

# City of Clearwater

*City Hall  
112 S. Osceola Avenue  
Clearwater, FL 33756*



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 11, 2018

2:00 PM

Council Chambers

## Public Art and Design Board

## Roll Call

**Present** 5 - Chair Alex Plisko, Board Member Karen Cunningham, Board Member Judith B. Powers, Board Member Jerri Menaul, and Board Member Jennifer Barbaro

**Absent** 2 - Vice Chair Neale A. Stralow and Board Member Eric Seiler

**Also Present** – Kevin Dunbar – Parks & Recreation Director, Kris Koch – Planning & Project Manager, Madai Gutierrez - Recreation Specialist, Patricia O. Sullivan - Board Reporter

Awaiting approval

### 1. Call To Order

*The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. at City Hall.*

To provide continuity for research, items are in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

### 2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approve the October 26, 2017 Public Art & Design Board meeting minutes

**Member Menaul moved to approve the minutes of the October 26, 2017 Public Art & Design Board meeting as submitted in written summation. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

### 3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda

*Jenny Pearl of Art Bazaar/Second Century reviewed downtown art projects and events, offered to present them to the board, and requested that the board consider her for public art project consulting services.*

*Joseph Morgan recommended the City provide underprivileged residents with opportunities to experience the arts, complained that the City invested \$10 million in the Capitol Theatre, a venue that catered to wealthier residents, and said the Capitol Theatre should set aside 25% of its seats for working people.*

### 4. New Business Items

4.1 Provide direction on the Public Art & Design Board's purpose - Kevin Dunbar, Parks & Recreation Director

Develops guidelines, procedures and policies to administer the Public Art and Design Program.

*Parks & Recreation Director Kevin Dunbar thanked board members for*

*their service. Following budget cuts, the department's 4-member cultural affairs team was reduced to ½ FTE (Full-Time Equivalent). The department had some restructuring since Christopher Hubbard resigned; Public Art was still a priority. Recreation Specialist Madai Gutierrez will focus half her time on downtown and half on Public Art.*

*It was commented that it would be helpful if the City brought someone onboard with public art experience rather than starting from scratch. It was stated the board oversaw large investments in public art and had depended on staff for professional expertise re the best artist for a project, sustainability issues, and help with making decisions.*

*Mr. Dunbar said this was the Public Art & Design Board's board, established to make recommendations to the City Council. Staff, as the board's conduit, prepared agendas but did not lead the board.*

*It was stated that was not how the board had operated since its inception. It was indicated the board did not generate projects; staff brought projects to the board for review and recommendation.*

*Mr. Dunbar said staff would organize the process with the board. While staff looked for projects before, that was not this organization anymore. The board needed to make recommendations to the City Council re what they wanted to do. He worked for the City Manager. The City Council approved the budget.*

*It was stated the Clearwater Arts Alliance had worked casually with Mr. Hubbard and it was questioned how the Public Arts position could be reassigned to a different department such as Economic Development. It was stated the City's flourishing art scene, a huge component of downtown Clearwater, had improved significantly over the past 10 years and its economic impact was important. Concern was expressed that the board was not hearing that the City was taking ownership of the Public Art program and moving it forward.*

*Mr. Dunbar said the first step started with the board making budget recommendations to the Mayor and City Council. Following previous budget cuts, the City decided to do fewer things. The City Manager will submit his FY (Fiscal Year) 2018/19 budget by June 30, 2018 for City Council review and approval in September. In response to a suggestion that the Clearwater Arts Alliance and Public Art program combine resources, Mr. Dunbar said during the past 2 years, the City had allocated funds for part-time Alliance staff.*

*It was stated the Clearwater Arts Alliance was always notified after the fact re Public Art projects, too late to be part of the process. Concern was expressed that compared to downtowns in Safety Harbor and other*

*nearby cities that were taking off, Clearwater was not moving fast enough and needed to make a stronger commitment to the arts. Board representation on downtown boards was recommended to ensure that public art was not bypassed when decisions were made.*

