

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
TORRANCE CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Cultural Arts Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 20, 2007 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Miranda led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Armstrong, Endo-Roberts*, Miranda, Strehler, Wang, and Chairperson Smisek.

Absent: Commissioner Stadler.

Also Present: Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland, Cultural Services Supervisor Ferguson, Torrance Art Museum Curator Cristina Newhouse, Cultural Services Consultant Powers, Performing Arts Specialist Inferrera, and Program Manager Maddox.

*Commissioner Endo-Roberts arrived at 7:15 p.m.

MOTION: Commissioner Armstrong moved to grant Commissioner Stadler an excused absence for the August 20, 2007 Cultural Arts Commission meeting. Commissioner Strehler seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Wang moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda. Commissioner Strehler seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Cultural Services Supervisor Ferguson offered the following correction to the June 18, 2007 meeting minutes:

Page 2, Item 8, line 3: "...Manzanar opened on June 16, 2007..."

MOTION: Commissioner Strehler moved for the approval of the June 18, 2007 Cultural Arts Commission meeting minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by

Commissioner Miranda and passed by unanimous voice vote approval (absent Commissioner Stadler and with Commissioner Wang abstaining).

6. NEW BUSINESS

6A. REPORT ON TORRANCE ART MUSEUM ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Cultural Services Supervisor Ferguson introduced the item and welcomed Hazel Alamares, J. Paul Getty Multicultural Undergraduate summer intern.

Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland noted that tonight's presentation was informational and that staff was still in the process of evaluating the accreditation process.

Ms. Alamares provided a power point summary presentation on research she has collected on the American Association of Museums (AAM) accreditation process and standards. She offered a description of AAM accreditation and discussed benefits of accreditation that include a clearer sense of purpose, networking, credibility and accountability, leverage and support, and sustainability and a stronger institution. She described the accreditation process and AAM eligibility criteria, noting that Torrance Art Museum (TAM) has accomplished most of the requirements. She stated that characteristics of an accreditable museum include public trust and accountability, mission and planning, collections and stewardship, education and interpretation, financial stability, and facilities and risk management.

She reviewed the mission and goals of the Torrance Art Museum as well as the accreditation review process and projected timeline included in Attachment A. She outlined the AAM accreditation stages: application, self-study, interim approval, site visit, and final accreditation decision, noting that the process takes two to three years. She advised that TAM's first opportunity to submit an application is December 31, 2007. She concluded her presentation with TAM accreditation goals: leadership support, available staff and hours to support project, time commitment of two to three years for the accreditation process, financial and personnel resources, and time management of approximately 10 years for maintenance of accreditation.

Responding to Commissioner Miranda's inquiry, Ms. Alamares stated that accredited art museums in Los Angeles County include Long Beach Museum of Art, the University Art Museum at California State University at Long Beach, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Strehler, Cultural Services Supervisor Ferguson stated that comparable cities that have art museums include Los Angeles, Downey, Riverside, and Brea.

When Commissioner Strehler inquired what TAM hoped to gain by accreditation, Ms. Alamares responded that the Museum would become part of a data base in a large networking organization.

Curator Newhouse added that accreditation would allow potential eligibility for granting and would attract some types of traveling exhibitions.

Responding to Commissioner Strehler's inquiry, Ms. Alamares stated that there was a \$200 annual membership fee for American Associations of Museums.

6B. REPORT ON WILSON PARK AMPHITHEATRE

Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland presented a basic design concepts study to renovate the gazebo area at Wilson Park into a professional amphitheatre. He noted that the three-phase project was prepared by JVSA/John von Szeliski Architecture and submitted in November 2006. He provided background on the item and summarized project objectives and primary needs included in the material of record. He stated that limitations in funding capacity for the project could require building only a minimum-scope amphitheatre upgrade, with additional construction of more complete facilities as future funding opportunities become available. He stated that at present there were no funding, grant, or donation opportunities lined up to implement the construction.

He briefly described the three phases of the project: Phase 1 would include a basic stage floor, roof/canopy, and tiered seating, Phase 2 would include public restrooms and an enclosed stage house with dressing rooms and technical storage wings, and Phase 3 would include a control booth, lighting towers, and perimeter fencing.

Commissioner Armstrong concurred that it was a good idea to have a plan in place if funding becomes available and, in response to her inquiry, Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland stated that total project cost was estimated to be between \$1,234,000 and \$1,573,000, with Phase 1 costing approximately \$400,000.

6C. STANDING COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland reported that presently the Commission oversees three standing committees: Excellence in Arts, Community Cultural Plan, and Non Profit Arts Grants. He recommended that the Commission consider replacing the Community Cultural Plan Committee with a Facilities Committee that would encompass oversight of the Torrance Art Museum accreditation process, issues related to cultural facilities in Torrance, and evaluation of the Wilson Park Amphitheatre.

