CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

December 21, 2020

Meeting by teleconference (Zoom) – in accordance with procedures on agenda 1400 Highland Avenue

Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 5:09 PM.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan

Absent: Davis, Ibaraki

Staff present: Eilen Stewart, Interim Cultural Arts Manager (ICAM), Linda Robb, Cultural Arts Division

staff (Host Participant); and Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary (untill 5:45 p.m.)

C. <u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u> - November 16, 2020

Chair Ryan moved that the minutes be approved as submitted; seeing no objection, it was so ordered.

D. <u>CEREMONIAL</u> – None

E. <u>AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION</u> (3-Minute Limit) – Ann Pitts expressed her gratitude and thrill regarding the upcoming A.C. Conner/Eva Joseph Goldshied exhibition. The late Eva Goldsheid was a beloved art teacher and was an important part of the history of the "Bay Area Figurative Movement." She feels this recognition and show will greatly affect many. The Commissioners expressed thanks to Ms. Pitts for the work she has done to assist staff with the exhibit.

F. GENERAL BUSINESS – Discussion of Work Plan to Present to City Council

Chair Ryan announced "ground rules" for this final discussion in prioritizing work plan projects in preparation for the joint Council/CAC meeting January 4^{th.}, 2021. She noted the importance of focusing to streamline the discussion and Commission alignment with the prioritizations. She called attention to a detailed summary – "Cultural Arts Division Projects" dated December 17, 2020 that will form the basis for discussion tonight and that there are about 4 areas where some decisions need to be made tonight.

ICAM Stewart clarified that "unassigned projects" will be discussed today and went on to explain what is expected at the January 4th meeting with City Council. By presenting the work plan projects by priority category, Council will be able to discuss in terms of giving guidance on how to prioritize time and resources. The unassigned projects will be presented along with a suggested category of priority. At this meeting today Ms. Stewart emphasized that she would like to see the Commission "clean up" the work plan item list – leaving only official work plan items. **ICAM Stewart** then presented a revised list of projects by priority, with the staff report as guide (A: highest urgency; and B/C those furthest from completion or paused due to Covid or less pressing) along with rationales per the following summary:

Chair Ryan led discussion on each plan item in detail, asking for updates and recommendations for City Council and with action taken as follows:

Category A

1. PR and Marketing Campaign: (essential in providing visibility for other projects); **Update:** none

Action: Unanimous – keep as priority A

2. Arts Grants: (can go forward – incorporate murals into) **Update:** none except will make a presentation in early 2021

Action: Unanimous – keep as priority A

Category B

3. Utility Box Beautification: (able to accomplish in Covid)

Update: Chair Ryan noted that this item is complete for the original commitment of 10 boxes and actually 12 were done; staff (support from Dir. Levman) recommends folding the Utility Box (plus other infrastructure) Beautification Program into Community Arts Grants program to broaden the scope (allowing other public utility infrastructure, like parking meters, to be eligible, and to streamline/decrease staff time needed).

Discussion: Commsr. Rubino expressed strong concern about incorporating the Utility Beautification Program into the Arts Grants program, which Ad Hoc Committee she serves on. ICAM Stewart, understanding concern for impact on Ad Hoc Committee workload, explained the idea is that the grants Committee would need to outline the parameters but the City's legal department and staff would draft the program documents. The question for Council on Jan. 4th is, given that the staff has fully and beyond implemented the original 10 Utility Boxes this is now a completed program, however, if more public place items are desired to be beautified – it would be appropriate be moved into Arts Grants; clarifying, the alternative is to leave as a stand-alone Utility Box Program limited as such and with the need on part of the Commission - to restart the RFP process. ICAM Stewart clarified further that, because the Arts Grants Program, regardless, has not been fully vetted - there still is an opportunity, based on how this develops - to revert back to a stand-alone Utility Box program, but that will be determined on Jan. 4th. Concern was expressed by Commsr. Manna as to whether Commsr. Davis could continue to work on the utility boxes if moved over. Chair Ryan will reach out to Commissioner Davis about this.

