

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

March 14, 2017

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

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson May called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Friedman (arrival 6:55 pm), Gill, Manna, Prigozhin Chairperson May.

Absent: None

Others present: Martin Betz, Cultural Arts Manager, Eilen Stewart, Ceramics Supervisor, Deborah Hom, Recreation Supervisor, Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 14, 2017

A motion was made and seconded (Manna/Gill) to approve as submitted.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Gill, Prigozhin, Manna, Chairperson May

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Friedman (arrived after minutes vote)

D. CEREMONIAL

Presentation of certificates to artists who have made a long standing contribution to the community as follows:

Chair May proceeded to call forward and award certificates recognizing the accomplishments and contributions of two accomplished local artists,.

1. Frank Matranga, ceramicist

Ms. Casey Matranga accepted a certificate of recognition and spoke on behalf of her husband Frank Matranga, noted potter and ceramicist who passed away in 2016. Casey recounted that Frank was an artist for more than 60 years, who since his teens loved the beach and jazz, spending much time at the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach. He was a graduate of USC but was first introduced to his medium at Cal State LA where he was tutored and nurtured by well known artists, including an apprenticeship with Raul Cornell. In the 1970's he was invited to Japan where he enjoyed two residencies and incorporated a Japanese aesthetic into his art. He received national awards as early as 1962 and in 1976 served as the President of the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Ceramics Society. Frank is known for creating 60 large murals. Casey recalled that one of Frank's largest commissions was a mural for a Sears Escondido store which he worked on for a year and a half but was still able to complete the job within two weeks of the deadline. Six of his murals were installed at Los Angeles County Libraries. Two local murals can be seen at the Marina Del Rey (ship theme) and West Gardena (entryway) libraries. Casey described his love of the outdoors as he was an avid bike rider and skier until he sustained injuries. He was tremendous fun and touched many lives. Casey noted

that their home studio on Ardmore Avenue which contains many of Frank's pieces, including a 7' by 14' mural in the living room is still available for tours. In closing she emphasized, though he was stricken with leukemia, he was a true optimist and even in the last year of his life never slowed down.

2. Painter Charles Lynn Bragg

Charles, who lives in El Porto, thanked the Commission and made a brief presentation, showing the two of his latest paintings, one of which depicts Refugio Beach north of Santa Barbara and another which is part of a series of paintings "Earth Icons" that are copies of classics, such as a Norman Rockwell painting, but with an updated message. He noted he is often mixed up with his father, Charles Bragg who was a very well known artist who did many famous pen and ink political and social satire drawings. Charles noted that he loves to surf and paint and in 1994 was commissioned by the US Post office to do a series "Wonders of the Sea" of commemorative stamps depicted ocean life. Under Instagram he can be found as Chick Bragg.

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit)

James McCleary, of the North Manhattan Beach BID announced that on June 10, Saturday, from 10 am to 4 pm their organization will be having the First Annual North Manhattan Beach Art Walk and possibly a car show in the Veranda parking lot. He is here to get some feedback and the BID is looking for possible sponsorship from the City. They expect that over 40 artists will be present to display their work inside businesses and on the exterior of the stores. They are looking for sponsors to help pay for advertising, and are estimating costs of \$730 for utility bill inserts for 2 months, \$175 for posters, \$650 per week for 2 weeks of ads in Beach Reporter and Daily Breeze and 2-3 banners at \$800 each. Their next subcommittee meeting will be April 5th.

Cultural Arts Manager Martin Betz explained that this request would have to be approved by the City Council before it could be considered by the Cultural Arts Commission. Mr. McCleary is here to provide information and receive input.

Mark Lipps, new CEO Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce, commented that the Chamber is 100% behind the BID. He believes that the Art Walk will be one of many initiatives coming from the North End BID and he supports the notion that the North End can become the "art district" of the city and again, the Chamber is highly supportive of this and will be working alongside the BID.

The Commission posed questions with Mr. McCleary such as whether there is a design standard for the way the art is to be displayed? Mr. McCleary recognized that only a portion of the sidewalk can be used, and they will be working with the businesses to display art in their own windows, and more new ideas will be developed. Commissioner Prigozhin suggested that they look for ways to make the displays more visible and not get lost in the other merchandise.

Mark Lipps commented that a goal is for the North End to become a destination for art and attract visitors which will be a benefit for the whole city and any advice is welcomed.

