

**Public Arts Commission  
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA**



**MINUTES  
Regular Meeting**

Thursday, May 14, 2015  
Palm Springs City Hall • 3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Large Conference Room

**ROLL CALL:**

	Present <u>This Meeting</u>	Present <u>to Date</u>	FY 2014/2015 <u>Excused Absences</u>	FY 2014/2015 <u>Unexcused Absences</u>
Joshua Edmundson	x	8	1	
Anne Rowe, Chair	x	8	1	
Bonnie Ruttan	x	9		
Amy Sand		5	4	
Ann Sheffer	x	3		

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Rowe at 2:00 p.m.

**ALSO PRESENT:** John S. Raymond, Director, Community & Economic Development  
Jennifer Henning, Arts and Special Projects Coordinator

Chair Rowe paid a wonderful posthumous tribute to Commissioner Buddy West; Buddy passed away on April 19; his life touched so many friends through its journey and he will be greatly missed.

**ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA:**

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Edmundson, second by Commissioner Sheffer, to approve Public Arts Commission Agenda for Thursday, May 14, 2015; unanimously carried

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No Public Comments.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Sheffer, second by Commissioner Edmundson, to approve meeting Minutes of April 9, 2015; unanimously carried

**A. PRESENTATIONS**

1. None

**B. NEW BUSINESS**

2. Rainmaker Fountain Assessment  
Discuss Water Usage Issues and Potential Options  
**RECOMMENDATION:** Direct Staff as Appropriate

The City is moving forward with water conservation and has turned off all decorative fountains, including the Rainmaker fountain at Frances Stevens Park.

Commissioner Sheffer advised that she has seen skateboarding going on around and inside the fountain; feels this could cause some safety issues; we can't change the drought, the fountain is going to be off for the foreseeable future; putting it away for safekeeping seems the best thing to do. At this time it is an attractive nuisance.

Various options were discussed, i.e., move the sculpture portion of the fountain to storage until a decision is made as to what to do, dismantling the wands; Commissioner Sheffer advised that someone suggested it would make a nice planter.

Commissioner Edmundson – the bowl might make a beautiful cactus garden; need to find out what kind of jurisdiction we have.

Commissioner Ruttan – I know we can't make it go away; remember when it was installed and the concern about the size of it; its impact; obviously decommissioning it is the order of the day, but certainly taking the moving components out wouldn't be a bad idea; it could be a hazard; not sure what our obligation is to the artist in these situations.

Chair Rowe – I know the City is working at being responsible and flowing water is not something you should see upon arrival into town.

John Raymond – one of the things you might want to consider is having Ms. Henning start a conversation with the Artist, sooner rather than later. Particularly for in the future, will it hold water? Not hold water? (Will drought conditions change?) Even if the drought were to end in December with the rainy season, the sensibility of the community (not just Palm Springs, but California) is going to change about the use of water.

Mr. Raymond spoke briefly regarding the extensive repairs that have been performed on the fountain in the past. The longer it goes without pumping water, the seals and other mechanical equipment [down below] are going to degrade without regular maintenance. Mr. Raymond reiterated that this is an interactive fountain, when it is pumping water it is not uncommon to see people dipping their feet in and/or playing in and around the fountain.

Mr. Raymond thinks putting it "on ice," in a sense, is the correct way to go, but would like to see communication begin with the Artist earlier rather than later; maybe it will include conceptualizing it for something else. Mr. Raymond advised that staff will come back to the commission with a report after speaking to the Artist. Regarding safety issues, Mr. Raymond explained that there are some temporary things that can be done (bumpers perhaps) in the interim.

3. Public Art Sculpture Placement

Discuss Relocation of the Sculpture “Frank Bogert on Horseback” by Raymundo Kobo  
Located at City Hall, 3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way and Recommend Alternative Sites  
For Consideration, Including Palm Springs International Airport

**RECOMMENDATION:** Discuss Sculpture Placement and Possible Site Recommendations

Commissioner Sheffer – had a conversation with Councilmember Foat who mentioned to her that with all the work going on in the parking lots around City Hall, would it be time to consider a new location for this piece. She explained that Councilmember Foat thought that the piece gets lost in the architecture of City Hall. Councilmember Foat thought there would be a good location for the piece at the Airport near the fountain.