Action: Unanimous – recommend that, as the plan item has been completed for initial scope, to move forward such that if additional utility box wraps are requested, that they be accomplished under the Arts Grants Program. It was moved/seconded (Ryan/Manna): vote: 4-2; ayes: Rubino, Manna, Marcy, Ryan and absent: Davis, Ibaraki), with reservations/caveat expressed by Commissioner Rubino as described

MBAC Revamp Project

Update: none

Discussion: ICAM Stewart confirmed that the 24-page "summary" of CA Division Work Plan projects,

including timelines, will be given to City Council with recommendations.

Action: Unanimous – keep as priority B.

Category C

5. Performing Arts Campaign – Virtual Performance

Update: none, in a holding pattern waiting for approvals to start on virtual performance program.

Discussion: ICAM Stewart confirmed that a summary of CA Division Work Plan projects, will be given to City Council with recommendations.

Action: Unanimous – keep as priority C

6. Sculpture Garden: (currently on hold with PWD due to Covid constraints)

Update: Staff is shifting its recommendation toward decommissioning the program.

Discussion: Chair Ryan and **ICAM Stewart** explained the rationale behind decommissioning and two basic options. Rationale: three sculptures have already been committed to be made and installed but installation has stalled due to Covid. Although the program has been stopped, the City has a financial commitment to the artists and it can be restarted once the pandemic subsides. Two options are: continuing the program with temporary artworks; if so, the Commission will need to review the

program and revamp it. Or, the City can look at sculptures for the program on an ad hoc basis. ICAM Stewart noted another variation which staff supports is to renew the sculptures as another cycle and reinstall them next year if able. Chair Ryan stated her agreement with the staff recommendation to both discontinue the program and pay out the contracts, but not attempt to install the sculptures. There was further discussion regarding what to do about the current round of sculptures – and those that already have been approved are due payment. Commssr. Manna stated he favors decommissioning and looking at sculptures on an ad hoc basis in the future, but raised the issue as to whether it would be cost effective to purchase the sculptures. Chair Ryan expressed a personal opinion that the City should pay out the contracts – whether or not the City purchases and installs them. **ICAM Stewart** noted that this has not been done before but the City would have to (and the artists may be amenable) renegotiate the contracts due to the Covid situation. This would be a Council decision with the caveat that it may be a tough decision to approve a purchase "sight unseen" whereas in the traditional sculpture garden program (as in the case of Dragon Tales) they are able to be installed and viewed prior to a decision on whether to purchase. Commssr. Rubino suggested an approach – that committed sculptures could be installed at the MB Art Center as part of the proposed exterior improvement. Chair Ryan suggested that the CAC recommend decommissioning the program as it currently stands, and also that the City pay the artists under the current contract even if work has not been displayed; following this, the City could talk to individual artists as to what could be done, and then staff/CAC would bring back a recommendation for each. Commssr. Manna agreed the lease contract should be satisfied regardless of what the final outcome but inquired if the lease could be renegotiated such that the City has an option to purchase. ICAM Stewart suggested, if the City wanted to continue with the program, all of the contracts could be extended for another cycle (e.g., two years) and the City would pay the artists for the original two years (even if the City did not install the artwork) and also pay for two more years. Commssr. Marcy noted that a fair amount of money may likely be involved; he supports decommissioning and fulfilling the agreements, but feels it's appropriate to take a step back, have conversations with the artists and also get an understanding as to what the community wants as he expects that there will be opportunity in 2021 to look at some high impact projects.

Chair Ryan moved, with a second by Commssr. Rubino that the work plan address the Sculpture Garden program by recommending to: 1) Stop the current program; 2) Satisfy the leases and artists paid for the three pieces that have been approved for the current cycle; and 3) Incorporate in the work plan a period of time for the City to reevaluate those three pieces for either purchase or for no action – with the understanding that sufficient time be allocated for staff to discuss options with the artists. ICAM Stewart suggested that the Commission solicit feedback from the Council on what it would like to see done on the three current program leases. Considerable discussion ensued; Commssr. Rubino withdrew the suggestion that the current sculptures be considered for installment at the Art Center as it may be a long time before that part of the center revamp will occur; but stated she supports getting Council feedback. ICAM Stewart noted that it's important to understand the pending proposal, from the artist's perspective – it's not just about the money but also about the fact that the artwork never got viewed and that can be really hurtful to an artist. She also pointed out that it could be disadvantageous for the artist – that it would be a two-year period to pay out the contract and then we would ask the artists to hold onto the sculpture for an indefinite amount of time if and when the City can decide it wanted it for a program that does not yet exist. On the positive side, for the City, if the program is stopped, in the future there can always be a new initiative to solicit the artists for loan of the sculptures and these discussions will be on record as to the desired artworks. Commssr. Manna noted he supports discussing the future of the sculptures with City Council and with the artists. Commssr. Marcy stated he felt that caution should be exercised as how public funds are spent and the Commission should consider whether or not they are encouraging the Council to buy more art that does or doesn't reflect the community's priorities.