Cultural Arts Manager Betz suggested that if the Commission and City Council decide to move forward, the BID can consult with the city staff.

The Commission discussed this concept. Commissioner Gill explained that this is an unprecedented request and that if money is to be used from the art trust fund, there would be strings attached in that public funds are involved, plus it takes time to process such a request through the City Council.

Mark McCleary explained that this is about “putting a footprint on” the north end, and while it promotes businesses, it is also about promoting art.

Cultural Arts Manager Betz advised Mr. McCleary he would be in touch with him to discuss and it was agreed that this topic would be potentially brought back to the Commission with a specific proposal that meets the trust fund mandates. Mr. Betz also noted that he would look into how this proposal would fit in with the commission’s Work Plan.

F. STAFF ITEMS

1. Cultural Arts Division Update

Mr. Betz, after reminding that Form 700s are due Wednesday, reported regarding the upcoming events that staff is working on including, but not limited to: the Time4ART “Dance of Thought” Shane Guffogg exhibit and summer concerts.

2. Report on “I Heart MB” Program

Zaha Shtewi gave a detailed presentation on the I Heart MB project, a community based exhibition on the first and second floors of City hall open to all residents and city class students. The reception was held February 24 and the exhibition will run to March. Over 100 persons attended the reception and staff attributes this great attendance to the increased advertising. The staff wants this event to grow and flourish and mimic the “Day in the Life” project done nationally, but focus on Manhattan Beach.

Ms. Shtewi noted that, as this was the brainchild of Councilman Wayne Powell, who is leaving office next month, it would be great to carry the concept forward and staff proposes that the Commission could adopt this event.

The Commission discussed this concept. In response to a question about a financial commitment, staff member Eilen Stewart stated there may be a small hard cost of about \$1,500 for advertising and the cost is more in terms of staff time and resources. Arts Manager Betz stated that at this time, staff is asking whether this is something that the Commission would want to formally sponsor and support. Ms. Stewart noted that in the future the program may outgrow City Hall and in finding an alternate site, a sponsorship by the Commission would lend more support. Mr. Betz also responded to an inquiry as to how this would fit into the trust fund budget, that this would have to be addressed in the Work Plan. Ms. Stewart responded to the Commission that about 25 of the submittals were from students but staff did not ask for an age, or jury the work by age. The submittals could, if desired, be categorized in the future.

The Commission arrived at a consensus to support future “I Heart MB” events. Regarding the event title, input was provided that perhaps each year there may be a different theme or the requirements may change which could affect the title, however there was support for keeping the “I Heart MB” title because as such they could have different themes but still have a focus on the city.

Manager Betz advised that he will think about this with the goal to start next year. He would like to encourage new images and art.

3. Other updates. Mr. Betz mentioned other upcoming events:

- Skate Park opening/California Lobos Exhibit: 3/18; 8 am start, ribbon cutting at 1 pm, concert and book signing till 5:00 pm and finally the California Locos art exhibit at 6:00 pm. It was noted that public parking will not be available at the MBAC parking lot and the exhibit will be up only four days.
- **17th Annual Mira Costa Show at the MBAC: 3/24 to 4/2.**

Mr. Betz concluded with a few announcements: He asked the Commission for ideas in that staff is looking for a future exhibit space for a high school program that will be on May 19th tentatively. The Commission mentioned some possibilities including a possible space at LAX, Begg School, the Knights of Columbus Hall, or an empty store front. Mr. Betz advised that the Sailboat sculpture at the City Hall Plaza will be finished this Thursday and that the City will collaborating with the Library for an event in July.

G. COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Gill reported on a Foundation of the Arts show sometime in April.

Commissioner Manna commented that he attended a Leadership Manhattan Beach art night event which featured some fantastic photography and that he received the City newsletter and complimented staff that it is very impressive and very appreciated.

Commissioner Prigozhin reported on a ground breaking event he attended at LAX for the “Midfield Terminal”, and that the project has a very impressive plan for public art.

Commissioner Friedman announced that Mira Costa’s production of the musical Oklahoma! will be running the last 2 weekends in April.

H. GENERAL BUSINESS - None

I. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:40 P.M, it was moved and seconded (Gill/Manna) and passed unanimously by voice vote to adjourn the meeting to 6:00 P.M. on April 11 in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.