

Newport Beach City Arts Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 10, 2022
Regular Meeting – 5:00 PM
1000 Avocado Avenue
Newport Beach, CA 92660

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER – 5:03 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Arlene Greer, Chair
 Maureen Flanagan, Vice Chair
 Wayan Kaufman, Commissioner
 Marie Little, Commissioner

Commissioners Absent: Leonard Simon, Secretary (excused)
 Meghan McNulty, Commissioner (excused)
 Barbara George, Commissioner

Staff Present: Melissa Hartson, Library Services Director
 Camille Escareal-Garcia, Cultural Arts Assistant

Staff Absent:

III. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vivian Brown, Newport Beach resident, recently finished the Distinguished Citizens Program which encouraged attendance at public meetings. She indicated she was interested in the City Art Commission’s (CAC) purview.

Chair Greer introduced the meeting participants and attendees.

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of Minutes of the October 13, 2022, City Arts Commission Meeting

1. Draft of 10/13/2022 Minutes

Chair Greer called for comments/revisions to the minutes and heard none.

Motion made by Vice Chair Flanagan, seconded by Commissioner Little, and carried (4-0-0-3) to approve the October 13, 2022 meeting minutes as presented.

AYES: Greer, Flanagan, Kaufman, Little
NOES: None
ABSTENTIONS: None
ABSENT: Simon, McNulty, George

B. Consent Calendar Items

2. Financial Report – *Review of financial information*

Library Services Director Melissa Hartson reported that not much had changed financially since October. The Concerts on the Green concluded and there were some expenditures for installations and art maintenance. In the coming months, the Financial Report would change as staff adjusted the funding as directed for the Sculpture Garden. Staff were working with Finance to adjust the budget.

3. Cultural Arts Activities – *Monthly review of cultural arts activities from the Library Administrative Office for upcoming Library and City arts events and services*

Library Services Director Hartson reported that October concluded one season and started another. The final concert at Marina Park was fun and lively. The Newport Beach Arts Foundation (NBAF) presented the check for Phase VIII of the Sculpture Garden.

Chair Greer called for the public comment on the Consent Calendar.

Jim Mosher, Newport Beach resident, stated that, as indicated in the October minutes, there was a discussion regarding why the Cultural Arts Grant Budget had decreased from \$40,000 to \$30,000 and how that tied into Council Policy I-10, which cited a \$55,000 figure. He studied the issue on behalf of Commissioner Simon and found Policy I-10 was originally connected to a reserve fund for future arts projects. City Council was to fund that budget each year. In the 1980s, the policy was merged with another policy about grants for cultural arts activities. The \$55,000 seemed to be a combination of funds that could be granted to activities. The intent of the policy was unclear related to unspent funds. He could not find anything further in the City Budget, but the official name was The Reserve Fund for Cultural Arts. He thought it was important for the CAC to ask what happened to that fund since it was still cited in Policy I-10. The other important question was why the \$40,000 budgeted for Cultural Arts Grants was decreased to \$30,000. He thought it was done because the CAC started granting less than \$40,000 and reserving funds for its own programming. With COVID-19 all departments were asked to reduce budgets and he thought that former Library Services Director Tim Hetherington lowered the number to \$30,000, reflecting the practice of the CAC. He repeated that the major question was what happened to the Reserve Fund and its original \$55,000.

Chair Greer remembered that back in 2011 the budget was \$55,000 per year. The CAC could typically grant \$20,000 or \$25,000 in Cultural Arts Grants. The rest of the funds were used for concerts, museum tours, Shakespeare in the Park, and other programs.

Motion made by Commissioner Little, seconded by Commissioner Kaufman, and carried (4-0-0-3) to approve the Consent Calendar.

AYES:	Greer, Flanagan, Kaufman, Little
NOES:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None
ABSENT:	Simon, McNulty, George

VI. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Items for Review and Possible Action

4. Sculpture Exhibition Phase VIII Selection Process and Public Survey Discussion

Richard Stein of Arts Orange County will review the selection process and public survey for Phase VIII of the Sculpture Exhibition.

Richard Stein of Arts Orange County (Arts OC) stated that they were very pleased to be contracted to continue to oversee the Sculpture Exhibition. The program started in 2013 with the intention to install 10 works per year for a two year exhibition on loan from artists. Initially there was a worldwide call for artists, but it quickly became evident that it needed to be limited to existing works in the United States. Phase I was installed in 2014, and since inception, 70 works have been exhibited. The selection process evolved to include Arts Commissioners, outside expert judges, and a public survey. The City Council has ultimate review and authority over the process and will look over the sculpture selections in February 2023. For Phase VIII, Arts Orange County selected Lisa M. Berman and Mateo Tannat as judges.

