



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH CITY ARTS COMMISSION MINUTES

DRAFT

Newport Beach Civic Center – Council Chambers
100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach 92660
Thursday, June 11, 2026 – 5:00 PM

City Arts Commission Members:

Heather Ignatin, Chair
Vanessa Moore, Vice Chair
David Anastos, Commissioner
John Blom, Commissioner
Cory Glass, Commissioner
Tiare Meegan, Commissioner
Laurel Tippett, Commissioner

Staff Members:

Melissa Hartson, Library Services Director
Rebecca Lightfoot, Library Services Manager
Camille Escareal-Garcia, Cultural Arts Assistant

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Heather Ignatin called the City Arts Commission Regular Meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chair Heather Ignatin
Vice Chair Vanessa Moore
Commissioner David Anastos
Commissioner John Blom
Commissioner Cory Glass
Commissioner Tiare Meegan
Commissioner Laurel Tippett

Commissioners Absent: None

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

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Heather Ignatin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Notice to the Public was read, explaining the public comment procedures and requesting that cell phones be turned off or set to silent mode.

V. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. **Consent Calendar Items**

2. **Minutes of the April 9, 2026, City Arts Commission Meeting**

3. **Financial Report**

Review of financial information.

During public comment, Newport Beach resident Jim Mosher requested that Commissioner Cory Glass's name be verified for correct spelling in the minutes. No public comments were received on the Consent Calendar.

Motion by Chair Ignatin, seconded by Vice Chair Moore, to approve the consent calendar. Motion carried unanimously (7-0-0-0).

VI. **CURRENT BUSINESS**

A. **Items for Review and Possible Action**

4. **Outstanding Financial Obligations for the City Arts Commission**

Receive and file a report prepared by staff on outstanding financial obligations for the City Arts Commission.

Library Services Manager Rebecca Lightfoot presented a staff report prepared in response to a request made at the May 14, 2026 meeting, identifying two potential future financial obligations for the Commission.

The first obligation relates to the sculpture *Metalfor*, which will need to be placed on a concrete pad. Staff is currently working with the City's art installer to obtain quotes and will return to the Commission at a future meeting with cost and placement recommendations.

The second relates to *Chairman of the Board*, a sculpture that has remained at Civic Center Park without a formal placement decision. If the sculpture stays in its current location, no additional cost is anticipated beyond routine annual maintenance. A prior quote from 2020 estimated \$3,500 annually to maintain the piece, though that figure would need to be updated.

Commissioner Blom raised the question of how future financial obligations accepted by one Commission would be communicated to subsequent Commissions via the financial report. Commissioner Anastos suggested including such obligations as a payable line item, while the Chair suggested waiting for a specific instance to arise before deciding how best to notate it in the financial report. Staff agreed to find an appropriate notation method if such a situation occurs.

During public comment, Jim Mosher noted that the City maintains reserve funds that can be used to set aside money for future obligations and suggested staff investigate whether that mechanism could be applicable.

This item was received and filed. No vote was required.

5. Placement of Sculpture *Chairman of the Board*

Staff is recommending the City Arts Commission review and approve the Art in Public Places Ad Hoc Subcommittee's recommendation to keep *Chairman of the Board* in its current location at Civic Center Park.

Manager Lightfoot provided background on the sculpture *Chairman of the Board*, created by artist Steven Rieman. The piece was donated to the City and was part of Phase 4 of the Sculpture Exhibition. A previous iteration of the City Arts Commission was unable to reach consensus on a permanent placement — a November 2020 recommendation to move the sculpture to Marina Park was rejected by the full Commission, and a subsequent May 2021 staff recommendation to defer moving the sculpture and retain it at Civic Center until a suitable location could be selected was approved. Sadly, artist Rieman passed away in 2022. The sculpture has remained at Civic Center Park since the May 2021 deferment.

The current Art in Public Places Ad Hoc Subcommittee reviewed the matter and recommended that *Chairman of the Board* remain in its current location. If approved by the Commission, the acceptance will be forwarded to the Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission, and ultimately to City Council for final approval.

During public comment, Jim Mosher raised two points: first, that the Commission may not have formally voted to accept the piece at any prior meeting, and that the motion may also need to include formal acceptance; and second, he asked whether the sculpture's current location falls within the footprint being considered for a future police station.

Commissioner Blom expressed interest in placing art in parks throughout the city that currently have no sculptures, noting the Commission has few city-owned pieces to distribute. Commissioner Meegan agreed this would be a worthwhile long-term goal and noted that the title *Chairman of the Board* felt fitting for its current civic surroundings, making it a natural fit for Civic Center Park. Chair Ignatin concurred, noting that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee had studied the matter and that keeping the piece in its current location incurs no additional cost.

Motion by Chair Ignatin, seconded by Commissioner Anastos, to approve keeping *Chairman of the Board* in its current location at Civic Center Park. The motion passed unanimously (7-0-0-0).

6. Sculpture Exhibition in Civic Center Park – Phase XI Timeline

The Sculpture Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee recommends the City Arts Commission approve a timeline for Phase XI of the Sculpture Exhibition in Civic Center Park

Manager Lightfoot presented the Ad Hoc Subcommittee's recommended timeline for Phase XI of the Sculpture Exhibition, which closely mirrors the prior year's schedule:

- August 1: Call for artists opens
- September 18: Submission deadline

- September 22: Online review and ranking period by Commission and guest jurors opens
- October 8: Rankings presented at City Arts Commission meeting
- October 12: Public vote opens
- November 20: Public vote closes (one week before Thanksgiving)
- December: Public poll results discussed at Commission meeting; site walk conducted
- January 2027: Selected pieces presented to City Council
- June 2027: Sculptures installed

Vice Chair Moore inquired whether the four-day window between the October 8 Commission meeting and the October 12 public vote opening was sufficient for ArtsOC to address any safety concerns. Staff indicated ArtsOC had approved the timeline without reservation. Vice Chair Moore also noted that only approximately 200 people voted in the prior public vote cycle and encouraged ArtsOC to undertake more robust marketing efforts. Staff agreed to follow up with ArtsOC on that matter.

