

February 26, 2008

**MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF THE
CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION AND
TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Cultural Arts Commission convened in a joint session with Torrance City Council at 5:35 p.m. on Tuesday, February 26, 2008 in the West Annex meeting room, Torrance City Hall.

II. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Candioly led the Pledge of Allegiance

III. ROLL CALL

Cultural Arts Commission

Present: Commissioners Bunting, Candioly, Miranda, Rische, Strehler, and Chairperson Smisek.

Absent: Commissioner Endo-Roberts.

City Council

Present: Councilmembers Barnett, Brewer, Sutherland, Witkowsky, and Mayor Scotto.

Absent: Councilmembers Drevno and Nowatka.

Also present: City Manager Jackson, City Attorney Fellows, Finance Director Tsao, Community Services Director Jones, Acting Cultural Services Manager Kaemerle, City Clerk Herbers, Senior Recreation Supervisor McClelland, Senior Business Manager Minter, City Librarian Weiner, Recreation Supervisor Ferguson, Management Associate Fulton, Program Coordinator Maddox, Torrance Art Museum Curator Newhouse, Theater Programs Coordinator Inferrera, and Cultural Services Consultant Powers.

MOTION: Commissioner Rische moved to grant Commissioner Endo-Roberts an excused absence for the February 26, 2008 meeting. Commissioner Strehler seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Mayor Scotto regretfully announced the passing of former Commissioner and volunteer Russ Nolte.

IV. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

City Clerk Herbers indicated that the agendas were properly posted.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2008

Commissioner Candioly moved for the approval of the January 28, 2008 Cultural Arts Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Miranda seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Endo-Roberts).

VI. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cultural Arts Commissioners took turns introducing themselves.

VII. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

VII.A EXCELLENCE IN ARTS COMMITTEE

Committee Chairperson Miranda provided an overview of the background and purpose of the Excellence in Arts program that recognizes excellence in the advancement of the arts as demonstrated by Torrance residents, businesses, or organizations. He stated that awards are given annually to applicants in the categories of dance, music, visual arts, literary arts, drama, arts education, and the Katy Geissert award that recognizes outstanding support for all arts in the City. He reviewed nomination criteria and announced the Excellence in Arts Award ceremony to be held on May 10, 2008.

Mayor Scotto noted that Torrance Education Foundation was also on May 10, 2008 but received clarification that it would be possible to attend both events.

VII.B FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Committee Chairperson Strehler presented information about the Facilities Committee that was created last fall to oversee the Cultural Arts Center including the Torrance Art Museum as well as the proposed Wilson Park Amphitheatre project. She reported that one area of focus will include the proposed accreditation of the Torrance Art Museum and presented questions that need to be addressed that include funding, exhibits, generation of income, and participation of local art groups. She discussed areas that need to be looked into regarding the Wilson Park Amphitheatre project that include noise, encroachment on traditional uses, generation of income, and primary use.

Councilmember Witkowsky suggested exploring installation of better signage at the Torrance Art Museum.

Community Services Director Jones commended the Facilities Committee for identifying questions regarding Torrance Art Museum accreditation and stated that the Wilson Park Amphitheatre was still in a conceptual phase with no funding opportunities identified yet.

In response to Mayor Scotto's inquiry, Community Services Director Jones stated that the proposed location for the Amphitheatre is south of the pond at the existing gazebo, with the intention of using the natural contours that are present.

Senior Recreation Supervisor McClelland presented the architect's version of

the Amphitheatre and described the three phases that could be constructed individually or at one time. He stated that there was \$100,000 budgeted for this project, of which \$10,000 has been used for the architectural concept, noting that at present there were no funding sources identified for the \$1.5 million estimated cost for construction.

VII.C NON-PROFIT ARTS GRANTS COMMITTEE

Committee Chairperson Smisek provided background on the non-profit arts grants program, noting that 40 grants have been awarded to date. She discussed the number of organizations that apply, their requirements, the recipients of grants, and evaluation criteria. She raised the possibility of increasing funding to better serve the arts community.

Mayor Scotto indicated that the amount may be increased in the future and suggested that it be stipulated that grant awards be a minimum of \$1,000.

Councilmember Witkowsky noted that non-profit organizations are even more important now that school budgets have been cut.

When Commissioner Candioly suggested implementing a sliding scale for awarding grants, Senior Recreation Supervisor McClelland indicated that allocation of grants could be flexible.

