

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

September 18, 2023

Hybrid format: by teleconference (Zoom) and in person in accordance with procedures on agenda  
1400 Highland Avenue  
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Tokashiki called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

**C. ROLL CALL**

Present: Dohner, Erlich-Fein, Karger, Patterson, Vice Chair Tokashiki

Absent: Chair Spackman

Staff present: Cultural Arts Manager Eilen Stewart, Recording Secretary Rosemary Lackow

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 21, 2023**

It was moved and seconded (Karger/Patterson) to approve the August 21<sup>st</sup> minutes with one revision: in D. Approval of Minutes for July 17, 2023: delete Vice Chair Tokashiki’s name from the vote.

The above motion passed by voice vote: 5-0-1 (Ayes: Dohner, Karger, Erlich-Fein, Vice Chair Tokashiki, Patterson; Absent: Chair Spackman)

**E. CEREMONIAL - None**

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

**G. GENERAL BUSINESS**

1. Work Plan Item Discussion

a. Utility Box Beautification (Phase II): CAM Stewart updated that installations are expected to start sometime in the next month, after installer agreement is fully executed. A follow-up remains related to a location in the downtown area. Downtown Manhattan Beach Business and Professional Association (DMBBPA) director Jill Lamkin has requested that the City consider three additional locations of utility boxes in the program. Staff determined that one of the two locations requested is already in the project, and the second has a cabinet that is too deteriorated to use at this time – which leaves two utility boxes at a single downtown location. Staff is working with the DMBBPA as to which artist proposal (from the original Commission selections) it prefers, and it is expected that the association’s preference will be brought before the City Council for final approval in October, as a consent matter.

b. Murals (Phase II): CAM Stewart updated: the recommendation of the Cultural Arts Commission for semi-finalists will be reviewed and approved by City Council at its meeting tomorrow. Two locations are in question: one on a public restroom building (facing the strand), and a second one on the Fire/Police

Department building (not far from the 9-11 and veterans memorials). If those two are to go forward, the balance of the art trust fund will be reduced by a significant amount.

c. Sculpture Garden: CAM Stewart reported; this project will be reviewed by the City Council also at tomorrow's meeting, but council will be providing direction only, with no allocation of funds.

d. Velzy Plaque: CAM Stewart reported the plaque was unveiled and celebrated in August at the Hermosa Beach Historical Society and is expected to be installed by Public Works soon.

e. New Art Initiatives

The Commission proceeded to review the existing list of possible work plan initiatives in order to eliminate those that were felt may be impractical or not viable at this time (see summary below). The next step would be, after further research, to further refine and prioritize.

**1. Public Art Tour (formerly Art Walk/Art Exhibition)**

Discussion: City-wide tour of all of City's public artworks, utilizing City Dial-a-Ride busses (former commissioner Manna suggestion). Confusing title – staff recommends renaming as "Public Art Tour"  
Commission direction: Stay on list (with new title); discuss further

**2. Digital Art/Performance**

Discussion: Digital art, e.g. pre-recorded performance, projected on a screen either passively or as part of some event (from former Commissioners Rubino/Marcy). Commission consensus is that this is redundant to digital wall project to be implemented at City Hall.  
Commission direction: Remove from list

**3. Instruments in the Park**

Discussion: Install interactive outdoor musical instruments in a park or public space, possibly in Polliwog Park. Commission/staff concerns: noise impacts to nearby residences and compliance with ADA requirements (can be costly). Needs an appropriate location to address noise and ADA concerns; suggestions: Veteran's Parkway, Marine Avenue Park (perhaps address after decision made regarding Pay N' Play).  
Commission direction: Stay on list - brainstorm possible locations

**4. Performing Arts at MBAC**

Discussion: Live performance scheduled regularly at the Art Center. Staff recommends against this item in that this is already being done as much as feasible for exhibition openings and special events, and it is much more efficient to be handled by staff. Staff, by policy, works with students to participate in cultural art happenings (e.g. community art exhibition). Suggestions: pair art events with MBUSD – e.g. middle schoolers in drama usher at Shakespeare by the Sea, work harder to let teachers know about exhibition possibilities, have kids' band play prior to fireworks; continue to promote student work on the City Hall digital display when installed.  
Commission direction: Remove from list (redundant)

**5. Art Nights/MB Chamber**

Discussion: Conceptually, event typically occurring around an art gallery concentrated commercial area (similar to North End Highland Art Walk, now discontinued) but potentially some variations. Commissioner Karger to touch base with Downtown Business Association to gauge interest. Also,

perhaps combine with City Public Art tour?

Commission direction: Stay on list – check with downtown business association/chamber for interest

**6. Intersection Decorations**

Discussion: an extension of existing painted intersections (e.g. Rosecrans/Highland) but at additional major intersections. Issues: distracting to new drivers (difficulty locating the limit lines), and costly maintenance, disruptive to traffic.