*Mr. Dunbar said Ms. Gutierrez could research and provide information re upcoming City projects. Information re the CIP (Capital Improvement Project) budget for future City construction projects was on the City's website. No staff member was available to provide the board the information they were seeking. Additional dedicated staff required City Council approval. According to Public Art & Design Board rules, staff was responsible for providing a memorandum to the City Council re board recommendations.*

*It was stated that was not how the Public Art board operated. Board recommendations were based on the efforts of a strong individual who knew public art and how to advertise it and see a project to completion. The Board either agreed or disagreed with staff's recommendations. It was indicated the board was not capable of handling these responsibilities.*

*Mr. Dunbar said the process started with the board. Staff would advertise for artists at the appropriate time. The Board needed to formalize its recommendations. Staff would continue to advise the board re the Public Art fund. He said the board had not objected to Council reductions to the cultural affairs team. He discussed department responsibilities for City parks.*

*It was stated the Clearwater Arts Alliance had complained about staff reductions. It was noted the Alliance had pushed forward with the Garden Avenue Garage mural project, but the project was back to square one after the process broke down. It was stated the mural's selection committee was not contacted to choose finalists before staff advised the board that 2 groups were collaborating on the project. Concern was expressed it was unfortunate the process had not been followed.*

*It was felt the City should be getting on its feet this long after financial problems in 2008. Concern was expressed that the board needed more from staff than showing up at meetings; the board needed a point person familiar and able to work with ideas for public art who would bring forward public art project ideas within budget. It was indicated after a conversation with the board regarding a public art opportunity, Mr. Hubbard would post a call to artists, verify candidate credentials, experience, knowledge of materials, and previous public art projects, and then present a short list of the best candidates to the selection committee for review and recommendation to the board. It was stated the board was responsible for considering committee recommended submissions, requesting modifications, and making recommendations to the City Council.*

*It was stated the essence of board member concerns was the loss of an individual with expertise, training, and education in public art, who was tuned into nationwide public art trends and provided information to the board re timelines, managed projects, identified upcoming major projects, and helped the board's vision by providing guidance, general recommendations, and choices. It was suggested a public art expert be contracted who was familiar with the Public Art ordinance, selection process, neighborhoods, and best practices re art project materials and maintenance to oversee public art projects and assist the board.*

*Mr. Dunbar said the Parks & Recreation Department had lost staff members and was experiencing a learning curve. He said Ms. Gutierrez and Planning & Project Manager Kris Koch were competent and could do what was needed. He agreed the current process was good.*

#### **4.2 Review the Public Art & Design Board Budget**

Provide information on procedures for allocating funds to new/existing projects.

*Ms. Gutierrez reviewed the staff report and reported the Public Art fund had a balance of \$122,000, less funds dedicated to existing projects.*

*The breakdown of the amount and purpose of encumbered funds was requested. Staff was requested to provide an overview of upcoming projects, including those lacking timeframes so the board could make informed decisions. It was noted the board previously requested this information and had anticipated discussions today re public art associated with future City construction projects.*

*Mr. Dunbar said a new Countryside police substation was planned but its timing and location were unknown. The Crest Lake Park project soon will be added to the list. Solid Waste transfer station project public art money probably would go into the public art fund. Staff needed to speak with project owners to determine each project's public art budget, if public art was planned, or if budgeted money would be transferred to the fund. Mr. Koch said public art money associated with Fire Station 50 and 47 construction was added to the public art fund.*

*In response to a question re who determined the use of each project's public art funds, Mr. Dunbar said a former Fire Chief had wanted a public art statement at the Belcher Road Fire Station.*

*It was felt the public should make those decisions. It was noted that City buildings constructed at major intersections may not be the best location for public art; transient cleanup requirements needed to be considered. It was questioned if the Clearwater Gas construction project owner had*

*made suggestions for public art. It was stated Mr. Hubbard would have provided the board with suggestions for Public Art to be funded by that project's large \$235,000 contribution to the fund. Concern was expressed that the City now wanted the board to be responsible for suggesting art projects that fit within budget constraints.*