VIII. COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT REPORT

VIII.A DISCUSSION OF CULTURAL PROGRAMS

Senior Recreation Supervisor McClelland provided a power point presentation included in the material of record that describes the Mission, organizational chart, and accomplishments of the Cultural Services Division. He discussed performing and visual arts programming, festivals, arts education programs and classes, and special events such as excursions, guest artist workshops, and merit scholarships.

1. SPECIAL EVENTS

Cultural Services Consultant Powers provided information about the four programs each year that he is responsible for: Works in Progress in February through April, Ooodles of Noodles Festival in June, Wild Wednesdays! concert series in June through August, and the new Hot Fun Sundays in July through September. He distributed fliers for the next Works in Progress series "1968—Year that Rocked!" beginning on February 27, 2008 as well as a Program Report on the 11th Annual Ooodles of Noodles Festival.

Community Services Director Jones stated that staff had a successful meeting with representatives from homeowners associations to identify types of music, dates, and park locations to hold Hot Fun Sundays this summer.

2. TORRANCE THEATRE COMPANY

Theater Programs Coordinator Inferredera provided information about the thirteen programs that she works on each year and discussed the classes and summer drama

camp in collaboration with StarLight Productions. She presented a video about the Torrance Theatre Company and some of the productions that have been presented in the James Armstrong Theatre and Nakano Theatre. She stated that Torrance Theatre Company has gained the reputation of offering high quality, professional looking productions and expressed appreciation to volunteers and the Cultural Arts Center Foundation for their assistance, noting that formation of a Friends of the Torrance Theatre Company is being considered.

3. TORRANCE ART MUSEUM

Torrance Art Museum Curator Newhouse provided a brief history of the Torrance Art Museum, its mission, and an overview of activity since its reopening in October 2005. She reported that the Museum presents four exhibition cycles of contemporary art in three gallery spaces and has had over 13,000 visitors since reopening. She stated that goals include expansion of program offerings, education outreach to Torrance Unified School District, and developing a Friends of Torrance Art Museum. She stated that she looked forward to discussing the accreditation process with the Facilities Committee but that staff's initial thought is that it is not the appropriate time to begin such a costly and labor-intensive process. She added that accreditation is not necessary for the Museum to operate or to be eligible for most granting opportunities.

4. STORIES IN ART

Recreation Supervisor Ferguson provided background and an overview of the Stories in Art program that is supported by the Arts Education Grant Partnership Program offered through Supervisor Don Knabe, Los Angeles County Fourth District. She reported that the purpose of the program is to introduce children and their parents to the Torrance Library and Gallery resources. She stated that participants meet in the Library for storytelling, walk to the Museum to tour the current exhibitions, and then create artwork related to the afternoon's activities.

5. CLASSES AT THE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER

Senior Recreation Supervisor McClelland reported that there are 17,350 participants in the classes provided, as well as 1,676 students on waiting lists.

IX. ORALS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Bunting stated that it was a joy to watch the programming develop at the Torrance Art Museum, noting that it is becoming extremely reputable and that there is no other venue of its kind in the area. She agreed that better signage would be beneficial.

Commissioner Rische stated that she learned a lot at this meeting.

Commissioner Candioly expressed appreciation to City Clerk Herbers, Debbie Collins, and Senior Recreation Supervisor McClelland for helping him in his new position as Commissioner.

Commissioner Strehler announced that Torrance Artist Guild is working on a show in conjunction with home tours and Torrance Women's Club.

Commissioner Miranda stated that he hoped that joint meetings with City Council would continue on an annual basis.

Chairperson Smisek thanked Councilmembers and staff for their continued support.

Councilmember Witkowsky thanked Commissioners for their hard work and for being the eyes and ears of the City Council.

Mayor Scotto stated that the presentations at this meeting were very informative and that it was important to show the community all that is going on at the Cultural Arts Center. He added that he hoped that City Council would meet with the Commission at least on an annual basis.

Senior Recreation Supervisor McClelland expressed appreciation to Secretary Debbie Collins.

X. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:57 p.m., City Council recessed to City Council Chambers for the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m.

At 6:58 p.m., Chairperson Smisek adjourned the meeting to March 17, 2008 at the West Annex meeting room, City Hall, at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted April 21, 2008 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
