manhattan Beach citizen, is an artist and has background in teaching. She is working to establish an artist group in Manhattan Beach and has found the City to be very supportive.

Chair May noted that all suggestions for agenda items should be submitted to Mr. Betz, the Cultural Arts Administrator and she plans to meet with Mr. Betz on Wednesdays in the week that the meeting agenda is being finalized.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - May 10, 2016

Cultural Arts Manager Martin Betz noted that the April 26 meeting minutes will be put on the next meeting's agenda.

The minutes of May 10, 2016 were approved unanimously (Dunn, Gill, May) with Commissioners Manna and Prigozhin abstaining subject to three changes:

Page 3, top paragraph, 3rd line and 6th line, insert "Livability" after "Blue Zones"

Page 5, top paragraph, 1st line: correct "Gil" to read "Gill"

Page 5, under Adjournment: delete "1:40 pm"

D. CEREMONIAL - None

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit)

Gary McAuley, beach city resident since 1975 is an amateur artist and has been involved in community affairs in the City for over 20 years. He would like to know if there is going to be a mural project at the proposed skate park in Marine Avenue Park and believes strongly that the public should be involved in the planning of such a project.

A discussion followed about the Marine Avenue Park Skate Spot project. Cultural Arts Manager Betz Martin responded that the idea of a mural has come up but is conceptual only. If such a project were to be approved by the City Council, it would come before the Cultural Arts Commission.

Commissioner Manna noted that the final design has been approved, and the facility location is behind centerfield of the large baseball field, on the west side of the AdventurePlex. Cultural Arts Manager Betz noted that the design is very artistic and a memorial bench will be included, but because the grant funding was contingent on the construction being completed in 2016, it was determined that any additional embellishments would be considered after construction is completed.

F. STAFF ITEMS

Update on Sculpture Garden - Mr. Betz advised that, although the art selection occurred a year ago, the artist, Mr. Asher has maintained that it is his goal is to complete his sculpture before his contract expires.

Presentation on Cultural Arts Division programs and projects – After a brief introduction by Mr. Betz, Ceramics Supervisor Eilen Stewart gave a comprehensive slide show informing the Commission of the Division's work programs, covering: Manhattan Beach Art Center Exhibition Schedules through 2019; the Live Oak Ceramics Studio, the Youth Education Program, Adult Education Programs, Summer Concert series, Summer Metlox Movies, Joslyn Center Performance Series, StArt Projects (with Mira Costa High School); Art As Experience (Family Workshop Days); Special Projects and Programs, and the Cultural Arts Commission purpose.

Mr. Betz described all the city programs and highlighted several. The MBAC Exhibit program is key in that it is a marketing driver for other programs. Its emphasis is on local artists who are from the metro Los Angeles area. The high school studio program has been very successful and all of the Commissioners are welcome to visit the program and interact with the participating students. Regarding the Live Oak Ceramics Studio program: staff plans to present an exhibition of professional level ceramics every two years. The Summer Concert series from July to September is very popular, drawing between 5,000 to 12,000 attendees. There will be three outdoor summer movies held on specific Thursday nights at the library or Metlox sites. Commissioner Manna suggested that movies with an art focus be shown. Mr. Betz responded to Commissioner Prigozhin that the City uses social media in part to advertise the events; Commissioner Manna suggested that announcements at City Council meetings could be another avenue to get the word out, and Commissioner Gill stated that he publicizes Manhattan Beach art happenings on his “Art in Manhattan Beach” Facebook page.

A discussion followed the presentation. Commissioner Gill explained that the Public Trust Fund is generated by an assessment of 1% on new commercial development, and the money collected must be spent within a 5-year period. Commissioner Gill also highly recommended that each Commissioner review the Master Plan for the arts in the City, which is available from staff. Chairperson May raised the question as to whether there was interest in looking into an alternative way of generating public art funding (other than the current 1% formula) and Mr. Betz explained the protocol established by the City Council is that, before the Commission can discuss such a topic first permission must be granted by the City Council, and if such permission is granted, then the topic would be placed on an agenda for open discussion at a meeting. Commissioner Manna inquired whether the City keeps a roster of artists, to which Mr. Betz responded that staff is generally very aware of local artists, and the staff strategy is to use the Art Center as a focus for attracting local artists.

