

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

Minutes

February 15, 2012
Manhattan Beach City Hall
1400 Highland Avenue
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting called to order at 6:12 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner Peter De Maria, Commissioner Nancy Humbarger,
Commissioner Susan Sweeney and Commissioner Susannah Rosenthal.

Absent: Commissioner Russ Samuels

Others Present: Parks & Recreation Director Richard Gill, Acting Cultural Arts
Manager Megumi S. Moisen, and Vicky Huynh, Recreation Leader II.

III. APPROVAL MINUTES

The minutes of the December 13, 2011 Cultural Arts Commission Meeting approved as written.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

V. GENERAL BUSINESS

12/0215-1 The Use of the Public Art Funds for the Centennial and New Library Art
Projects

Library Art Project

Commissioners De Maria and Sweeny reported to the Commission regarding the February 14th meeting of the Los Angeles County Civic Art Selection Committee for the New County Library in Manhattan Beach. In the meeting, the interior of the library was revealed for the first time. Responding to the design drawing, Commissioner Rosenthal shared her concern that the space looked so busy that artwork could get lost in the environment. Parks & Recreation Department Director Richard Gill identified possible areas for artwork -- the inside stairwell, outside stairwell, near the entrance off of Highland, the Community Room, and outside patio. Manhattan Beach resident Alison Wright suggested the outdoor amphitheater area with green slopes as a possible site for placing artwork.

Related to the artist selection, Commissioner Sweeny reported that the County agreed to use the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process, in which artists recommended by the Cultural Arts Commission can be included. In the County Civic Art meeting, the City Representatives requested to the County that the City donation be separated and not

comingled. Director Gill shared that the County was agreeable to having a separate artwork; additionally, the County is open to the City's ownership of the additional piece.

Director Gill stated that the use of Public Art Funds for the new Manhattan Beach Library will be discussed during the February 21 Council meeting, and the Staff Report will be posted to the City's website on Friday, February 17 by 5:00 p.m.

Commissioner De Maria introduced an excerpt from the City's Public Art Master Plan, questioning the role and authority of the Cultural Arts Commission in determination of the use of the Public Arts Funds:

The Cultural Arts Commission alone shall be vested with the power to forward requests to the City Council. (Section V. Initiation of Public Art Projects, City of Manhattan Beach Public Art Master Plan)

Commissioner De Maria also stated that the Art Master Plan stated:

Projects to be funded from the proceeds of fees ... designated by the Cultural Arts Commission and approved or accepted by the City Council. (10.90.060, Ordinance No. 2040)

Commissioner De Maria stated that the Public Art Funds have been designated by the City Council, while the Commission's recommendations were disregarded.

Centennial Art Project

Director Gill reported that Mayor Pro Tem Wayne Powell and Councilmember David Lesser asked that the Cultural Arts Commission hold off on discussing the Centennial Art Project until they report to the full City Council on February 21, 2012 as to the vision of the project, budget, process for selecting artists, and art for the project.

12/0215-2 The City Attorney's Direction Regarding the Cultural Arts Ad Hoc Committee's Definition and Roles

Director Gill introduced a staff report from the City Attorney's office regarding the "Cultural Arts Ad Hoc Committee." The City Attorney recently reviewed the composition of the "Cultural Arts Ad Hoc Committee" and informed City Staff that only members of the Cultural Arts Commission can be members of an ad hoc committee. The City Attorney in the staff report explained that an ad hoc committee must be comprised of only two cultural Arts Commissioners with a specific purpose or project of limited duration. The two appointed commissioners can reach out to experts in the community for that specific project for their expertise. Based on the discussion in this report, the City Attorney has advised that the Cultural Arts Commission Ad Hoc Committee that is comprised of three community members be dissolved.

Ms. Greco stated that Public Art Master Plan allows the Commission to form a committee to assist in artwork selection. Director Gill pointed out that the appointing authority written in the Master Plan was contradictory to the City's Boards & Commissions Handbook (2009). He also mentioned that the City Attorney is aware that the Master Plan has several areas that disagree with the Handbook, and will review the documents to resolve the issues.

12/0215-3 Other New Programs and Projects for 2012

Commissioner Rosenthal suggested considering reviving the Arts Festival related to the Centennial Art Project. Director Gill proposed to add this item for the next meeting.

Prototype bench designs by local architects also should be revisited in preparation for a City Council presentation.

12/0215-4 Request from Leadership Manhattan Beach to Move the Existing Art Sculpture in Front of the Chamber of Commerce/Post Office per the Attached Plan

Leadership Manhattan Beach Project Director Loli Ramezani Mazhar and Hardscape Committee Lead Vinny Fazzino proposed that the Cultural Arts Commission approve Leadership Manhattan's request to move the existing sculpture in front of the post office/Chamber of Commerce. The proposal requested the art piece be moved up against the building. Leadership Manhattan Beach also requested the piece be lowered, leaving only 4"-6" of the base remaining. The Leadership Manhattan class of 2012 has worked with the "Sustainable Garden" Project, which converts the landscape surrounding the Post Office (425 15th Street) to a water-conserving, sustainable landscape with efficient walking paths. The existing sculpture was created by local artist Harold Reach in the early 1980s, and it is one of his identical sculptures donated to several municipalities in the Los Angeles area.

Leadership Manhattan proposed the following (3) changes: 1) Move the sculpture 12 feet closer to the building and place it east or west approximately two (2) to three (3) feet, so as not to be directly centered in front of the wall, as it is now; 2) Sink the sculpture pedestal into the ground to the level leaving 4"-6" of visible base below the plaque; and 3) To remove the brick planter that surrounds the sculpture to comply with ADA requirements. In addition, Leadership Manhattan suggested the Commission should consider refurbishing the sculpture's surface, painting in the natural colors, or returning it to its original colors of when it was installed (turquoise and mauve).

Commissioner De Maria mentioned that lowering the pedestal could give an impression of degrading the artwork. He recommended that landscape architect determine the sculpture's height in consideration of the design integration. In the past, the City was not successful in finding the artist's contact information despite their research efforts. Commissioner Rosenthal and Manhattan Beach resident Jim Murray suggested considering decommissioning the piece in the future, addressing that developing a policy for artwork removal was important.

Responding to the project's mid-May deadline for completion, Commissioner Humbarger moved to approve the proposed changes, and Commissioner Rosenthal seconded the motion.

Ayes: Humbarger, Sweeny, De Maria, Rosenthal.

Noes: None.

Absent: Commissioner Samuels

Abstain: None.

VI. REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.