Mr. Raymond suggested that some research will need to be completed to find out what the terms of the gift are/the acquisition. If your site location subcommittee comes back with a couple of new alternative sites, we can look into the agreement of the art piece. This would be a good opportunity to look into relocating the piece; work has been completed on the parking lots; landscaping is going to change; City Hall is a mid-century piece of architecture in and of itself. Councilmember Foat has mentioned this at a council meeting, during Council comments.

Commissioner Ruttan – feels if it isn’t broke, why fix it? Thinks this piece speaks of the City [likes it where it is], he was such a significant person all those years at City Hall; knows it’s not the same aesthetic as the building; speaks to me of City Hall.

Commissioner Edmundson – is on the Sites and Installations Committee – would be glad to look into a few sites for recommendation to Council. Does not feel it works with the architecture at all; could possibly find a wonderful new home for this piece.

Item will be on next month’s Agenda for Subcommittee Reports.

4. Selection of Study Session Date and Agenda Topics

Review Possible Study Session Dates, Location and Agenda Items

**RECOMMENDATION:** Direct Staff as Appropriate

Study Session will be held Thursday, June 11, at 3:30 p.m.; following the regularly scheduled Arts Commission Meeting.

Staff requested that all commissioners email topics they would like to discuss either to Jennifer Henning or to Chair Rowe.

**C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

5. Public Art Sculpture Restoration and Conservation

Discuss Restoration and Funding Options for: 1) Victoria Park Totem Project by First Nation Hunt Family Located at Victoria Park, 2744 N. Via Miraleste; 2) James O. Jessie Desert Highland Unity Center Mural by Artist Richard Wyatt.

- 1) Victoria Park Totem Project by First Nation Hunt Family  
Victoria Park, 2744 N. Via Miraleste

Currently there is a proposal for restoration and conservation of the totem from the Hunt family. The Hunt family has advised that they enjoy having kids around during the conservation and

answering their questions about the history of the totem pole; there are also coloring activities, etc.

Commissioner Sheffer – feels it is a fairly urgent project; not clear if we have the funds in the budget for this year or if it could be obtained from some other department.

Mr. Raymond – after speaking to Finance Dept. and the City Manager, they advised to plan and go ahead to proceed with the restoration in the coming year; cost for restoration is approximately (\$20,000). We are coming up on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of public art in the City; the installation of this piece predates that anniversary.

Chair Rowe and staff will coordinate with the school (district) to coordinate dates for the restoration program; Chair Rowe will speak to the Hunt Family regarding options and requirements that will be needed.

2) James O. Jessie Desert Highland Unity Center Mural by Artist Richard Wyatt

A proposal has been received for the restoration of the mural; Staff has not yet spoken to Artist Richard Wyatt. Staff advised that the quoted price has been reduced, but feels there are other areas in the proposal that could be eliminated to further reduce the overall cost. There was a line item dollar amount to hire a professional artist to help with the conservation, could possibly be modified to use local students for cost savings. Staff advised that the lowest figure we will probably get to is about \$50,000-\$60,000; she also stated that a call could be put out to Masters of Fine Art Students and possibly create an education/mentorship program that works for everyone and has an educational component. Staff will continue the conversation with the Artist to move forward.

6. Community Outreach and Publicity – 2014/2015 Programming

1) Sculpture Dedication, Palm Springs High School Sculpture Project at Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce Office, 190 W. Amado Road; 2) R. HERO Sculpture Dedication Palm Springs Public Library, 300 S. Sunrise Way; 3) Spring Exhibition 2015, Staff Update Regarding Temporary Gallery Location.  
**RECOMMENDATION:** Discuss Programming Updates

- 1) There will be two public art dedications next Thursday (5/21) – The project for the Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with the Palm Springs High School welding class, has been installed. The dedication will take place May 21 at 10:00 a.m. The public is invited.
- 2) R. HERO has been installed at the Palm Springs Public Library – dedication will take place on May 21 at 11:00 a.m. – The public is invited.
- 3) Staff reported that she and Mr. Raymond have found a location (next to Ruben and Ozzy's) for the Spring Exhibition 2015. Minimal adjustments will need to be made to the space. Mr. Raymond suggested that the commission begin planning the exhibit.

Commissioner Sheffer – would like the discussion of art shows to be added to the Study Session Agenda. Also would like to talk about the subject of art spaces for exhibitions, i.e., staffed and non-staffed.

Mr. Raymond – there were concerns on the part of the Commission that there was not going to be an Annual Juried Art Show in 2015; Mr. Raymond was asked by the City Manager (Dec/Jan) to work with the Commission to have a Spring 2015 exhibition (there was approximately 2-3 months of looking for space) and now we are at the May meeting...it is not imperative that a

show be hung before June 30 – Mr. Raymond spoke on having pop up shows 1-2 times per year – maybe it is in lieu of the annual show at the Library or in addition to.

