

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
MINUTES OF THE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION**

July 17, 2017

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

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Gill called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Present: Chase, Manna, May, Rubino, Chairperson Gill.

Absent: Prigozhin (contacted staff to advise had an emergency meeting and couldn't make it)

Others present: Martin Betz, Cultural Arts Manager, Deborah Hom, Program Supervisor and Rosemary Lackow, Recording Secretary

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 19, 2017**

It was moved and seconded (Manna/Rubino) to approve the June 19, 2017 minutes as submitted. The motion carried with a voice vote: Ayes: Manna, May, Prigozhin; Noes: none, Absent: Prigozhin. Abstain: None.

**D. CEREMONIAL – None**

**E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit) - None**

**F. STAFF ITEMS**

Cultural Arts Division Update

**Strand Bench Proposal by Alex Weinstein**

Cultural Arts Manager Martin Betz gave a brief introduction, stating that twice a year (February/July) artists can come before the Commission to propose Strand bench designs. City resident Alex Weinstein has approached the City proposing to design a public bench however the action tonight is for the Commission to accept his presentation and determine whether this matter should be put on a future agenda. Mr. Betz also gave a brief description of the City's Strand Bench program, explaining that the City maintains a catalogue of benches that are approved by the Commission and City Council from which the public can choose and donate for placement on the Strand as the opportunity arises.

Alex Weinstein addressed the Commission, and showed slides of proptotype benches including two types, both made of concrete with a textured seating surface. The first option is a bench comprised of 4 18-inch cubes placed next to each other, and another is the same basic design and size but as a single form. The seating surface replicates the wavy surface of the ocean. He also showed other possible materials and finishes other than concrete such as one with a black reflective material. He explained that he is an avid surfer and the form is surprisingly comfortable to sit on and evokes the changing surface of the ocean.

The Commission discussed the proptypes shown and Mr. Weinstein responded to questions and

concerns.

In summary, the Commission as a consensus, liked the overall design as being aesthetically clean and complementary to the beach setting, but stated a preference for a single cast bench, as opposed to 4 individual cubes, as this option would eliminate any small gaps between cubes. Concerns expressed by the Commission included comfort, longevity and maintenance (would water and dirt collect in the grooves on the seating surface?), safety (could a child's finger get caught between cubes?) cost (to be consistent with other benches in the City's catalogue) and whether the bench would be attractive to and possibly be impacted by skateboarders.

Mr. Weinstein clarified his intent that he would like to have the bench approved for inclusion in the pre-approved City catalogue, but he would consider donating a bench and his first preference would be to install at 31<sup>st</sup> Street. He believes that he can easily create the bench within the cost range (\$8,000 - \$16,000) of the current benches in the catalogue.

Manager Betz stated that a donation would be a good way to go, and a very positive aspect about this proposal is that none of the benches currently in place are designed by a City artist, and Mr. Weinstein's art is well known internationally. He also leans towards the single cast design and noted that all the Strand benches are regularly cleaned once a month in that it is natural for dew to collect on the benches.

It was subsequently moved and seconded (Manna/May) that this item be put on the next agenda for a full and detailed discussion. The motion carried unanimously with a hand vote of all present.

Chair Gill advised Mr. Weinstein, that in coming back with his presentation, the more homework he does, the better in addressing all expressed concerns and that the City Council would make the final decision. Meanwhile Mr. Weinstein should work with Mr. Betz to provide more detailed info and staff will submit and get input from other relevant City staff such as from Public Works.

### **Events Update**

Cultural Arts Manager Martin Betz briefed the Commission on several happenings:

- The *Method Movement Memory* opening (150-200 attendance) at the Art Center last Friday was very well received. The show will be going until September and a portion of the show will be installed this week in the Library (second floor). There will be a show catalogue and a few related events including two held at the Library. Mr. Betz will email dates to the Commission.
- The next art exhibit show coming up is Jose Lozano: *Chicano Trickster*, opening September 14. This exhibit is part of a much larger collaboration with the Getty through next February, in which the Los Angeles region is celebrating its artists. Manhattan Beach is participating one month only till October.
- Staff is busy with the summer concerts which are going well.
- The sailing ship sculpture is getting the final touches tomorrow and staff has no news yet about an opening event for that installation.
- The next Sculpture Garden RFP will be initiated at the September Commission meeting. It will be for a 2-year period. The existing "space needle" piece will be picked up soon and moved to another city.

- The CAC Work Plan will be presented at the City Council meeting tomorrow for approval.
- The Public Art Trust fund has been increased recently by about \$4,000 and staff is hopeful that some immediate funding of projects will be available soon for the Commission's consideration.

## **G. COMMISSION ITEMS**

Chair Gill presented a "cheat sheet" on Roberts Rules explaining his goal is for the meetings to be smooth and for everyone to be able to participate in orderly discussions. He will go one by one giving an opportunity to each Commissioner to speak on an issue.

Commissioner May informed that there has been a request to repeat June 10<sup>th</sup> North End Art walk and a second walk is being planned for September 23. The walk was highly received but there is a need for more artists and interested parties can email the organizers at NorthMBartwalk@gmail.com.

Commissioner Manna gave kudos to staff on another great art show (*Method, Movement, Memory*) and stated this appreciation for improvements he had requested that were recently done by the City easing access across Manhattan Beach Boulevard and into the Art Center driveway.

Commissioner Rubino reported favorably on a multi-media South Bay arts festival held in June by the Torrance Arts Foundation and asked if this could be an event that the City could participate in. Chair Gill responded that the Commission had received a presentation from the Torrance group and the Manhattan Beach Cultural Arts Commission is aware of and watching this event.

Mr. Betz commented that the "Renegade Craft Fair" held recently in downtown Los Angeles is a fantastic place to see very high quality crafts.

Commissioner Chase asked about putting lights on the steps in Sand Dune Park and how this could be done. It would be a nice visual element that could attract locals to the park. Manager Betz explained that this might be able to be done under the re-granting program, but perhaps she and Commissioner May could come in and discuss with him.

## **H. GENERAL BUSINESS - None**

## **I. ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:50 P.M., it was moved and seconded (Gill/May) and passed by voice vote 4-1-0 (4 ayes, 1 absent, 0 abstain) to adjourn the meeting to 6:00 P.M. on August 21, 2017 in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue.