

**City of Oakland
Cultural Arts & Marketing Division
Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) Meeting
Minutes
November 3, 2008**

Members Present: Jennifer Easton*, Carole Jeung, Deborah Lozier, Cherie Newell (co-chair), Rick Moss, Claire I. Warhaftig, Andrew Woodd, Karen Zukor
Excused: Ernest Jolly (co-chair)
Absent: Jacqueline Boggan (Cultural Affairs Commission liaison), Devin Satterfield (CAC liaison)
Staff Present: Steven Huss, Public Art Coordinator; Kristen Zaremba, Assistant Public Art Coordinator
Public Present:

* denotes partial attendance

Meeting Chair: Cherie Newell

1. Meeting called to order at 5:40 p.m.
2. **Open Forum:** No speakers.
3. **Minutes: A. Woodd moved to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2008 PAAC regular meeting. C. Warhaftig seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Item 8.a. was moved up in agenda for discussion purposes.

8.a. Cultural Arts Programs Budgets, Staffing, Administration: Public Art Program Coordinator Steven Huss reported on recent budget issues for the City and the Public Art Program. Due to the City's recent economic downturn, the City Council proposed 'suspending' the Cultural Arts Programs and cutting all Cultural Arts staff. The City Council has never been in this position before, as typically the City Administrator develops the budget in concert with the Mayor. Staff learned of the proposal at the Oct. 17 City Council meeting. As Council planned to act on the revised budget a few days later, on October 21, Cultural Affairs Commission Chair Lori Zook and several Oakland arts nonprofits including ProArts had to quickly mobilize to spread the word to the arts community.

Huss stated that approximately 350 artists and other arts community representatives attended the Council meeting on October 21. City Council accommodated the supporters by giving over almost three hours to speakers in defense of the arts. Most spoke in support of the Cultural Funding Program, as fewer artists, arts organizations and other community members understand the Public Art Program and funding mechanism unless they have participated in a project. All municipal agencies are facing similar challenges with budgets, but most are not facing the proposal to completely shut down programs. Cultural Arts & Marketing Division Manager Samee Roberts was able to work with City Council, to provide them with options

beforehand. Ultimately, two of three Cultural Funding Program positions were cut, leaving one staff person to manage the program, and Public Art staff salaries now will be charged to projects (removed from General Fund); this model of funding staff is used in other cities, but is not ideal as it impacts the funds available for commissioning of artwork. All current projects will have to be completed without funds for administration, and an administration set-aside will be taken from all new projects. Huss noted that Commission and Committee members should be prepared to advocate for the programs again in the next budget cycle, prior to June 2009. Finally, he noted there is interest in the Budget Office in developing a private percent-for-art ordinance, but that is a long term solution. In the interim, ProArts will convene additional meetings to sustain the arts community's advocacy momentum.

Committee members and staff discussed additional concerns and strategies. Huss noted that in Berkeley a coalition of arts non-profits lobby every year for continuation of City arts programs, funding and staffing. All agreed there is a need to raise awareness regarding the value of public art; Huss recommended that PAAC become pro-active in crafting and delivering the message to elected officials. A persuasive argument is the value of the economic investment and return. At the Council meeting, staff made the argument that each dollar invested in the arts through the Cultural Funding Program leverages nine dollars in the local economy.

C. Newell called to form a subcommittee. D. Lozier; C. Newell; and A. Woodd all agreed to be on the subcommittee.

4. **2009 Public Art Projects Plan. Informational Item. First Reading of Draft Plan.** S. Huss presented the first draft of the 2009 Annual Public Art Projects Plan. Due to the budget reductions, some project budgets have been adjusted as staff salaries will have to be reserved from project funds, particularly for the ORA projects. New projects include Fremont Pool and Peralta Hacienda Historical Park, each with a small budget that must be spent on site. Committee and staff discussed how to create the most meaningful projects in light of the current budget challenges, and to avoid having the challenges or other City staff agendas drive the project opportunities. They agreed that it is important to keep pursuing the Public Art Master Plan agenda, and determining how to address the built environment, rather than just commissioning 'feel good' projects.