Chair Ryan restated the pending 3-part motion that the CAC recommend that: 1) the current Sculpture Garden program be stopped (not decommissioned); 2) the City pay the leases for the 3 currently

approved pieces for which the City is under contract; and 3) the CAC seek City Council feedback as to how to move forward with the three current pieces. **Commssr. Manna** asked if the Chair would be amenable to replacing "stopped" in motion part (1) to "completed" because the City has completed three sculpture installs and the City is paying off the three it didn't install, and there are no future plans at this time.

Action: Upon Chair Ryan and Commssr. Rubino agreeing to the suggested change, the Chair restated the motion: that the Commission recommend that the Work Plan address and revise the Sculpture Garden program such that: 1) the current program be considered complete (not decommissioned), and not continued at this point; 2) the three leases that are the contracts for the current sculptures be paid; and 3) the program, going forward, be revised based on recommendations from the City Council on any further consideration of the three current sculptures that have not been able to be installed due to Covid.

Commssr. Rubino seconded and **Chair Ryan** called for a show of hands. The motion passed 4-0: (Ayes: Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan; Noes: None; Absent: Davis, Ibaraki)

7. City Wide Murals: (Covid constraints)

Update: Chair Ryan noted that ICAM Stewart and Director Leyman assisted greatly on this item. The Chair explained that three murals have been installed with two others (by Bo Bridges) pending. However, there are some unresolved issues on three others which do not have fully executed contracts with the City, including: a Charles Bragg mural designated for the Joslyn Center front wall, a Trek Kelly proposal a and a Josh Barns mural. The Bragg mural wall proposed by the City needs to be smoothed out which will cost \$15k compared to \$19k for the mural itself so another more suitable location is needed. The other two (Kelley and Barns) are also not under contract nor have an approved location.

Recommendation: Chair Ryan reviewed the Staff suggestion that this program be put "on the back burner" for the murals other than the Bo Bridges pieces and be moved into the Arts Grants program. Staff needs some time to adjust the grants program to include a mural component but requests that the current "City Murals" program be designated "complete" similar to the Utility Boxes, as all that has been able to be done, has been completed. Staff asks to hold off on the remaining three until the Arts Grants program can accommodate proposals for them.

ICAM Stewart explained once the revised Arts Grants program is ready, staff can go back to the three artists and ask them to tell the City where the murals might be installed and likewise address all issues that were not yet resolved. Of particular importance is the fact that the Josh Barns mural had been proposed on the wall behind the Marine Avenue Skate Park for which ownership is shared with a private party, Northrop-Grumman. This is an issue that needs to be addressed legally by both parties and will not be a unique situation as it will also affect public murals on privately owned properties. The City Attorney is tasked to come up with an ordinance that will enable a shared partnership between property owner and City and allow trust fund dollars to be used for the artwork.

Discussion: Chair Ryan opened discussion by stating she agrees with the staff recommendation noting that a prospective arts program grantee could help locate a suitable mural location. ICAM Stewart emphasized that the Commission does not need to be concerned with the details of the Arts Grants Program mural component at this time – this will be worked on by staff. Once the mural component is ready, staff can go back to say, Charles Bragg, invite his participation and he would then bring a proposal that resolves prior Council issues as well as a location that is suitable; staff would then take that proposal to City Council for approval.