Arts Orange County was contracted in October, the Call for Artists was issued October 10th, and currently there were 19 submissions. Three artists who made submissions were past exhibitors. The deadline for submissions was November 30th and more submissions were expected. Phase VII had 48 submissions, more than half of which were from California. That was not reflected in the final selections and at least one Councilmember indicated during Phase VII that they were interested in featuring more California artists. The judging panel was comprised of the CAC and the outside judges. At the December 8 CAC meeting, the finalists would be selected for the public survey ranking. The public survey would open December 10 and close January 10, 2023. The CAC will receive the rankings at the January 12 meeting, and then the City Council will hear the matter on February 14, 2023. He clarified that there would be 10 selections made with 3 alternates, which historically had been necessary as things happened to selected works. By mid-March, the City Attorney will have the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)s prepared for the selected artists. Arts OC and Library Services would handle everything with the City Attorney and the artists. Part of the process was selecting the sites for each work, and he explained that they occasionally needed to re-site works for one reason or another. Arts OC continually monitors the works in the park and then contacts artists and conservators when issues arise. Installation was slated for June 1 through 16 with the deinstallation of Phase VI in May. If new concrete pads were necessary, they would be installed, but those were expensive. Everything will be installed and ready by the time of the Annual Art Exhibition on June 24, 2023. He suggested that due to the timing, it might be difficult to hold the annual luncheon for the Sculpture Exhibition. The new crushed gravel walkways were protected from damage in Phase VII by plywood. It was unanticipated that the walkways would be gravel rather than concrete, but it had worked out. He concluded his overview of the Sculpture Exhibition Phase VIII selection process and was happy to answer questions.

Chair Greer thanked Mr. Stein and Arts OC for their work.

Mr. Stein indicated that the Sculpture Garden was Arts OC's premier project.

Chair Greer reminded the CAC to sign up with CaFÉ (CallForEntry.org).

Mr. Stein stated that there was a logon process that needed to be set up. The CAC should have received instructions.

Commissioner Little stated that she had not received hers.

Mr. Stein assured her that he would follow-up. The platform was slightly different from the one used last year, but CaFÉ tended to generate more artist submissions.

Chair Greer called for CAC comments and questions, but there were none. She called for the public comment.

Jim Mosher, Newport Beach resident, inquired if the CAC planned to discuss the format of the online public survey. The survey was planned to go live two days after the December meeting. Last year, the public scrolled through 25 photos and were asked to select 3, which was difficult to do on certain devices. There were many alternative ways to do the survey and he suggested having users rate each work on a 5-point scale. That rating system would provide the CAC and Council with more information than they previously received and more meaningful results. Second, he noted that it was important for the public to know that the survey was live, and he understood that it was up to the City to do the publicity.

Mr. Stein said that Arts OC played a role in publicity as well. Beginning with Phase VII the City Council instructed that only Newport Beach residents could vote, so Arts OC began to investigate the ISP addresses to ensure that. He further thought that they could show images in an “at a glance” section at the top of the page before people scrolled down to place their votes.

Mr. Mosher thought City staff would best know how to communicate the availability of the survey to the residents. He hoped to see strong publicity.

Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia explained that they had previously done a press release and that she would speak with the Marketing Specialist about the survey. She believed it was also posted on Instagram and Facebook. There were Cultural Arts Social Media Accounts and Library Social Media Accounts.

Commissioner Little suggested a banner at the Civic Center Park to reach the visitors.

Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia said that she would check with Recreation. She could place something in the brochure box though.

Commissioner Little suggested something larger to catch the attention of people who walked through the park regularly.

Chair Greer thanked Mr. Stein.

Mr. Stein stated that he would be in touch with the CAC and would be at the next meeting.

5. Ad Hoc Subcommittee for the Review of Council Policies I-9 through I-12

The City Arts Commission will form an ad hoc subcommittee for the purposes of reviewing City Council Policies I-9 Art in Public Places, I-10 Financial Support for Culture and Arts, I-11 Acquisition of Art by the City of Newport Beach, and I-12 Sister City Association Policy, in accordance with a resolution adopted by City Council at their September 13, 2022 regular monthly meeting.

Library Services Director Hartson reported that the CAC had four City Council Policies under its purview. The City Council created an ad hoc to review municipal codes and City Council Policies. Accordingly, the CAC was asked to form an ad hoc subcommittee to review Policies I-9, I-10, I-11, and I-12 and present a recommendation to City Council.