Commissioner Ruttan – would still like to go forward with the annual juried art show; the Desert Arts Center is a perfect venue for the annual exhibit – very well attended.

Commissioner Sheffer – advised the Commission that the Palm Springs Convention and Visitor’s Bureau is putting together a data base of artists and art organizations that will be available on their website.

Commissioner Edmundson – the Desert Arts Center might also like to participate in a more contemporary pop-up exhibition.

This item will be placed on Study Session Agenda for further discussion.

**D. LEGISLATIVE:**

7. None.

**E. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

8. Community Exhibitions  
Discuss Affordable Live/work Artist Housing Project in Collaboration with the Palm Springs Art Museum, report by Commissioner Sheffer

Commissioner Sheffer spoke regarding Artspace a non-profit real estate developer specializing in creating, owning and operating affordable spaces for artists and creative businesses. Artspace is the nation’s leading developer of arts facilities – live/work housing, artist studios, art centers, commercial space for arts-friendly business and other projects.

Commissioner Sheffer advised that Elizabeth Armstrong, Director, Palm Springs Art Museum has asked if the City (John Raymond and David Ready) would like to meet with them and a representative from Artspace; feels there are some interesting possibilities. They have submitted a proposal for a feasibility study to Mr. Raymond; the study would be \$20,000 (P.S. Art Museum is in agreement to pay half); interested in seeing more artists living downtown.

John Raymond – at the end of the day this is an affordable housing project which would fall under the purview of Community & Economic Development, as well as managing the City’s Housing Successor Agency (housing function out of the former RDA). The feasibility study will look at repurposing an existing building; there are potential opportunities with various buildings in the downtown area. Also, there would be a series of community meetings with stakeholders and the art community to get into what the fabric of the community is and the support on the artistic side and the civic side in terms of what this would be about. A report would then be generated. This could be a very exciting project.

The commission is in support of this project.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/REPORTS/REQUESTS:**

Commissioner Ruttan – hopes that commissioners will be attending the memorial for Buddy West. Would like to mention at the memorial that the bike rack he wanted so dearly is going to be installed in Demuth Park; would like

to invite his friends so they will be aware of that; would like a dedication of the piece and also place a plaque in his honor.

Commissioner Edmundson – thanked Mr. Raymond, Mr. Ready and City Council for supporting us and our art collection which seems is going to get a much needed revitalization.

Commissioner Sheffer – Looking forward to the Study Session; there are already a lot of ideas for next year bouncing around; if we have a plan I think we can get support for what we are asking for.

Chair Rowe – A Celebration of Life will be held for Buddy West on Saturday, May 23, 2:00-5:00 p.m., at Escena. Chair Rowe also reported that there is currently an opening on the Arts Commission; appeal to the community if you have an interest in arts, please let that be known and throw your hat in the ring.

#### **REPORTS OF STAFF:**

**1. John F. Kennedy Sculpture Removal, Tahquitz Canyon Way Median Project Update**

Staff reported that the sculpture was removed on April 22; now in storage; please think about new sites for this sculpture.

**2. Spring 2015 Library Exhibition Update, *Earth Matters* Artist Talk**

Earth Matters exhibition ended on May 13. The Artist lectures were well attended on Earth Day.

**3. Sam and Alfreda Maloof Foundation Student Field Trip**

The field trip on Friday, April 24 was a great time and very successful. The students were very engaged.

Jennifer expressed her sentiments for our wonderful Commissioner Buddy West and how much he LOVED being on this Commission. The Annual Juried Art Show was very near and dear to Buddy's heart. He will be greatly missed.

Thank you to My Little Flower Shop for the beautiful flowers in memoriam to Buddy.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The Public Arts Commission adjourned at 3:45 p.m. to its Regular Meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2015, at 2:00 p.m., Palm Springs City Hall, Large Conference Room, 3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California.

Adjournment unanimously approved by a Motion of the City of Palm Springs Public Arts Commission this 14th Day of May; unanimously carried.

Approved by a Motion of the Public Arts Commission this 14<sup>th</sup> Day of May 2015.

***APPROVED 6-11-15***

***ORIGINAL SIGNED DOCUMENT ON FILE IN CITY CLERK'S OFFICE***

***Paula J. Sweat***  
***Economic Development Program Assistant***