Commissioner Rubino stated concern that there may be some negative repercussion if we first tell an artist we approve and then later say no, we no longer can use your mural. **ICAM Stewart** acknowledged it would not be ideal but is not as difficult a situation as some others and there were some obvious problems.

Commissioner Manna weighed in and expressed concern about loading up the Arts Grants Program with so many potential projects and that the City may be suddenly dropping a lot more in Commissioners Rubino and Marcy's subcommittee, as well as asking a lot of the artists in coming up with a proposal. The City should be cautious as it might be that many people start to come to the CAC meetings with proposals.

Chair Ryan agreed that revising the Arts Grants Program will be something that all of the CAC will need to work on together in developing parameters. The Commission will need to assist the legal team in drafting an ordinance be as broad as possible but as narrow as is needed as well so there are clear expectations for the artists.

Commissioner Marcy opined that the discussion is very insightful and he supports moving some of these initiatives into the Arts Grants Program.

Commissioner Manna stated he envisions a future Commission meeting devoted strictly to making recommendations for the Arts Grants Program projects. **Chair Ryan** agreed and that there could be several.

ICAM Stewart noted that what staff is asking the Commissioners on the sub-committee (Marcy/Rubino) to do is not to figure out how to structure a grant program, but to keep track of the programs that are being moved into grants which would be two: the murals and the Utility Infrastructure Beautification (formerly utility boxes only) project and to come up with really broad categories and thoughts of what type of arts categories the grants should be applicable to. The former grants program had two or three categories: individual artists performing, schools, and nonprofit organizations. The categories were very narrow which excluded many types of arts (e.g., murals). **ICAM Stewart** explained that the first step would be to think about the types of artwork that we want to support with grants funding, and she envisions splitting the Grants program into sub-committees: e.g. working on performing arts grants, and then another on utility boxes and another on murals.

Commssr. Rubino thanked staff for explaining the possible delineation of the Ad Hoc committee tasks. **ICAM Stewart** also explained that the entire Commission would be responsible for vetting the grant submittals and once vetted, the grants committee will be able to care of most everything but the Commission, after vetting the grants, should be able to take on special projects.

Action: Chair Ryan moved that as suggested by staff, the Commission recommend that the current Murals Program be deemed complete (to the extent that is possible) and that, in the future, the Council allow the Commission to move city wide mural program into the Arts Grants Program.

Discussion on motion: Commssr. Rubino asked if it would be possible to eliminate the moving of murals into the grants program noting that some murals are to be done in the Art Center improvement project. **ICAM Stewart** strongly recommended that a murals component be in the grants program because the community is very interested in murals and proposals are expected to come forward. The application process will be greatly simplified if there is a distinct murals component instead of handling each proposal separately. **Commssr. Rubino** asked if a category "MBAC Mural Program" could be created to have an opening for murals. **Commssr. Manna** opined that he doesn't think a separate

category as suggested is needed, because the MBAC Revamp is a broad category and includes a lot of things, including murals. **Chair Ryan** agreed with **Commissioner Manna**.

Final Action: Chair Ryan called for a second to the motion; it was seconded by Commsr. Marcy. Chair Ryan called for a show of hands: The motion passed 4-0: (Ayes: Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan; Noes: None; Absent: Davis, Ibaraki)

8. City Wide Arts Assessment: (a lot of work not done yet)

Update: **Chair Ryan** noted that she and **Commsr. Davis** were assigned to this but it has been delayed due to Covid. No action needed at this time.

Chair Ryan moved to the topic of Unassigned Projects which includes the Rainbow Crosswalk, Bruce's Beach artwork and the City Hall Lobby Art. She noted that at the APPC meeting, the Rainbow Crosswalk got added to the discussion; there was a great amount of interest in it and so she proposed that the Commission recommend adding it into the CAC Work Plan.

Chair Ryan touched briefly on the Bruce's Beach Artwork which was also discussed at the APPC meeting – she noted that it has a working committee of 17 persons and they want to eventually submit some proposals for artwork to the APPC. But the discussion included support for a Rainbow Crosswalk at Bruce's Beach possibly on both sides. At this point the Commission does not have to make any decisions, but she is recommending that it be added to the Commission's Work Plan, to be accomplished sooner than later. Commissioner Marcy suggested that the recommendation be worded such that this is felt to be a high priority.