Chair Greer noted that all Commissioners would be able to offer input in a meeting. She then assigned herself and Vice Chair Flanagan to the ad hoc subcommittee.

Library Services Director Hartson believed two appointments were all that was necessary but indicated that she would check if a third was necessary. She was waiting to hear from the City Manager's Office on how to proceed.

Chair Greer was very impressed with Sister Cities. The CAC very seldom worked with Sister Cities although it was also under the Cultural Arts Branch of the Library. She mentioned several programs that the CAC had worked on with Sister Cities. She called for questions on the item and asked if they needed a Motion.

Library Services Director Hartson indicated that all they needed was the appointments.

Chair Greer called for the public comment.

Jim Mosher, Newport Beach resident, thought it was a good thing for Commissions to review their policies, but he noted that they were only being asked to shorten them and not necessarily to change them. He was sure that it would prompt them to make recommendations to City Council where necessary.

Chair Greer thought it was timely for the CAC to review the policies. She wanted to spend more time raising historical awareness in the City and named several organizations that they could collaborate with, including Historical Resources. Commissioners could look up how other historical and cultural events had been handled. She called for further comments but heard none and closed the item.

6. Revisions to the Newport Beach Art Exhibition Entry Guidelines

The Newport Beach Art Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee recommends that the City Arts Commission approve revisions to the annual art exhibition entry guidelines.

Chair Greer complimented the staff on organizing the revisions in an efficient and easy manner. Two guidelines were removed and everything else was the same except for a small addition. She directed the CAC to Pages 37 and 38 to view the final copy. She asked for comments on the Entry Guidelines.

Commissioner Little stated that they had previously made changes that were not incorporated because the Entry Guidelines were already sent out. They had discussed attempting to draw more accomplished artists to the event, but there were no guidelines set to support that goal. Further, she had previously heard comments from artists that they chose not to participate because they thought the City had allowed artists in who were “not really artists” or were not up to a certain standard for a juried event. She thought the CAC should give consideration to the wording to change that perception.

Chair Greer noted that the language had been used for the exhibition for years but acknowledged that she had also struggled with the idea. It was an open exhibition, and they did not turn away a lot of work. She asked if Commissioner Little was suggesting they not host an open exhibition.

Commissioner Little said that she thought the CAC should seriously consider the issue. In order to get more established artists, they needed to make sure the exhibition did not appear to be for amateurs.

Vice Chair Flanagan asked how Commissioner Little suggested they rewrite the guidelines.

Commissioner Little did not want to workshop the idea but thought that the CAC needed to think about the matter before they finalized the language. If it needed to be finalized urgently she understood, but if not then they could look at it further. Last year they decided not to charge 30% or insist that the artist donate 30% of their profits to the Newport Beach Arts Foundation (NBAF). Many artists were very happy about that. They stated that they would rather pay more to enter the exhibition than have to pay in their proceeds. Some artists did not make sales on the day. The exhibition works as a means of exposure. Many artists struggle financially and she wanted to bring that up for others to consider.

Chair Greer suggested they each offer opinions.

Vice Chair Flanagan had never attended the Newport Beach Art Exhibition and had no issue with the guidelines.

Commissioner Kaufman understood Commissioner Little’s points. She suggested the bullet points be reordered and categorized. That way, age could be buried in the requirements and the information emphasized would be about original artwork.

Commissioner Little agreed.

Commissioner Kaufman thought the guidelines were important and should not be struck but could be reordered.

Chair Greer said that the guidelines were like those sent out in 2019 when they had their largest artist turnout. She did not recommend increasing the entry fee and removing the donation to the NBAF, as the CAC is currently strapped for funds. The NBAF needs a vehicle to raise money and most of the artists she had spoken with adjusted the price of the artwork to get what they need. First time artists might object, but artists familiar with the exhibition simply adjust their prices.

Commissioner Little stated that the majority of artists did not make a sale the day of the exhibition. That could be due to increased prices. She stressed that she wanted to hear from the absent Commissioners on the matter as well. Finally, she disagreed with the guideline that works had to be completed within the last two years. She argued that art was not fashion and therefore she was unsure if that was necessary.

Chair Greer explained that guideline was put in by Jana Barbier, who was the Arts Manager at the time, because they were receiving art that was very old and had been in prior exhibitions and not sold. They liked to see new things each year. She noted that staff requested the CAC approve the guidelines so they could start promoting the Newport Beach Art Exhibition. The committee looked at everyone's suggestions and redlined the document. The guidelines did make things look less mature, but she noted that the exhibition used to allow artists under 18. The exhibition was an evolving process. She asked staff if they had suggestions on how to proceed and for the deadline. She understood the CAC's concerns.