Introduction of Cultural Arts Division Staff, was covered in slide presentation, where it was noted that the Cultural Arts Division is supported by 3 full-time staff: Cultural Arts Manager Martin Betz, Ceramics Supervisor/Program Supervisor Eilen Stewart, and Art Center Supervisor Deborah Hom and 9 part-time staff members who assist with exhibits, arts education, StArt and other special programs, marketing and PR, the art eNewsletter, the Ceramics Studio and other activities.

Update on future work plan

Mr. Betz noted that Staff is hoping there will be a shift in that a true work plan will be developed. However, if this doesn't happen in the next month, then this will be a topic of discussion at the next meeting and he will provide the Commission with a list of four specific projects to discuss.

G. COMMISSION ITEMS

The following items were raised by the Commission:

Commissioner Dunn recommended two current LACMA/ Center exhibits: one about the history of men's fashion and another on Robert Maplethorpe.

Commissioner Manna highly recommended the Annenberg Space for Photography in Century City where the exhibits have a focus on video and photography. He noted he was familiar with

two Maplethorpe exhibits and while they are very good, he noted that the subject matter is adult oriented.

Commissioner Prigozhin thanked Mr. Betz for all the hard work for so many projects and would like to plug in and participate.

Mr. Betz invited all the Commissioners to meet with him to discuss the City art programs, but can meet with no more than 2 commissioners at a time. He also reminded that the closing of the Ed Moses exhibit is June 30th, 6-8 pm and invited all to attend, as the artists (except Ed Moses) will likely be present.

Chairperson May reported that she visited the StArt program and it was very interesting to see the students' projects in progress. The Chair also noted that she and Staff member Eilen Stewart met with a commissioner from the City of Beverly Hills Art Commission to discuss that city's art program. Topics discussed included their donation program and how they purchase art, including a list of criteria that guides in purchasing art, which is done carefully as the art is considered part of a financial investment portfolio. Chair May noted that she is not sure Manhattan Beach would want to have such rigid criteria, but found it interesting. Chair May went on to explain that many artworks are on loan and they look to have a stipend come with the donation, to pay for installation, maintenance and that the City also has an annual fair which involves their art program. Commissioner Prigozhin suggested that Manhattan Beach could consider an art festival along the Strand as the city is associated with the beach. Ms. Stewart noted that there will be an Art Village at the City's 75th Anniversary event in July and there will be booths for artists.

Mr. Betz noted that he and the Chair met with Tony Choueke, who owns some downtown businesses as well as an art museum in Japan. Mr. Choueke has indicated he wants to integrate art into the downtown.

Chair May reported that she had recently talked to Dwight Crum's son who has been involved with the surf festivals which in years past featured a prominent sand castle contest, and she asked if there was any interest by the Cultural Arts Commission in reviving the sand castle contest. Mr. Betz stated he believes that the City's Parks and Recreation division is involved with something similar already but he will look into this.

Chair May also reported on the new artists group, and she noted that she has found a great new commercial space for an exhibit but needs to do a walk-through. She is also recruiting an executive board for her artists group and inquired as to whether an active cultural arts commissioner could concurrently participate as a board member of the group, and Mr. Betz stated he would look into this and report back. She invited anyone interested to help with this endeavor.

H. GENERAL BUSINESS

15/1208.1 Sculpture Garden

Mr. Betz noted his purpose is to have a vote from the Commission giving him the authority to extend the Sculpture Garden program another year which would allow the City staff to renegotiate the contracts with the artists and reinvigorate the program.

It was moved and seconded (Gill/Manna) that the program be extended by one year, and the motion passed 4-1 with a hand vote (Commissioner Dunn absent, having left at 7:45 pm).

I. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded (Gill/Manna) to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM to 6:00 PM on July 12, 2016 in the Council Chambers. The motion passed with the following hand vote:

Ayes:	Gill, Manna, Prigozhin, Chairperson May
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Dunn