Chair Ryan opined that there could be support for adding the rainbow sidewalk to the scramble crosswalks in the downtown area on Manhattan Beach Boulevard and if the goal is to have the Rainbow Sidewalk(s) in by June 20, 2021, this might be a good way to go. Discussion followed as to whether paint or tile could be used, the idea being that paint could be applied more quickly compared to tile but tile would last longer. ICAM Stewart suggested that at the January 4th joint Council meeting the Commission present the Rainbow Sidewalks as a high priority. Commssr. Manna suggested that to do the installation more quickly – that paint could be installed and once the crosswalks are in and if there is significant community support, then perhaps the paint can be replaced by more permanent tile. Commsr. Rubino agreed with Commsr. Manna's suggestion.

Action: Chair Ryan moved that the CAC recommend that the Rainbow Sidewalk be added as a top priority to the Work Plan with the desire to complete Phase One by June, 2021 and with consideration to replace with a permanent installation at a later date. The motion was seconded by Commssr. Marcy and Chair Ryan called for a show of hands: The motion passed 4-0: (Ayes: Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan; Noes: None; Absent: Davis, Ibaraki). As a point of clarification ICAM Stewart noted the project is a Rainbow Crosswalk not Sidewalk. Chair Ryan noted that the idea of a crosswalk is that the City would be showing that it accepts those who are coming into the city for who they are – really a beautiful concept.

9. Cultural Arts Commissioner Ambassadorship (new work plan item)

Discussion: Chair Ryan next noted that in talking to staff, it would be appropriate to add a new work plan item that calls for CAC Commissioners to attend and be recognized at cultural arts division sponsored events to promote its programs. After briefly discussing, the Chair proposed adding an action item to the work plan that calls for each Commissioner to be considered an arts ambassador and as such is expected to be present, if possible, at such art events. **Commssr. Manna** asked and it was explained that the issue as to whether this would apply to a single Commissioner, representing the entire group, or to the entire Commission, would need to be ironed out; **Commssr. Manna** also suggested that the

program be designed in such a way that a specific introduction time be established for such events; and that at that time, each then-present Commissioner would be introduced along with the exhibiting artists and other notable persons. **Commssr. Rubino** endorsed these suggestions however questioned whether this should be a policy rather than a stated Work Plan item. **Chair Ryan** stated she understood that by making it a Work Plan item, it is more of a commitment and the implementation would involve putting this in a policy manual.

ICAM Stewart explained that attendance at CAC events has always been a policy but it is her opinion that because this has not been on the work plan, it has not been taken seriously. Staff feels adding it to the work plan will cause this expectation to be taken seriously and both the Parks and Recreation Commission and Library Commission have this as a high priority work plan item. She invited the Commission to comment on this proposal and whether they want to make the commitment and include it as a statement in the Work Plan. **Commssr. Rubino** commented that she didn't think it is a question of willingness, and that there had been no discussion with her about attending events – and she came to an understanding on her own that attending events is important as she is a representative of the CAC. She supports with concurrence of the other Commissioners and also supports the suggestions of **Commssr. Manna**. **Commssr. Manna** noted that he felt event attendance was important as within a sort of job description for a Commissioner but he suggested that parameters for what is expected should be adopted. **Chair Ryan** mentioned that having an events calendar has been discussed with staff, and this may be a way to implement this item.

Action: After brief discussion, Chair Ryan moved, seconded by Commssr. Rubino, that an item be added to the Cultural Arts Division Work Plan, that states a policy is to be implemented that declares that the Cultural Arts Commission will act as ambassadors at cultural arts events and as citizens of the in this community. Chair Ryan called for a show of hands and the motion passed 4-0: (Ayes: Manna, Marcy, Rubino, Chair Ryan; Noes: None; Absent: Davis, Ibaraki)

Commssr. Marcy suggested that perhaps this should be in the Commissioner Handbook. **ICAM Stewart** encouraged the Commission to suggest any other additions or revisions they think are needed to the Handbook.

At the suggestion of staff, **Chair Ryan** asked whether there were any other Work Plan items to add or change, to which the response from the Commissioners present was negative.