Commission direction: Remove from list

**7. Designated Street Performance Area**

Discussion: A designated spot where a single performance could be held (open call). Challenges/concerns: anyone could perform and would the community want more selectivity and how do you regulate? Also, there are existing private programs (e.g. privately hired musicians at Metlox, Manhattan Village Shopping Center).

Commission direction: Remove from list (difficult logistics)

**8. Small Downtown Performance Space**

Discussion: Similar to above (#7) but with area for seating; need to research possible places where small curated performances can be held. Perhaps program existing venues that lend themselves to small-medium performances instead (grass lawn behind Library, small amphitheater in Civic Plaza).

Commission direction: Stay on list – research

**9. Mural at Dorsey Field (north field Live Oak Park)**

Discussion: Cover an existing wall with mural, but location of wall is unclear (hill behind tall fence covered in concrete?) If so, many cracks in surface and would not be conducive to a mural.

Commission direction: Remove from list

**10. Decommission or Repair Mosaic Mural at Pier**

Discussion: Existing mural composed of one-inch mosaic tiles as ocean waves located on wall facing beach adjacent to pier. Staff recommendation: defer to consultant RLA in City-wide assessment project.

Commission direction: Remove from list, defer to RLA assessment

**11. Polliwog Park Landscape Art**

Discussion: Create a grass maze in a park. Concern: too much going on in Polliwog.

Commission direction: Remove from list

**12. Chalk Art Festival** (New – Commissioner Tokashiki)

Discussion: Outline spaces for people to come and draw artwork; exhibition or contest?

Commission direction: Keep on list as a separate item, discuss further

**13. Surfboards on Parade** (New – Commissioner Erlich-Fein)

Discussion: Idea similar to “Cows on Parade” concept but a surfboard to fit with Manhattan Beach. Artists decorate the same object/shape (a surfboard) – details to be discussed. Maybe have a show and then offer for sale?

Commission direction: research, discuss further

**14. Art Vending Machine** (New – Commissioner Erlich-Fein)

**Discussion:** Artists create miniature artworks that can be purchased for \$1; location: library?  
Commission direction: details to be developed and discussed

15. **Young at Art program for Older Adults** (New – Commissioner Dohner)

Discussion: Offered at Joslyn Center for older adults with a multigenerational component (student accompanies instructor?). A YAA volunteer docent to teach a class; supplies to cost less than \$1;  
Staff concern: would concept be acceptable to older adults? (idea of simplifying for older adults);  
Commission direction: research further – CAM Stewart to discuss with Kari Bell (Older Adults Senior Supervisor)

16. **Art Therapy at Joslyn Center** (New – Commissioner Erlich-Fein)

Discussion: Per staff – already some classes along this line but not technically art therapy, which would require a registered art therapist.  
Commission direction: Research further

17. **LA / South Bay Coalition vs Hate Community Mural** (New – from Murals RFP)

Discussion: Artist to design as a mural with a Unity/Love message and lead volunteers in painting; can be managed by external company such as LA vs Hate; CC must approve design  
Commission direction: Research further

18. **Alley Arts Murals** (New – Commissioner Dohner)

Discussion: Install framed plywood surfaces on walls of building(s) facing an alley, designated to provide a “canvas” open for commissioned artists (at lower price point) – intent is for entry level artists  
Commission direction: research further

**H. STAFF ITEMS**

Cultural Arts Division updates – CAM Stewart reported:

- The Community Art Exhibit is continuing until October 8<sup>th</sup>. Staff is preparing for the next exhibition (Homeira Goldstein Time4Art retrospective).
- The MBAC Van Hamersveld frieze is now restored but awaiting application of signature.
- City Council updates: as stated earlier, tomorrow (9/19/23) City Council to consider direction on Sculpture Garden, and approve murals. Also, will decide whether to expand the RLA scope of work for conservation assessment of all of the City art collection; if so, that work can begin right away. This will give more clarity to the balance of the public trust art fund.
- PATF (Public Art Trust Fund): total fund balance is about \$1.8 million; of that, +- \$950k is allocated; and +- \$845k is unallocated; projected expirations: 2023 - none; 2024 - almost \$418k (will be adjusted after allocations are approved by City Council tomorrow). There is no new significant construction that would imminently increase the fund balance. In response to Vice Chair Tokashiki, CAM Stewart explained that if the City Council approves the larger scope of RLA conservation assessment work, it will take at a minimum a few months before the City receives a comprehensive report from RLA that will list all artworks, their conditions, locations, recommended maintenance and repair, what should be decommissioned, etc. before it can be understood the implications as to potential impact to the PATF. The report will be provided to the Commission.

**I. COMMISSION ITEMS**

Vice Chair Tokashiki announced that the Home Town Fair will be held October 7 – 8; of note the new “Dietz’ Stage” will have its debut at the fair, and a ceremony to recognize this will be on Sunday around noon.

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

At 5:41 p.m. it was moved and seconded (Karger/Dohner) to adjourn the meeting to October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 4:00 pm; with no objections, it was so ordered.