



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

The following are minutes for the meeting of the **City Art Board** held at 4:30 p.m. on May 9, 2024, at City Hall, 700 N. Main St., Las Cruces, NM, Conference Room 2007-A.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Adam Amador, Chair
Chantelle Yazzie-Martin, Vice Chair
Melanie Brown, Secretary
Susan Polka, Member

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Kayla Blundell, Member

OTHERS PRESENT:

Yvonne Flores, City Councilor/Liaison
Ceci Vasconcellos, Public Art Coordinator
Rebecca Slaughter, Deputy Director, Quality of Life Dept.
Corrina Miramontes, public/Las Esperanzas
Antonio Lujan, public
Martha Rodriguez, public/Las Esperanzas
Mina Stafford, Museum Manager
Cecilia Vargas, public

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Amador called the meeting to order.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Those present introduced themselves.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

4. APPROVAL of April 11, 2024 MINUTES

The minutes were accepted as presented.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

Ceci Vasconcellos reminded everyone that there is a code of conduct that Board Members and Members of the Public are expected to follow at meetings. She reported that Members of the Public will sign up to give input from now on.

Martha Rodriguez, Member of the Public represents Las Esperanzas. It is a neighborhood organization interested in the history of their Mesquite neighborhood. They are collecting stories about the neighborhood from the elderly residents. They would like to have a mural created on the street-facing side of the stage at Klein Park to help create a sense of community between property owners and renters. The expected cost of the mural is \$6,770. They have received funding of \$5,000 from Parks & Rec and Las Esperanzas has raised \$500, leaving \$770 to fund the mural. They have asked the Board to provide the remaining \$770. Ceci Vasconcellos noted that this is an action item so Ms. Rodriguez agreed to wait until that discussion item on the agenda.

Antonio Lujan, Member of the Public spoke in support of Ms. Rodriguez.

6. STAFF UPDATE AND ACTION

- Ceci Vasconcellos, Art Project Coordinator
 - GO Bond Projects
 - Fire Station #9 Call for Artists
 - EMPRC Call for Artists

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that the Call for Artists on Fire Station #9 has closed and there were 118 submissions with at least 115 qualifying. The Selection Committee scored them all and then met to choose the top three submissions. These artists will be invited to present to the Selection Committee in July. There are plenty of excellent submissions if one of those three chooses to drop out. The Selection Committee members are Councilor Corran, Chantelle Yazzie-Martin, Susan Polka, Jason Smith, and Joshua Vaughn.

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that the EMPRC Call for Artists is active. The deadline is June 4, 2024.

- Ask ALICE Workshops

The final workshop was a two-day event last weekend. Classes ran from 10:30 until 4:30 and lunch was provided. She provided the information from that workshop and suggested that Board Members should also attend such classes in the future.

- Lift Up Block Party

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that the Block Party is scheduled for May 18, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. on Espina Street near Valley View Park. She asked for volunteers to work the event.

- Water Conservation Festival Summary

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that the festival was a great success. About 850 children participated and placed bottle caps with their initials in them. The caps did not stick to the cement well and a few of them fell off during the week. The piece was repaired and painted with clear coat. Ceci Vasconcellos thinks that if the caps fall off, the archway will still look good. Board Members thanked Ms. Vasconcellos and Megan Connolly for their hard work.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- Pictograff Event - Mina Stafford, Museum Manager (Education)

Mina Stafford discussed the upcoming event to paint the wall at the Museum of Art facing Water Street. This mural is redone every two years. This event is "Pictograff" and will take place June 1, 2024. The artist's plan will involve event attendees in the creation of a mural. There will be a small art display at the Railroad Museum on that day as well. The Branigan Cultural Center plans to do programming to discuss the meaning of the artwork with the public. The Board was asked to approve the proposed mural design.

Motion and second to approve. Passed unanimously.

- Klein Park Mural Funding - Ceci

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that Parks & Rec has provided \$5,000 and Las Esperanzas has raised \$500 for the proposed mural at Klein Park. The CAB was requested to provide the remaining \$770 to fund the project. The proposed mural was shown. Ms. Rodriguez of Las Esperanzas requested and received capital outlay funding to repair the roof, improve the acoustics, and paint the facade of the bandstand. Public Works was also asked to improve the ADA accommodations in the park and add a shade structure over the playground to keep the metal equipment from burning the children. Timing is important for this project, as the \$5,000 needs to be encumbered before the end of this fiscal year. There are some administrative issues that Ceci Vasconcellos needs to follow up on regarding the funds from Parks & Rec. The proposed mural design was agreed upon by Las Esperanzas in preparation to be brought to the Board for funding approval. Las Esperanzas publicizes their meetings and invites everyone to come. Las Esperanzas is planning a 25-year anniversary celebration at Klein Park on October 26, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Everyone is invited.