G. STAFF ITEMS

1. Cultural Arts Division Updates - ICAM Stewart reported:

- a. The CAC is required to attend the **January 4 joint meeting with the City Council** at which the Cultural Arts Work Plan will be discussed. This time, the Cultural Arts Commission will be going second (after the Parks and Recreation Commission) in making its presentation which will take approximately one hour per Commission. Protocols were noted including a starting time of 6:00 p.m. and the running of the meeting. **ICAM Stewart** also reminded about the policy on absences that Commissioners are allowed three absences; after a third absence, they will be asked to resign from the Commission.
- b. There will be a **MB Art Center exhibit** opening for "Rediscovered: The Life and Art of A.C. Conner and Eva Joseph Goldsheid" on January 22 (tomorrow) the show will be up through March 21, 2021.
- c. The designs for the "Scrambled Crosswalks" in the downtown on Manhattan Beach Boulevard at Manhattan Avenue and at Highland Avenue were approved by City Council; this installation will be managed by the Public Works Department.

- d. **The North End BID** has received concept approval from City Council for a public sculpture the location is being evaluated for possible conflicts with underground utilities.
- e. **The Catalina Classic** sculpture at the beach (proposed by the South Bay Boardriders Club) has been reviewed by City Council, however several questions were raised including whether the City would partner in its funding and provide about \$350k from the art trust fund because the cost of the project has greatly increased due to a number of code requirements. City Council directed that the project be reviewed by the APPC which would make recommendations and then the project will either go to the CAC or straight back to City Council. This project had been reviewed some time ago, by the CAC on two occasions **ICAM Stewart** will check the dates.
- f. The Parks Master Plan was approved by Council; it includes a few items relating to the CAC:
 - The concept of "skatable art" to address damage to public art by skateboarders; currently a broad/not yet developed concept which may come to CAC for input but will be reviewed by Parks and Rec Commission as it concerns recreation "equipment" than art.
 - The idea of installing small temporary "pop up" art galleries in vacant downtown storefronts, which first requires the City's legal department to review required agreements; therefore, will be in the purview the City Attorney's office, not CAC.
 - A permanent stage/pavilion is planned for Polliwog Park, to replace need for costly rentals for Concerts in the Park; will be in the purview of Parks and Rec, Building and Safety, and Public Works initially (CAC later). The plan is to build a permanent stage that would not only be a stage, but would also be an art piece in and of itself so it can partially at least qualify for public art trust funds (infrastructure to be paid through General Fund).

g. Bruce's Beach Artwork

Cultural Arts Division staff has met with reps of this committee to start discussion as to what may be proposed (purpose is to create something to address historical events); A new APPC committee will be formed which will consist of two CAC Commissioners, typically the Chair and student Commissioner; Chair Ryan will participate and Commssr. Ibaraki will be invited. Other members will include Councilmembers Napolitano and Sterns, three members of the Task Force and a staff member. Initially the committee will outline ideas and options, eventually its recommendations will come to the Cultural Arts Commission. Commssr. Manna inquired if, since the term of this committee will likely exceed one year, the Committee should have two regular Commissioner reps; ICAM Stewart explained that, while continuity is important, the second CAC rep must be a student in order to get that perspective. If Commsr. Ibaraki agrees to participate she would have the option to remain on the committee past her term as a commissioner because the seat that she's occupying is not a commissioner seat, but a specific student seat.

- h. PATF Budget Update: no new information to report.
- i. City Council Updates: see staff updates.

H. COMMISSION ITEMS

- 1. Commssr. Manna with all other Commissioners, congratulated Commssr. Marcy, who reciprocated with thanks, on receiving a recent 2020 "Manhattan's Best" award in the *Positive Pandemic Pivot* category, for his service on the Manhattan Beach Hometown Fair, recognizing his adept community work during the pandemic.
- 2. Next CAC meeting: due to holidays, in discussing, will be scheduled for Monday, February 1, at 5:00 pm.via Zoom; staff will distribute this notice to absent Commissioners.

I. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:00 P.M, **Chair Ryan**, seeing no objection, adjourned the meeting to Monday February 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom and all wished each other a blessed holiday.