Responding to an inquiry by Commissioner Roberts, he provided background information on the Community Cultural Plan that was created in 1995. He noted that many goals of the Plan have been accomplished and that it would be appropriate to bring it up again where there is a Cultural Services Manager in position.

MOTION: Commissioner Wang, seconded by Commissioner Strehler, moved that the Cultural Arts Commission replace the Community Cultural Plan standing committee with a Facilities standing committee; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Stadler).

6D. JOINT MEETING WITH CITY COUNCIL

Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland recommended that the Commission direct staff to arrange a joint meeting with City Council in the near future.

Commissioner Endo-Roberts related her experience with yearly joint meetings of the City Council and Library Commission when she was a Library Commissioner.

Commissioner Armstrong stated that it would be important to discuss the Community Cultural Plan at the joint meeting.

Following a brief discussion, it was determined by general consensus to direct staff to schedule a joint meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Strehler moved to direct staff to schedule a joint meeting of the Cultural Arts Commission and City Council and for individual Commissioners to submit suggestions for agenda topics to Chairperson Smisek. Commissioner Endo-Roberts seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Stadler).

7. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

7A. EXCELLENCE IN ARTS

The following Commissioners were selected to serve on the Excellence in Arts committee: Commissioners Miranda (Chair), Strehler, and Wang.

7B. COMMUNITY CULTURAL PLAN

No report.

The following Commissioners were selected to serve on the newly formed Facilities committee: Commissioners Armstrong, Strehler (Chair), and Endo-Roberts.

7C. GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE

The following Commissioners were selected to serve on the Grant Review committee: Commissioners Endo-Roberts, Stadler (Chair), and Chairperson Smisek.

Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland distributed reports from grant recipients, noting that all organizations have submitted reports with the exception of StarLight Productions.

8. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Program Coordinator Randi Maddox reported on her responsibilities that include coordination of dance, music, exercise, youth gymnastics, art, and home school classes at the Cultural Arts Center. She also described her position as supervisor of the Cultural Arts Support Team.

Cultural Services Supervisor Ferguson reported that the next exhibition, opening September 8, 2007 at TAM, will be *Themes and Variations: New Abstraction in Los Angeles* in the main gallery, noting the partnership with Regina Klenjoski Dance Company that will give three performances. She reported that Fran Siegel's *Overlap* would be in Gallery II, with Youn Sin with *Rule Out* on exhibit in the South Bay Focus

Gallery. She encouraged Commissioners to attend the opening reception on September 8, 2007.

She commended Cristina Newhouse for being an outstanding curator and described some of her responsibilities and duties. She stated that a new assistant curator, Christine Finley, has been selected.

Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland noted that Curator Newhouse is a 30-hour per week employee and that a full time curator position would need to be created in order to fulfill accreditation requirements.

A brief discussion centered on goals and funding for Torrance Art Museum accreditation; Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland reiterated that staff is still gathering information about the accreditation process before it is prepared to make any recommendations.

Performing Arts Specialist Inferrera reported that she is the producer for the Torrance Theatre Company and Event Coordinator for performance-based programs with the Cultural Services Division. She discussed the success of the summer musical "West Side Story" as well as announcing upcoming productions that include "Proof" opening on September 7, 2007 and StarLight Production's "Bye Bye Birdie" August 24-26, 2007. She mentioned that auditions for Nunsense would be held on August 27, 2007 and that staff has been working on the Torrance Theatre Company's 2008 season.

Chairperson Smisek stated that she and the students from Kashiwa enjoyed "West Side Story."

Cultural Services Consultant Powers reported that he is preparing the next Works in Progress and the published report for Ooodles of Noodles. He encouraged Commissioners to attend the last Wild Wednesdays! on August 22, 2007 and briefly discussed the concert in the park series.

Acting Cultural Services Manager McClelland commended the dynamic group of employees in the Division and informed the Commission that, after two more weeks as Acting Cultural Services Manager, four Senior Supervisors from Recreation Department would begin rotating monthly in the position.

9. ORALS

9A. Commissioner Miranda announced that his wife and stepdaughter have become United States citizens and discussed his involvement with Philipino Athletes International.

9B. Commissioner Wang stated that she enjoyed Cultural Services Manager Myers farewell party and visiting museums in St. Petersburg and Europe.

9C. Commissioner Wang stated that she would not be present at the September 2007 Commission meeting.

9D. Commissioner Endo-Roberts stated that she enjoyed "Wicked" and plans to see it again.

9E. Commissioner Strehler stated that she enjoyed “West Side Story,” “South Pacific,” and the Torrance Art Museum openings.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: At 8:47 p.m., Commissioner Wang moved to adjourn the meeting to Monday, September 17, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Smisek so ordered.

Approved as Submitted September 17, 2007 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
