

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

September 16, 2024

Location: Joslyn Center Sunrise Room, 1601 North Valley Drive
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
and Hybrid (remote) format: by teleconference (Zoom)

A. CALL TO ORDER

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

B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Dohner, Padnos (seated 5:21 p.m), Karger, Colmey, Patterson, Vice Chair Karger

Absent: None

Staff present: Parks and Recreation Director Mark Leyman, Senior Recreation Supervisor (SRS) Eric Brinkman, Senior Management Analyst Linda Robb, Recording Secretary Rosemary Lackow

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 15, 2024

It was moved and seconded (Patterson/Dohner) to approve the July meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote: 5-0-1 (Padnos absent)

E. CEREMONIAL - None

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit)

Bob Perkins, member of MB Older Adults Poetry Circle, supports the development of a Poet Laureate initiative, including having a double (younger as well as adult) program; he encourages the Commission to look at the City of El Segundo's program.

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

Director Mark Leyman announced that Eric Brinkman has been promoted to the position of Senior Recreation Supervisor for Cultural Arts and will serve as liason to the Cultural Arts Commission; the Commission offered congratulations; city will recruit to fill his former position.

1. RLA Art Assessment Report Presentation – Christina Varvi

SRS Brinkman introduced Christina Varvi, RLA Conservation, Inc who provided a brief overview of the survey that is contained in the RLS June, 2024 Public Art Collection Survey report. The survey provides a professional visual assessment of each of 82 total artworks under the city's care including the environments for each, and any damaging factors that may be contributing to their deterioration, and cost estimates to repair/preserve. Ms. Varvi touched on methodology including a rating system (priorities 1, 2, 3) whereby each artwork was given a designation based on its condition and what is needed to conserve it. Ms. Varvi

also described training that RLS can provide in the future (but not part of the current scope of services) such as how best to maintain the city's artworks and prefabrication review for new artworks.

Ms. Varvi and SRS Brinkman responded to questions from the Commission.

Ms. Varvi noted that on page 4 of the report, near the bottom of the page there is a dropbox link that when dropped into a browser gives access to all the photos taken for the assessment.

SRS Brinkman informed that the City does not have a formal graffiti policy; graffiti is handled as it arises typically as a maintenance issue.

Ms. Varvi noted that the deaccessioning process itself is not part of this project – that will need to be worked out by the city, and under what terms would a piece be deaccessioned may be determined by the agreements that the City has with each artist. Director Leyman noted that in going forward, staff will work closely with the City's legal counsel.

SRS Brinkman noted that this is a multiple year project, including developing a deaccession plan. As a next step, the Commission will discuss the prioritization of the artworks in a first round, at the next (October) meeting. Tentatively City Council review and allocation of funds will be scheduled for December 3.

The Commission briefly discussed the Public Arts Fund (PAF); SRS Brinkman confirming that the current balance is \$1.6 million, of which approximately \$700,000 has not been allocated and approximately \$50,000 is set to expire at the end of 2024. He clarified that the Work Plan Sculpture Garden project which is currently paused will not be affected immediately by the assessment; that project will be deferred to next year's Work Plan.

Next steps: 1) Staff will prepare a scorecard/rubric to use at the next meeting for prioritizing the list of artworks submitted by the Commission based on aesthetic value, perceived community emotional value, including whether the piece is integral to a recurring public event, liability (e.g. is it structurally sound?), functionality and cost. 2) One week prior to the next meeting (by October 14), each Commissioner will email to SRS Brinkman a list of their top 5 artworks they feel should be in the first, highest priority group. In addition, the Commission is encouraged to list any "low hanging fruit" i.e. maintenance or repair items that have been identified in the report that could be implemented by the City to deter damage that may be occurring (vegetation trimming, irrigation system modification, etc.).

2. Work Plan Item Discussion

a. **Utility Box Beautification (Phase III).** SRS Brinkman reported that the city has hired an outside contractor, Ginna Muzingo, to manage this project. Ginna will attend the October Commission meeting and discuss the project RFP, expected to be re-issued at the end of October. It was noted that a few existing wrapped cabinets are not in good shape (per the RLS survey). It was determined that such cabinets should not be included in Phase 3, but should wait until City adopts a deaccessioning policy.

b. **Murals Update.** SRS Brinkman updated: two murals have not yet been completed including Charles Lynn Bragg's *Pelicans In Flight* on the pier comfort station, and the Eric Snyder 3-D shark, going onto the south wall near the 13th Street entrance to the civic center parking structure. The Bragg mural is anticipated to be completed by December.