Library Services Director Hartson requested approval if possible. If the guidelines were delayed the Call for Artists in January would also have to be delayed.

Chair Greer thought that they needed to put out the Call in January based on last year's numbers. The event was almost \$20,000 and was important. She thanked Commissioner Little for her comments and agreed that they could omit the line about works produced at school or under direction of an instructor. However, the staff would need to really review the bullet point to see if anything needed to remain.

Commissioner Kaufman thought the guidelines could use some reorganization and an edit for clarity, but due to the need to get them out, indicated she could approve them.

Chair Greer thought there were grey areas in the guidelines. They were meant to give artists a vision of what to expect.

Commissioner Flanagan liked the idea of moving the age requirement to the end. She thought it was fine to keep "original artwork only" and remove the rest about works done in school. Photography had to be signed and numbered.

Chair Greer asked what they thought about copied works. She was very worried about copied works from published photos or artist reproductions. They could still include that in the section that discussed dimensions. Too many guidelines could be overwhelming for artists, and they wanted to fill the exhibition.

Commissioner Little said that every year they had artists ask about framing. There could be an exception made for wrap around canvas works.

Chair Greer said that they had accepted the works without frames when that happened.

Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia explained that when artists asked she requested photos of the canvas so she could verify the painting wrapped around the edges. She could include that language in next year's exhibition but did not see it as a problem for this exhibition.

Chair Greer noted that Library Services Director Hartson had mentioned that to the CAC previously and it had been acceptable. The frame requirement was because people were bringing in works that were just on paper. She asked if they should leave the language as is and have Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia clarify the frame issue.

Library Services Director Hartson said that was acceptable if the CAC decided it was.

Chair Greer asked if the CAC was in agreement.

Commissioner Little said that she was in agreement and pointed out a section where the items listed should be singular and not plural. It should also be re-worded because drawings were not paintings. It should be revised and word smithed. The CAC had previously discussed adding pastel as well.

Chair Greer stated that they had not had it before but suggested they add it. She recommended paintings and drawings as categories as well as mixed media, sculpture, and photography. She asked if that made sense.

Commissioner Little requested she read the sentence as she wanted it stated.

Chair Greer read, "works of art can be Paintings (oils, watercolors, acrylics), Drawings (ink, pencil, charcoal, pastel) ...

Commissioner Little thought the word "Paintings" was unnecessary because they were all works of art.

Chair Greer indicated it was already in the guidelines.

Commissioner Little understood. She wanted it stated, "works of art can be of oil, watercolor, acrylic, ink, pencil, charcoal, pastel, mixed media, sculpture, or photography."

Chair Greer said that artworks could be paintings, as were the other categories.

Commissioner Little agreed and said that everything that would be submitted was a work of art, therefore, they did not need to use the word painting.

Chair Greer thought it should be left in. She asked for staff's opinion.

Library Services Director Hartson asked for Commissioner Little's language.

Commissioner Little said, "works of art can be of oil, watercolor, acrylic, drawing, ink, pencil, charcoal, mixed media, sculpture, or photography."

Chair Greer thought her statement was more definitive. Paintings and Drawings could be divided. She asked if they could submit it to a professional.

Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia explained that the Award categories as listed on the City Website were Paintings (oils, acrylic, watercolor) and then Drawings (ink, pencil, charcoal), then there was 3-D Art (sculpture and 3-D mixed media), Photography, Juror's Choice, and People's Choice.

Commissioner Little agreed that they should be separated in the sentence.

Commissioner Kaufman repeated that it would be helpful to use different formatting to emphasize things.

Commissioner Little agreed.

Library Services Director Hartson stated that could be done based on what they had on the website.

Chair Greer noted that the wording was eliminated in the 2022 guidelines.

Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia explained that the guidelines did not state it, but it was in all the marketing.

Chair Greer thought it was a marketing issue.

Commissioner Kaufman wanted to be consistent.

Chair Greer explained it had been added back into the guidelines because it was part of them in 2019, which was the best year for participation. She read how it was stated in those guidelines. It was good to have the information included.

Commissioner Little felt there should be uniformity. She thought it was unfortunate they had not seen the guidelines sooner because they took time to go through.

Chair Greer said that she had done a lot of research because she had noticed information was missing from the 2022 document. She suggested the staff look at the documents and the CAC hold a special meeting to discuss the item. The December meeting would be busy as they needed to look at the sculptures.

