

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

Minutes

May 8, 2012

Manhattan Beach City Hall
1400 Highland Avenue
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting called to order at 6:21 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None.

Others Present: Parks & Recreation Director Richard Gill, Recreation Manager Gina Allen, and Acting Cultural Arts Manager Megumi S. Moisen

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 15 and March 27, 2012 Cultural Arts Commission Meetings approved as written.

IV. CEREMONIAL

With presentation of a certificate from the City Council, the Cultural Arts Commission, community members, and staff members expressed their appreciation to the former commissioner Susan Sweeny and outgoing Commissioner Susannah Rosenthal for their service on the Commission.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Manhattan Beach resident, Jim Murray, distributed a working document titled "MB Arts: Past-Present-Future," in which he proposed a comprehensive review of the City's relationship with the arts and the history of budgetary support for the arts in visual arts, performing arts, and arts education. He suggested that the City establish a professionally developed art standard to change the decision making process related to the arts because not all City staff, Commissioners, and City Council members have an art background. Professional services specialized in the arts (e.g., arts consultant) was recommended, especially in the selection and procurement of both permanent and temporary art works displayed by the City. Commissioner De Maria appreciated Mr. Murray's work, and all commissioners recognized the need to bring this kind of professional services to make a better decision on future art project selections. Commissioner Humbarger asked what the appropriate steps were necessary to this process. Director Gill suggested the Commission include this in the agenda of the Cultural Arts Commission meeting, and then they can discuss in detail and make a recommendation to the Council.

Related to Mr. Murray's comment, Manhattan Beach resident Jackie May reminded the commissioners and audience that some Council members do have an education in the arts as well as some art background. Later, she raised a question about the funding sources of the art displays and locations of the sculpture display. She feels that the current locations of the Sculpture Garden on the Civic Plaza Area do not give enough

exposure to the public. She expressed her opinion that the City should purchase permanent artwork instead of spending money for renting pieces of art. Commissioner De Maia explained that the Sculpture Garden program was initiated by the City Council's Work Plan several years ago, and it was decided that the sculpture would be located in the Civic Plaza because it was thought that it would "spice up" the area. He continued by explaining that purchasing permanent art is a fairly complicated process, and temporary display by loan is a favorable option as of now.

VI. GENERAL BUSINESS

12/0508-1 The Centennial Art Project

The Cultural Arts Commission reviewed the RFQ prepared by staff for the Centennial Art Project, and several discussion points during the editing process.

Project Summary: Commissioner De Maria expressed that the RFQ needed to be "vague enough" as to not restrict the artist's creativity.

Project Summary: Related to the eligibility of artists, Commissioner De Maria did not want to limit the artists' eligibility based on the geographical locations where the potential artist might live. It will be an international call for artists. Commissioners Samuels and Humbarger agreed to leave it open to anyone who is interested in the project.

Overview: The Commissioners agreed to delete the second sentence of the description of Manhattan Beach history describing the City as the birthplace of beach volleyball.

Scope of Work: The Commission wanted to leave the locations open to the selected final artists choices. To broaden the possibility of the creation by artists, the bullet points in the paragraph starting with "The artwork(s) should" was simplified as follows:

- "Create Excitement and interest for the community" → "Foster community discussion."
- "Honor and commemorate the rich history of the community." → "Celebrate our unique community and culture."
- "Strengthen the visual identity of Manhattan Beach." → "Engage the mind and the senses."
- "Encourage community members to remember and contemplate the past, present and future, and inspire younger people to see a legacy that belongs to them and to the future generation." → "Anchor a key community places."

The Commission removed the last sentence of the section that comprised of the possible materials for the project.

Budget: The commission included "accommodations" as an item to be covered by the project budget.

Eligibility: As discussed in the Project Summary, the restriction of geographic locations of applicant's residency was removed.

How to Apply: Commissioner De Maria suggested to employ digital drop box system for the RFQ process, and it would be easier for artists to apply and also environmentally friendly. Recreation Manager Gina Allen told the Commission that it would be difficult

to set up the system with IS department within this short time frame. However, the City would consider introducing this kind of digital submission system in future projects.

Selection Process: Following two issues were determined and changed as follows:

- 1) A selection panel was deleted. The Cultural Arts Commission discussed the possibility of establishing the Art in Public Places Committee (APPC) for the Centennial project. The Commissioners reached the consensus that public participation in the commission meetings would be sufficient to reflect community opinions to the artist selection.
- 2) The way of allocating the honorarium for developing conceptual designs was rewritten. Since the Commission wants to maintain the flexibility and option to differentiate the honorarium amount based on the artist's experience and background, they changed the wording to "Total of \$20,000 will be rewarded to up to five finalists."

Timeline: Commissioner Samuels requested to insert the "Timeline" of the project reflecting updated schedule. The new time line looks as follows:

Submission Deadline: July 31, 2012
Selection of Finalists: Mid-August
Conceptual Design Submission Deadline (finalists): November 1, 2012
Finalists' presentation to the Cultural Arts Commission: November 2012
City Council Design Approval (Project awarded): December 2012
Artwork Installation: Mid 2013

Staff will email the revised RFQ to the commissioners in the following week for their review. Ms. Allen stated that the Commission may have to schedule a special meeting to approve all edits.

12/0508-2 The Use of Public Art Trust Funds to Repaint the Sculpture in Front of the Chamber of Commerce/Post Office

Acting Cultural Arts Manager Megumi Moisen introduced two quotes for repainting the sculpture in front of the post office -- \$3,000 and \$7,000. Commissioner Samuels recommended considering possible removal instead repeatedly spending funds for repainting and maintaining the sculpture. Commissioner De Maria suggested the evaluation of public opinions with an open discussion in the next commission meeting. Commissioner Humbarger requested that the artwork information be included, including the title and the artist's name.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Samuels and seconded by Commissioner De Maria to table the Use of Public Art Trust Funds to Repaint the Sculpture in Front of the Chamber of Commerce/Post Office to the next meeting agenda.

Ayes: Samuels, De Maria, and Humbarger.
Noes: None.
Abstain: None.
Absent: Commissioner Rosenthal (left earlier)

VII. REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Samuels inquired as to what had happened to the mural painting at the staircase into City Hall. The painting on the staircase wall of the City Hall has been covered with a curtain for several years. Commissioner Samuels shared a story that a writer came from France to see the mural and felt horrified when the person found out the artwork was covered.

Commissioner Humbarger asked what happened to the Cultural Arts Manager's position. Director Gill invited the commission to budget study session in mid-May, in which the Council would possibly decide whether or not to replace the Manager's position with a public arts specialist.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.