

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

Minutes

January 10, 2012

Manhattan Beach City Hall

1400 Highland Avenue

Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting called to order at 6:07 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner Peter De Maria, Commissioner Russ Samuels, Commissioner Nancy Humbarger, and Commissioner Susannah Rosenthal.

Absent: Commissioner Susan Sweeney

Others Present: Mayor Pro Tem Wayne Powell, Council Member David Lesser, Parks & Recreation Director Richard Gill, Acting Cultural Arts Manager Megumi Sando Moisen, and Vicky Huynh, Recreation Leader II.

III. APPROVAL MINUTES

The minutes of the November 4 and 8, 2011 Cultural Arts Commission Meetings were approved as written.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

V. GENERAL BUSINESS

12/0110-01 The Use of the Public Art Funds for the Centennial and New Library Art Projects

Parks and Recreation Director Richard Gill reported the recent development of the Public Art Fund allocations to the Commission. During the Cultural Arts Commission meeting on November 4, 2011, the Commission recommended up to \$200,000 of the Public Art Funds be used to develop a high quality art piece for the City's Centennial in 2012. Subsequently, the City has been approached by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission to consider adding some of the City's Public Art Funds to the art project budget for the new Manhattan Beach Library, which would total \$137,000 including the removal cost of existing artwork and contingency fund.

In the January 3, 2012 City Council meeting, staff requested direction from the City Council for the use of Public Art Funds. The City Council approved the use of up to \$400,000 of the uncommitted Public Art Funds for the two major public art projects -- the City's Centennial Celebration and artwork at the new Manhattan Beach Library. During the meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Wayne Powell and Council Member David Lesser were assigned to work with the Cultural Arts Commission to develop a process of selection,

implementation, and community involvement, and will report back to the entire City Council.

At the beginning of the Commission meeting, Council Member Lesser distributed a memo to the Cultural Arts Commissioners and some audience members listing the following discussion points: 1) vision of the Centennial project; 2) budget for the two projects; 3) timelines for the Centennial project and for supplementing the library art; 4) selection criteria; 5) integration of the City's Public Art Funds to the County's Civic Art Program; and 6) process.

Vision of the Centennial Project: Mayor Pro Tem Powell stated that the Centennial Art could be a monumental piece commemorating the city's 100 year history, reflective of the past, present and future. On the contrary, Manhattan Beach resident Jim Murray recommended the project's vision statement be broad, abstract, and less restrictive for artists to create quality art. Commissioner Rosenthal commented that the Centennial Project's vision statement should be one that celebrates the community of Manhattan Beach, not its history. Council Member Lesser saw the project's lack of definition, and the vision statement needed to be more tangible. Commissioner Samuels also stated that a solid vision statement needed to be developed.

Budget: Council Member Lesser mentioned that some council members had commented that an equal commitment of Public Trust Funds to the two projects was preferable. He also shared his view that the total commitment of \$300,000 for both projects would be legitimate. The Cultural Arts Commission agreed to be conservative on budget not to exceed \$300,000 in total, considering other possible expenses such as conservation and restoration. Responding to the Commission's suggestion to allocate \$200,000 for the Centennial Project, Council Member Lesser addressed the importance of supplementing the library project by suggesting more than \$130,000 of the Public Art Funds for the new library.

Integration of Funds: The Commission shared their concerns for the integration of the City's Public Art Funds to the County's Civic Art Fund for the new Library Art Project. Mr. Murray reported from the first Library Art Meeting with the County, in which he saw the County was set with the idea of working with only one artist. Commissioners and members from the community commented that it was premature to determine the amount of commitment because they were unclear how the City fund was going to be used in the County project.

Timeline: Councilmember Lesser expressed his concern with the tightness of timeline for the Centennial piece(s) to be completed before the end of 2012. He stated that it was more important to have the right artwork than rushing to make a decision prematurely. Commissioner Humbarger explained the possibility of having an additional temporary celebratory artwork this year for the occasion that the permanent Centennial art piece could not complete in time.

Selection Process: Using her website, Commissioner Rosenthal showed the Commission's review process of possible artists for the Centennial Project recommended by the Commissioners and a group of local art experts. She explained that they were going to select finalists by interviews and studio visits.

Council Members Powell and Lesser requested the Commission spend more time to clarify the process and define the vision, process, and budget of the Centennial project. The Commission agreed to have a special meeting on January 17, 2012 to continue their discussion to solidify the scope of the Centennial project and to decide the allocations of the Public Art Funds to the Centennial and the New Library Art Projects.

VI. REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Murray commented that Manhattan Beach community lacked opportunities of arts education. He stated that bringing art education into the school system and making a commitment to arts was desired. Commissioner Rosenthal also mentioned the importance of arts education and transparency, suggesting creating a forum where the community can learn and communicate with each other regarding arts.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:15p.m. Commissioner De Maria motioned to meet on January 17, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. for a special meeting.

DRAFT