*Mr. Dunbar said a combination of staff and board input would identify future projects. The board should not depend on staff to bring forward all ideas. The board should determine what public art impacts they envisioned during the next 5 years to include associated maintenance costs. The Crest Lake Park project was estimated to add \$60,000 to the public art fund balance. He suggested the location required a sizeable art piece in the \$150,000 range.*

*It was stated one of the board's biggest concerns was the loss of Mr. Hubbard's experience, awareness of Public Art trends, and his ability to help the board with the process and oversee technical aspects of design and installation. A copy of the Public Art & Design master plan and its inclusion on the next board agenda was requested. It was commented that more general public input for Public Art projects should be sought and the selection process provided an opportunity for public input.*

*Discussion ensued with comments that many City Public Art projects were indoors, larger cities featured memorable outdoor public art, and future Public Art projects should be readily visible to the public. It was stated the City would not post on its website professional photographs of all Public Art in Clearwater; it was felt the City should be known for more than being home to the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. It was stated Public Art helped tourism, economic development, and quality of life and should be publicized to the residents who funded it, perhaps via a dedicated page in each edition of MyClearwater magazine.*

*In response to a question, it was stated the board would consider significant projects presented by outside groups. It was suggested outside groups might provide additional funding toward City Public Art projects.*

*Consensus was to schedule a presentation by the Clearwater Arts Alliance to update the board on its activities.*

#### **4.3 Provide Updates on Current Projects**

1. Update on Morningside Recreational Center
2. Update on SPC East branch Library

*Ms. Gutierrez said concrete flooring at the Morningside Recreation Center gymnasium was installed; project completion was scheduled for May. Public Art will be installed in October.*

*Ms. Gutierrez said the St. Petersburg College section of the joint library was completed. Following demolition of the administration building and former library, the City's parking lot will be constructed and the City's section of the library will open in April. The construction project included a lighted platform for artwork.*

*It was stated after the board declined to provide additional funds for the library's public art, the board was advised design proposals based on the original budget were due January 31, 2018, and the selection committee, which included Members Stralow and Menaul, was scheduled to review proposals between February 5 and 9, 2018 to make a recommendation to the City Council for its February 15, 2018 meeting. It was felt the Public Art & Design Board should have the opportunity to make the recommendation or determine that the budget should be increased and new design proposals be submitted.*

#### **4.4 Provide information about upcoming projects**

*Ms. Gutierrez said Assistant Engineering Director Tara Kivett said the Clearwater Gas and Solid Waste transfer station projects probably would contribute to the public art fund balance. She was awaiting information on plans for upcoming Public Works and Fire Department projects.*

*Mr. Koch said Crest Lake Park would be added to the list of upcoming projects once a budget was determined.*

*Consensus was for staff to provide the board with a list of all upcoming City projects, including those with unknown budgets.*

#### **4.5 Appoint a Chair and Vice Chair**

**Member Powers moved to reappoint Alex Plisko as Chair. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

**Member Cunningham moved to appoint Jerri Menaul as Vice Chair. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

#### **5. Old Business Items: None**

#### **6. Director's Report: None**

#### **7. Board Members to be Heard**

*Member Powers said it was important that the board have access to someone with significant expertise when making public art recommendations to the City Council. She suggested consulting*

*services for big projects would be helpful and could be contracted to make recommendations to the board and manage each project. She said members could submit names of art experts to Mr. Koch to fill this need. She requested staff report on consulting costs and ask the Legal Department if project funds could be used to pay for consulting services since the City was not providing a staff person qualified to handle this task. She suggested the Parks & Recreation Department budget could cover these costs.*

*Member Powers said public artwork at parks around the country should be researched before considering a design for public art at Crest Lake Park.*

*Chair Plisko said Crest Lake Park's location on a dangerous road would not lend itself to Public Art the public could appreciate. He suggested considering a sculptural playground.*

*Member Cunningham expressed support for well-designed bus shelters as Public Art.*

## **8. Adjourn**

*The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.*

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Chair  
Public Art & Design Advisory Board

Attest:

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Board Reporter