



City of Long Beach

Office of Robert Garcia  
Councilmember, First District

**Date:** March 2, 2010

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Councilmember Robert Garcia, First District *RG*  
Councilmember Suja Lowenthal, Second District *SL*  
Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell, Fourth District *PO*  
Councilmember Dee Andrews, Sixth District *DA*

**Subject:** Blue Ribbon Commission on Funding Arts and Culture

**Background:**

One of the defining characteristics of a great city is its commitment to a vibrant arts and culture community. Long Beach is home to an exciting and growing arts community. However, funding the arts remains a challenge, both in terms of the availability of resources and the managing of those resources in a way that best supports the artistic and cultural needs and interests of the City and its residents.

Raising funds for the arts and managing the distribution of such funds are complicated matters with several stakeholders. Arts funding is in dire straits at this time due to the economy.

A Blue Ribbon Committee comprised of community members with proven expertise in the arts, business, finance, and not-for-profit management would help stimulate new ideas for funding the arts and help clarify the best way forward for the City as alternatives are sought. In the process of review, other municipal models for arts funding would be explored for applicability to Long Beach. The Committee should represent a balance of viewpoints and a diversity of backgrounds, knowledge and skills. The Committee would advise the Council on the best ways to maintain or increase funding for arts and culture and at the same time review the current mechanisms for distribution of funding.

The Committee would receive staff support from both the Arts Council for Long Beach (the official arts agency for the City), as well as from the Economic Development and Cultural Affairs Bureau of the City.

**Recommendation:**

Request the City Manager convene within 30 days a 7-9 member Blue Ribbon Committee for the Funding of Arts and Culture with a charge to report back to

Council within 90 days. The Committee's membership would be jointly recommended by the Arts Council and the Economic Development and Cultural Affairs Bureau, with all members appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council.