



**MINUTES
SUNNYVALE ARTS COMMISSION
AUGUST 19, 2009**

The Sunnyvale Arts Commission met in regular session in City Hall Council Chambers, at 456 W. Olive Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 at 7 p.m. with Chair Obrey presiding.

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chair Robert Obrey
Commissioner Noelle Hughes
Commissioner Tara Martin-Milius
Commissioner Dennis (Jay) Shinseki

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Christine Lanoie-Newman (~~unexcused~~) (excused)
(Note: The August 19, 2009, minutes were amended at the October 21, 2009, meeting to change Ms. Lanoie-Newman's absence from unexcused to excused.)

Staff Present: Director of Community Services David A. Lewis
Assistant to the Director Cathy E. Merrill
Diane Moglen, Recreation Supervisor
Tegan McLane, Recreation Coordinator

CONSIDERATION OF ABSENCE

The Commission determined by general consent that Commissioner Lanoie-Newman's absence was unexcused.

SCHEDULED PRESENTATION – None

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS – None

CONSENT CALENDAR

1.A. Approval of Draft Minutes of July 15, 2009, Arts Commission Meeting

MOTION: Commissioner Shinseki moved to approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously 4-0. Commissioner Lanoie-Newman was absent.

STAFF RESPONSES TO PRIOR PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

2. Consider Use of Hendy Iron Man Museum for a Cultural Amenity – Phase II (CA 9/29/09)

Director David Lewis presented the staff report and responded to questions regarding the 25 year commitment required from Northrup Grumman Corp. (NGC), funding sources if NGC had agreed to provide the space for 20-25 years, and other groups' interest in using the space.

Chair Obrey opened the public hearing and there being no public testimonies, closed the public hearing.

MOTION: Commissioner Hughes moved and Commissioner Shinseki seconded to recommend that Council accept staff's recommendation, Alternative No. 1: Conclude this study based on the information from Northrop Grumman stating they are not in a position to commit to a museum facility on their campus at the present time.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously 4-0. Commissioner Lanoie-Newman was absent.

Chair Obrey stated he will present the Commission's recommendation to Council on September 29, 2009.

3. Theatre Use Policies and Practices (Study Issue) (CA 9/29/09)

[Prior to the start of the meeting, revised page 26 of the report, which corrected typographical errors in the alternative numbers, was distributed to the Commissioners.]

Diane Moglen, Recreation Supervisor, introduced Tegan McLane, Recreation Coordinator. Supervisor Moglen presented the staff report.

Commissioners' questions included the impact on current groups using the theatre if rehearsal times are changed, available rehearsal space in park buildings or other off site locations, and rehearsal schedule changes which might open up more availability for rentals. Staff noted the City does not receive revenue for resident groups' rehearsal time, but many requests are received each week from groups interested in renting the theatre; rentals generate more revenue. Commissioners asked if staff consulted with California Theatre Center (CTC) and Sunnyvale Community Players (SPC) and if the City is more generous with the theatre as compared to theatres in other cities.

Chair Obrey opened the public hearing.

Rick Haffner, California Theatre Center (CTC), said he agrees with staff's recommendation. He recalled Councilmember Moylan's comments that CTC's present daytime schedule prohibits Sunnyvale Community Players (SCP) from keeping sets up between productions. Mr. Haffner believes it is more related to the configuration of the building itself. The trend now is to have community theatre more flexible to allow different groups to use stage front and stage back for different sets.

Commissioner Martin-Milius asked how "tiresome" is it to set up and remove the sets each day; she said her understanding is that this is the core reason for this study. Mr. Haffner responded that the time to set up and take down varies by show but generally approximately ½ hour. However, he said if the user group plans a lavish musical production, it would take much longer. He said the difficulty is reduced if there are appropriate set designs, and it may be best to use the audience's imagination.

Commissioner Hughes asked for clarification on the issue. Mr. Haffner clarified stage set up and take down is not a problem with CTC, but to some other types of productions, it could be a bigger concern.

Chair Obrey asked Mr. Heffer to explain what CTC would have to gain or lose if staff's recommendation is accepted. Mr. Haffner noted losing rehearsal time on stage and moving to a park building is uncomfortable. He said using a park building for rehearsal would be an "embarrassment"

as the buildings are not designed for this purpose. Park buildings are small, floors are cold and hard, and there is limited seating and waiting space. Mr. Haffner said the ideal rehearsal space would be a separate building or an additional theatre.

Mr. Haffner said CTC saw changes coming with the current downward state of the economy. He questioned the payment of a "per ticket fee" to the City.

Director Lewis clarified for the Commission the contract negotiations and the difference in revenue when more seats (tickets) are sold. Mr. Haffner noted that both resident groups need a marquee and a public presence in order to sell more tickets.

Chair Obrey closed the public hearing.

Chair Obrey opened the floor for a motion.

Director Lewis said that it was stated in a previous public meeting that CTC is a for-profit organization; however, he clarified that both CTC and SCP are non-profit organizations. He wanted to be clear in case Commissioners had heard the misinformation.

Staff answered Commissioner question regarding the amount of rehearsal time and staff's ability to negotiate more or less time.

MOTION: Vice Chair Martin-Milius moved and Commissioner Hughes seconded to recommend that Council accept staff's recommendations:

Alternative No. 1: Maintain Sunnyvale Theatre's operating practices for scheduling as they currently exist with emphasis on operating and scheduling theatre to maximize attendance and revenue.

Alternative No. 7: Reduce the amount of rehearsal time groups are allotted to allow the City to expand current program offerings and provide additional time for rental use by other community groups.

Alternative No. 8: Reduce the number of show weeks for resident companies to expand access for other community groups and generate additional rental revenue for the Community Recreation Fund.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously 3-0. Commissioner Hughes abstained. Commissioner Lanoie-Newman was absent.

Commissioner Hughes abstained stating that she did not feel familiar enough with the background issues of this study.

Vice Chair Martin-Milius said she is glad to hear that the agreements are all negotiable.

3. Propose Study Issues/Budget Issues for 2010

Assistant to the Director Merrill gave an overview of the study issue process and responded to questions. No study issues were proposed.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

Commission Members Oral Comments

Chair Obrey mentioned local shows that he plans to attend.

Staff Oral Comments

Assistant to the Director reminded Commissioners of the public art tour scheduled for September 16, 2009. The carpool tour will leave at 6:15 p.m. from the Olive Avenue parking lot outside City Hall. The regular 7 p.m. September 16 meeting has been canceled.

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

- Youth & Adult Activity Guide Sep-Oct 2009

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Cathy E. Merrill, Assistant to the Director
Department of Community Services

Reviewed by:

David A. Lewis, Director
Department of Community Services

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