The shark mural install has been delayed as it was found that a portion of the wall that the mural will be painted on is owned by LA County. A partnership agreement has been worked out with the County. The design of the mural has been revised, larger in size and more visually effective, with the 3-D effect maintained. However, the installation will cost more; the artist has requested an additional \$18,000; allocation from the art fund of this amount will be requested from city council (as a consent item) in November.

c. **Sculpture Garden.** SRS Brinkman updated: project remains paused but will be continued as a work plan item in 2025; a more comprehensive plan will be developed for next year. One of the artworks - a “lace fence” – has been proposed by the Parks and Recreation Commission to be incorporated into the Sand Dune Park renovation; staff is currently evaluating the viability of this proposal. The Sand Dune Park renovation plan, including artistic fencing will be reviewed by the City Council on September 17.

d. New Art Initiatives

- City Art Tour: (Tokashiki, Karger, Dohner)

Chair Tokashiki reported: the goal is to develop a paper pamphlet with a map that shows locations of city artworks, to enable a self tour. The committee is gathering info for a spreadsheet including: updated list of artworks, location, description and artist info.

In discussing, it was affirmed that the Strand benches should be shown on the map, but because it may be difficult to fit all of the many individual utility boxes, it was suggested that locations of the boxes might be shown more generally (tbd).

Director Leyman informed that the City Story Map showing Art in Public Places on the city website has been updated by the city and is a good resource for the committee. See:

<https://www.manhattanbeach.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/cultural-arts/art-in-public-places>
(click on link “Public Art Story Map”)

- Poet Laureate: (Patterson, Colmey, Padnos)

Commissioner Patterson reported she has started on a draft plan to establish a Poet Laureate program. She and Commissioner Colmey have met with someone involved with the El Segundo Poet Laureate program and received helpful input; some key things to explore include: the term (2 years for El Segundo), programming (suggested to be clearly established), and amount of compensation/honorarium (based on term, and duties). Commissioner Colmey suggested, to start, that the laureate produce one original work that would be presented perhaps up to 4 times/year at City events. SRS Brinkman clarified that as it will take some time to plan a new program, for now the description of the project will remain as “development of a new initiative” for Work Plan planning purposes.

The committee’s goal is to develop a recommendation for City Council in January, 2025 that will be presented for adoption onto the City Council work plan in March, 2025.

- Memorial for the Fallen (Tokashiki, Colmey, Patterson)

Director Leyman provided a background, noting that this project was first directed to the Parks and Recreation Commission and is now forwarded to Cultural Arts Commission to develop a potential artwork that would be installed at the Civic Center Plaza (three specific locations identified). Chair Tokashiki reported that the committee will be meeting with resident Gary McAulay to discuss the development of an

RFQ (request for qualifications) for the project.

H. STAFF ITEMS

Cultural Arts Division updates – Director Leyman reported:

- MBAC exhibits: The current very successful Community Exhibition will close October 6th; and the next exhibit will be a collaboration with Homeira Goldstein’s Time4Art program (opening reception October 25).
- October 5-6, Hometown Fair: new kiln to be unveiled as part of the annual ceramics studio open house.
- October 12, Sat: MB Historical Society sale of non-collection items. members: 9-11 a.m., general public: 11:30 – 3:00 pm - <https://www.manhattanbeachhistorical.com/>
- Digitization of historic collection: project is getting close to a wrap-up; staff to meet with Historical Society to develop a plan for rotating exhibitions.
- Bruce’s Beach artwork: Susan Gray, independent contractor has been hired to manage this project, kick-off meeting with multi-departmental city team held September 5; APPC committee meeting will be scheduled.
- *Surf Ascension* surfboard sculpture installed on Highland in the north end area (on loan for one year).
- Summer events in Polliwog Park - Concerts in the Park (10 concerts), Shakespeare by the Sea (2 nights) concluded; all very successful.
- City Arts and Facility tour: staff is organizing a “scavenger hunt” event – stay tuned.
- Sand Dune Park Redesign Project: final concept plan has been reviewed/approved by Parks and Recreation Commission; and is scheduled for City Council funding and approval at its meeting September 17.
- NFC Fitness Court in Polliwog Park: installation planned for September/October.
- Lot 3 downtown status: structure deemed unsafe, closed. An interdepartmental city staff team is working on how to best manage/address loss of parking; looking at options.
- City Manager recruitment: new City Manager anticipated to be hired by November.

I. COMMISSION ITEMS

Chair Tokashiki reminded regarding the Old Hometown Fair, first weekend in October, encouraged all to attend. It was noted that as part of the Community Showcase, the older adults poetry group will be participating.

Commissioner Dohner noted that on December 18 she will be sworn in as a member of the Manhattan Beach Unified School District board.

J. ADJOURNMENT

At 5:54 p.m. it was moved and seconded (Karger/Colmey) and passed unanimously by voice vote, to adjourn the meeting to 4:00 pm, October 21. Commissioner Karger advised that she will be absent at that meeting.