A discussion ensued regarding the City's installation contract with ArtsOC. Commissioner Anastos and Commissioner Blom sought clarification on how costs are billed — particularly for items such as crane rentals and new concrete pads. Library Services Director Melissa Hartson explained that the contract includes a line item for installation costs, but the Commission is billed only for services rendered. No unused allocations are charged. The contract also includes a contingency line item that has been used in past phases.

Commissioner Anastos asked whether the existing ArtsOC contract could be leveraged to install art in other parks at economies of scale. Director Hartson clarified that placement in parks outside the Sculpture Exhibition would require a separate contract with the City's art installer.

During public comment, Jim Mosher raised two concerns: first, that the call for artists materials should inform prospective artists of the possibility that Civic Center Park's footprint may be affected by future police station construction during the life of Phase XI; and second, that the jury and public voting process could be refined before September to allow the public access to a broader pool of submitted works, rather than only those pre-selected by jurors. A second public commenter, Nancy Warzer-Brady, representing Backhouse Dance and a Newport Beach resident, suggested involving local schools in the public voting process as a classroom project to broaden community engagement.

Motion by Chair Ignatin, seconded by Commissioner Meegan, to approve the Phase XI timeline and to invite Arts OC to present at the July City Arts Commission meeting to allow Commissioners to ask questions and consider refinements to the process before the call for artists opens. The motion passed unanimously (7-0-0-0).

7. 2026 Halloween Spooktacular Event

Staff recommends the City Arts Commission review and approve the Music and Live Entertainment Ad Hoc Subcommittee's proposal to have the City Arts Commission host a booth at the Halloween Spooktacular event.

Manager Lightfoot reported that staff recommends the Commission approve the Music and Live Entertainment Ad Hoc Subcommittee's proposal for the City Arts Commission to host a pumpkin painting booth at the 2026 Halloween Spooktacular event on October 24, 2026. This would mark the third consecutive year of the Commission's participation. Staff noted robust attendance and enthusiastic community response in prior years. Commissioner Anastos expressed strong personal support, describing last year's event as outstanding.

Motion by Chair Ignatin, seconded by Commissioner Anastos, to approve the Commission's participation in the 2026 Halloween Spooktacular event. The motion passed unanimously (7-0-0-0).

8. Cultural Arts Activities

Monthly review of cultural arts activities from the Library Administrative Office for upcoming Library and City arts events and services

Manager Lightfoot provided the monthly cultural arts activities report:

- The Central Library Lobby Gallery is currently exhibiting vintage Balboa paintings by artist Kathy Kehoe Bambeck. Gallery exhibitions are booked through May 2027.
- The Commission's Fiscal Year 2025-26 cultural arts grants were recently presented to recipients at the prior meeting.
- Concerts on the Green are approaching: the first concert on July 19 will feature Redneck Radio; the Pacific Symphony will perform in August to open the inaugural Art Week; and Flashback Heart Attack will perform in September.
- Art Week programming is taking shape with strong community participation.
- The Newport Beach Art Exhibition call for entries closes Monday, June 15, with 199 pieces submitted as of the meeting date.
- A Marina Park concert featuring Diego's Garage is scheduled for October.

Chair Ignatin commended staff for the significant increase in scope and effort compared to prior years.

This item was received and filed. No vote was required.

B. Monthly Reports

9. Art in Public Places Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Commissioner Anastos, Commissioner Meegan

Commissioner Meegan reported that the subcommittee assisted the Newport Beach Harbor Master in selecting artwork for his office at Marina Park and for the new offices at

Balboa Yacht Basin. The Harbor Master has invited Commissioners to view the pieces once installed.

10. Art Week Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Chair Ignatin, Vice Chair Moore, Commissioner Tippet

Vice Chair Moore reported that the Art Week webpage is live with a calendar of events, with additional events being added as participating organizations provide their listings and descriptions.

11. Music and Live Entertainment Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Chair Ignatin, Vice Chair Moore

Vice Chair Moore reported that final approval for the Pacific Symphony performance has been received.

12. Newport Beach Art Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Chair Ignatin, Vice Chair Moore

Vice Chair Moore reported 199 submissions received to date, with applications due Monday, June 15.

13. Public Relations and Marketing Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Chair Ignatin, Vice Chair Moore

Vice Chair Moore reported that a boosted call-for-entries social media campaign generated 20,000 views and approximately 1,000 website clicks at a cost of under \$200 — a significant improvement over the prior year. Art Week banners will be displayed at three locations throughout the city from August 3–17, providing two weeks of visibility.

14. Sculpture Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Chair Ignatin, Commissioner Blom

Chair Ignatin reported that the subcommittee met and reviewed the Phase XI timeline presented under Current Business.

15. Student Art Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Commissioner Anastos, Commissioner Meegan, Commissioner Tippet

Commissioner Anastos reported that while the subcommittee did not formally meet, Commissioner Tippet had conversations with representatives from Sage Hill School and Pacifica Christian to discuss a performing arts initiative.

16. Newport Beach Arts Foundation Liaison

Vice Chair Moore

Vice Chair Moore reported that she provided the Arts Foundation with an update on the Commission's upcoming programs and activities.

17. Historical Resources Liaison

Commissioner Blom

Commissioner Blom reported that no meeting was held.

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

No announcements or future agenda items were raised.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no public comments on non-agenda items.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – 5:45 P.M.

Chair Ignatin adjourned the meeting.