Motion and second to approve funding this project. Passed unanimously.

- Parks & Recreation mural recommendation - Susan Polka

Susan Polka reported that she inspected the vandalized mural at Lions Park last week. It is hidden between the back of the swimming facility and the tennis courts, thus not visible unless a person deliberately walks around the building to look for it. It is not a great area in which to display artwork. Furthermore, Ms. Polka reported that there were a few cyclists and a questionable person passing through the space, which made it even more uninviting. The mural is eight years old, is faded and graffitied and looks tired. She felt repair was not warranted and it should be painted over with something new. Ceci Vasconcellos stated that the appraiser's report agrees with Ms. Polka's opinion. The original artist's last proposal for repairing the mural was around \$10,000 and will undoubtedly be much higher now. Ceci Vasconcellos further reported that the president of the neighborhood tennis association volunteered to paint over the mural because the it has become an eyesore. Board Members agreed that the art should be decommissioned, and the wall painted a solid color. Ceci Vasconcellos reminded the Board that there may be backlash for this decision so their reasoning will need to be cohesively documented in a written response to Parks & Rec's initial request for guidance on the issue. Reasons stated for decommissioning the mural include its lack of visibility, its hidden location inviting continued graffiti/vandalism, and the cost of restoring or replacing the mural, which is near the end of its expected lifespan. Additionally, the mural is considered a "work for hire" piece and therefore does NOT require the artist's input/permission to make alterations. The Board agreed that Parks & Rec can do whatever they want with that wall, whether it is used for youth programs or simply left blank.

Motion and second to not approve restoring or replacing the mural at Lions Park and publishing the reasoning behind this decision. Passed unanimously.

8. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- Chalk the Plaza Committee Debrief - Melanie Brown

Melanie Brown reported that she spoke with Katrina and Tina and they felt there had been a good turnout with 1,000 votes for favorite artists. The lessons learned from last year helped this year's event to go more smoothly. CAB is currently shy 2 members and only 4 turned out, so that was a little disappointing. Overall though, the event was a success. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin reported that the awards announcement was rushed and felt like the CAB was sidelined. Adam Amador reported that the day was too long, lasting until 7:30 p.m., and asked if the project actually aligned with Ceci Vasconcellos' metrics. He recommended digitizing the voting with a QR code for each artist rather than doing it by hand. Board Members agreed with Dr. Amador that it

may not be the most beneficial venue for the CAB to do outreach. People did show appreciation for the event. There was a suggestion to collaborate with Museums on their event instead. The Board will continue to discuss whether to participate in this event next year or not.

- Mural Best Practices & Guidelines - Chantelle Yazzie-Martin, Susan Polka

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin and Susan Polka discussed their work on the mural guidelines to date. The definition of mural is generally agreed to be something applied with brushes or spray paint on an exterior wall. The display life of a mural is considered to be around seven years. They consulted the Albuquerque mural policy for ideas. They created preliminary rules for funding levels and maintenance agreements, contracts, materials and material documentation, and prep methods. Board Members would rather have this remain a guideline rather than a policy because policies have to be enforced. Board Members congratulated Chantelle Yazzie-Martin and Susan Polka on a great rough draft. Members will review the draft and bring their comments to the next meeting for further discussion.

- Board Member Update - Melanie Brown, Chantelle Yazzie-Martin

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin reported that Prospective Board Member Angel Velasquez is available tomorrow so she will contact him to see if he is still interested in being interviewed for a CAB seat. Melanie Brown reported that she met with Prospective Board Member Cecilia Vargas for an interview last week and that she is excited to become a Board Member. Ms. Vargas has attended this meeting. Ceci Vasconcellos has started the appointment process for her to become a voting member.

9. COMMITTEE UPDATES

- Communication and Public Outreach

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin reported that the art photography is still in process. Since it is May, she is extremely busy with end of school obligations right now. She will bring her updates to the June meeting.

- Research and Development

Nothing to report.

10. BOARD COMMENTS

Ceci Vasconcellos reminded the Board that Board Members represent the CAB when they are present in the room. Outside drama has no place in the meetings.

Dr. Amador reported that he shared what information he could with those people who needed it to straighten out the backlash from the member of the public who spoke at the last board meeting. He reminded everyone that he cannot disclose any information regarding his students or certain aspects of his job with the schools. Board Members commended him on his professional behavior towards the guest and running a very productive meeting afterward.

11. NEXT MEETING – June 13, 2024

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chantelle Younger-Martin

Chairperson