5. **Fremont Pool Public Art Project: Action Item. Approve Preliminary Request for Qualifications.** Assistant Public Art Coordinator Kristen Zarembo presented the draft RFQ for the Fremont Pool. The budget is \$30,000 but does not include administration costs. As this is a fast-track project which must be completed by June 2009, and without administration fees, staff all agreed the opportunity should be limited to the building façade, a high-profile location on Foothill at 46th. Zarembo encouraged PAAC members to forward any additional comments on the RFQ to her before it goes to the Cultural Affairs Commission on December 8.

Motion: J. Easton moved to approve the Fremont Pool RFQ. K. Zukor seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6. **Open Proposals 2004-05. Informational Item: Update on Sausal Creek Project by Artist Gwyan Rhabyt.** S. Huss reported that he was able to contact the artist, who has moved to Santa

Cruz but still works at California State University East Bay. The artist's main problem in completing the project has not been the permitting process but the difficulty with achieving vandalproof/weatherproof materials and fabrication methods. As all the stele are fabricated, staff now propose a temporary installation, to begin in April/May 2009. PAAC agreed and discussed coordinating a celebration to coincide with Earth Day or Creeks Cleanup Day.

7. **PAAC Nominations. Action Item. Review Qualifications and Recommend Appointment of Interested Nominees Judy Moran and Julie Trospser to fill Upcoming PAAC Vacancies.** C. Newell stated that local arts professionals Judy Moran, Public Art Project Manager for the San Francisco Arts Commission, and Julie Trospser, Conservator for the Oakland Museum, were nominated. Newell noted that they would replace the skill sets of the two PAAC members - Claire I. Warhaftig and Karen Zukor - who are terming out.

Motion: C. Jeung moved to recommend appointment of Judy Moran and Julie Trospser to fill upcoming PAAC vacancies. C. Warhaftig seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

8. **Program and Project Updates. Informational Item. Review Updates on Cultural Arts Programs Budget, Staffing, Public Art Program Administration, Committee Business and Current Projects.**
 - a. **Cultural Arts Programs Budgets, Staffing, Administration:** See above.
 - b. **Mandela Gateway Sculptures:** S. Huss stated that the sculptures would be installed in the next few weeks. The dedication is tentatively scheduled for Monday, November 17 at 10:30 am. Bridge Housing is assisting with the dedication logistics and Councilmember Nadel will attend the dedication.
 - c. **81st Avenue - East Oakland Library:** K. Zaremba reported on the successful community storytelling event pilot on October 25. Sixteen families participated in the event. The project artist Rene Yung and Public Art staff created an informal partnership with the 100 Families program, Youth Uprising, the Oakland Public Library and Acorn Woodland and Encompass Academy elementary schools to carry out programming and outreach for the event. Zaremba commended the artist's focus on leveraging matching contributions from community partners to expand the breadth of the project. A second similar event will be scheduled for the spring of 2009. In the meantime, participating families and interested community members can stay involved in the project and receive updates by creating a user profile on the project website, which is currently in development, at: <http://ouroakland.org/content/project>. The website will go live in early 2009. Additionally, the Library is hosting a state-grant funded Digital Storytelling Project out of the Eastmont Branch Library until June 2009. All community stories collected from that project will also be featured on the Our Oakland website. C. Warhaftig complimented staff on the project, noting its appropriateness for the neighborhood.
9. **Announcements:** C. Warhaftig invited all to attend the first annual event of the revived Treasure Island Museum, scheduled to take place on November 13, from 6 to 9 pm. J. Easton alerted PAAC members to an upcoming talk at UC Berkeley by Anne Pasternak, Director, Creative Time. Easton noted she would miss the December meeting as she has a schedule conflict with Ms. Pasternak's subsequent talk in San Jose.

10. **Agenda Building:** The December agenda will include a second review of the 2009 annual plan, the PAAC 2009 meeting schedule and possibly the review of the 2009-2010 Open Proposals RFQ.
11. **Adjournment.** J. Easton moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. R. Moss seconded. Motion passed unanimously.