Commissioner Little suggested that if they reorganized the information as suggested by Commissioner Kaufman, that the size information be presented together. It was not organized in a cohesive manner and was kind of disjointed.

Chair Greer explained that it was based off other documents. She suggested that the CAC look at the 2019 document and see if the format was acceptable.

Commissioner Kaufman stated that she needed to leave.

Commissioner Little indicated that she would move forward with the CAC but had wanted to bring up things that she thought should be changed. When change was to be made, they did not have to return to how things were done and could try for a fresh outlook. She understood the urgency of the matter and suggested the ad hoc subcommittee work with staff.

Chair Greer thought that they would have to redo it as it was important. She thought it looked good as it was done in 2019. The event worked and had not changed.

Commissioner Little looked at the 2019 guidelines.

Chair Greer stated that the most important thing was to include the dimensions in the guidelines. There was additional marketing done that included a lot of the information. Twenty bullet points was too many.

Commissioner Little agreed and noted that the guidelines only needed to be online where the artists would sign up.

Chair Greer thought they were listed on CaFÉ. She asked if it had all the marketing.

Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia said that it did not, but that they would post the entry guidelines and the categories. She needed to make a new call on CaFÉ but would include the mediums they accept.

Chair Greer noted that Commissioner Little's comments would be included in the minutes. Upon receipt of the minutes, they could meet with staff and organize the information into bullet points. It could then be returned to the CAC. She thought they should consider reducing the guidelines, but she would not remove the percentage of proceeds going to the NBAF. She thought "accomplished artist" versus "non accomplished artist" could be left in and then the rest of the wording could mirror the marketing and be left to staff. She asked if they had missed anything.

Commissioner Little mentioned the framing issue but stated that Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia indicated she could handle it.

Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia said that was correct.

Chair Greer said that they would do "accomplished artist"

Library Services Director Hartson asked if that bullet point would move to the end.

Commissioner Kaufman said that was correct.

Chair Greer said that it would be listed right after the 3-D size limit. Numbers 2 and 3 were acceptable. The next would be reworded by Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia based on Commissioner Little's comments. The entry fee would remain the same. She asked about the 2-year requirement and heard that the CAC wanted that removed. She requested the bullet point on original artwork be word smithed by staff.

Commissioner Little suggested "please do not submit works copied from published photos."

Chair Greer continued to move through the list noting that most items would remain in the guidelines without change. She asked if a diptych could be something that is removed, and people could ask the staff about if necessary.

Vice Chair Flanagan thought it was a good idea to leave it in.

Commissioner Little said that someone had asked before and that was why it was included in the guidelines.

Vice Chair Flanagan indicated she would keep it.

Chair Greer stated that they would leave it. Things could be reviewed next year as well.

Commissioner Little asked if they really needed everything laid out or if they could say, "refer to the online entry form."

Chair Greer stated that the guidelines were what was online.

Commissioner Little said that they had to go online to sign up.

Chair Greer stated that it was not going on CaFÉ.

Commissioner Little suggested they did not need anything on the flyer.

Chair Greer said it was not a flyer. The revised text would be the entry guidelines. The CAC agreed to that. She confirmed that the CAC was satisfied and called for the public comment.

Jim Mosher, Newport Beach resident, indicated that he did not understand the donation policy to the NBAF. He also found the wording to be peculiar and thought it might confuse artists. He asked if the donation was required, expected, or accepted.

Chair Greer confirmed that the CAC believed it should say required. She read the line from the 2019 guidelines and indicated "accepted" should be changed to "required."

Mr. Mosher thought it should say "is required."

Chair Greer agreed. She noted something needed to be said about that money in the marketing, which she had not seen yet. Other members of the CAC voiced agreement. She indicated that she would give her notes to Cultural Arts Assistant Escareal-Garcia.

Motion made by Vice Chair Flanagan, seconded by Chair Greer, and carried (4-0-0-3) to approve the Newport Beach Art Exhibition Entry Guidelines with revisions made during the meeting.

AYES:	Greer, Flanagan, Kaufman, Little
NOES:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None
ABSENT:	Simon, McNulty, George

B. Monthly Reports

7. Surf Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Commissioners Marie Little, Arlene Greer, and Maureen Flanagan

No report.

8. Newport Beach Arts Foundation Liaison
Commissioner Meghan McNulty

No report.

VII. CITY ARTS COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS OR MATTERS WHICH MEMBERS WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ACTION OR REPORT (NON-DISCUSSION ITEM)

- Announcements: None.
- Future Agenda:
 - Surf Film Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting with the NBAF

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – 6:38 p.m.

Approved by: *Arlene Greer*