



25 January 2021

Dear Gary —

Your letter to David Ready regarding the Public Arts Commission was sent to me by the City Clerk, and I'd like to respond to the issues you've raised concerning the benches in front of City Hall.

As you noted, these benches were meant to be temporary — part of our effort to help the City's economy during COVID by enlivening downtown and providing employment for artists. I'm happy to report that our efforts have been warmly received by downtown business owners, and we have paid more than 60 artists for their work.

I realize that somewhat different criteria apply to the benches at City Hall — and I certainly agree that we should have raised the issue with HSPB, because we try very hard to be an integral part of the City government, which means working with all of the departments and board and commissions. This was clearly a lack of communication on our part, and I apologize for not contacting them, even though we were trying to get this project going quickly because of the pandemic.

You've asked me to quantify 'temporary' and I think that the Public Arts Commission plans to reassess all of our current projects at the end of the year — but if you or HSPB would like the benches moved before then, we will be happy to do so, since benches are easy to relocate (the City does it often, to the extent that sometimes artists find that the bench they were going to paint is no longer there...)

Most importantly, I hope that if a future project of the Public Arts Commission is something that you find 'unfortunate' in terms of its placement, you will contact the chair of the Commission directly, or attend or provide a public comment at one of our meetings.

Meanwhile, before my term ends in June, I will try to establish better communication with HSPB, similar to what we have with the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Planning and Facilities departments.

Thank you for your concern about the Palm Springs 'brand' — we consider art to be part of that brand, and are committed to making sure that it is consistent with our history and culture.

Sincerely,

Ann Sheffer, Chair, PS Public Arts Commission