



The following are minutes for the meeting of the **City Art Board** held at 4:45p.m. on April 13, 2023, at City Hall, 700 N. Main St., Las Cruces, NM, Conference Room 2007A.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Katrina Chandler
Christina Ballew, remote/via phone
Melanie Grey Brown
Dr. Adam Amador
Chantelle Yazzie-Martin
Greg Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jack Crabtree

OTHERS PRESENT:

Yvonne Flores, City Councilor/Liaison
Ceci Vasconcellos, Quality of Life, Art Project Coordinator
Cathy Mathews, Landscape Architect, City of Las Cruces
Diego Medina, Muralist for Klein Park
David Chavez, Historic Preservation Commission
Wilfred Martinez, Parks & Rec
Sylvia Camunez, Mesquite Resident
Irene Oliver-Lewis, Mesquite Resident

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chandler 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 March 9, 2023 MINUTES

On page 5, line 4, the Arts Fair was at the Convention Center March 25 through 26, 2023. The minutes were accepted as modified.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

6. STAFF UPDATE AND ACTION

- Ceci Vasconcellos, Art Project Coordinator
 - Fire Station #3 Art Project
 - ASCMV Art Project
 - Earth and Cosmos Repair
 - GO Bond Projects

The Fire Station #3 Art Project is nearing completion. The artist was at the last phase of finishing the structures about a week ago. He was having difficulty finding an installer to mount it on the building. Most of the people he called were afraid to touch something so expensive and did not want the responsibility of handling it. The tentative date for installation is April 24th or 25th. He is willing to allow the Public Art Class from NMSU to observe the installation, but he felt that a better idea would be for him to offer a lecture on his piece and the process from his own experience on April 25th. Ms. Vasconcellos will confirm if this will be acceptable.

The ASCMV Project artist is working with the structural engineer to complete the designs for the foundation slab. Those designs will probably be finished by Friday, April 21st and then the contractor can start installing the slab, as the PO is already all set. Tentatively, the art piece will be installed in early May and the ribbon cutting for the center is hoped to take place by the end of May.

The insurance settlement for the Earth and Cosmos damage has arrived, so funding is now available to move forward with the repair. Mr. Schwaiger will send an updated proposal for Phases III and IV soon, which will then be forwarded to the Budget Office. This will notify them that the money is ready to be used to repair the piece. Actual work will probably not happen until Fiscal Year 2024.

The City Art Board received the full GO Bond net funding of \$340,000 for public art. Ms. Vasconcellos has already started talking with Parks and Rec and the Chief at Fire Station #9 to have them start thinking about what their art projects should look like. The fire station has a total budget of \$180,000 for public art. Chief Jason Smith has very specific ideas about how he wants to spend the money on the new fire station. Parks and Rec has \$95,000 to spend on the East Mesa Public Recreation Complex behind Sonoma Ranch and \$40,000 for improvements at any park. More meetings are to come about these projects. Ms. Vasconcellos will invite the City Art Board Members to attend the meetings with the fire station personnel and Parks and Rec. The budgets here are large and Ms. Vasconcellos is excited to have the Board involved.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- Klein Park Art Proposal - Diego Medina

Diego Medina presented a slide show of his design proposal for a mural. He has been out of circulation for a while and so now he has more new thoughts about the proposed mural. He reminds the Board that the surfaces available are unusual and challenging. He plans to create a mural that will connect Las Cruces' past with its present and future. His design includes abstract patterns based on Indigenous motifs rather than strict representation to tell that story. Mr. Medina's family has a close association with Klein Park as well. The mural will travel along the fence line and include designs inspired by Mogollon and Mimbres pottery that were found within a 100-mile radius of Las Cruces. Pottery found strictly in Las Cruces was mostly plain redware or white with one or two red stripes. There is only one traditional potter left in Las Cruces and she does not paint her pottery. There will be open spaces for vignettes throughout the design that will include images of things significant to the Las Cruces area. The surface of the fence itself is too rough and varied to do any detailed, realistic work, but it is well-suited to abstract art such as what he has planned. He also suggested adding QR codes so observers can look up the relevant history of the images. He hopes his design will provide education without political overtones. He plans to incorporate flora and fauna images as well as petroglyphs, as the landscape of an area influences how humans live within it. Mr. Medina wants to convey a feeling of history being a living thing and not confined solely to the past. He showed many photos of the odd irregularities of the wall surface. The painting will be on the street side of the wall on San Pedro, Griggs, and Organ. On the Mesquite Street side, the painting will be on the interior. Mr. Smith and Councilor Flores are very excited about this proposal. Mr. Medina is considering adding some text in odd corners but wishes to be careful what he writes there. He will be hiring youth and community contributors to help with the painting. He will be drawing out the pattern and creating a paint-by-number plan for people to participate. Mr. Medina also plans to compile a history of the park to put on a website and allow people to add their own stories there. Irene Oliver-Lewis is a resident of the area and is looking forward to having this mural done. She reminded Mr. Medina that the park is a gathering place and that the Cinco de Mayo and Dieciseis de Diciembre festivals were huge. Mr. Medina plans to have conversations with Ms. Oliver-Lewis and others in the neighborhood and get more stories. Mr. Chavez advised that Klein Park will be registered in the State and National Historic Places lists this year. It has one of only three bandstands of its kind in the state. A question was asked regarding painting only the front apron of the bandstand, if it would even be possible. It was suggested this could tie together the wall and the bandstand. Mr. Medina is excited about the idea. Mr. Medina proposed an increase in budget for maintenance. This would include cleaning up, sanding, and priming the surface of the wall before painting. The City Art Board does not have a start date set for this project yet. Ceci Vasconcellos asked about the lifespan of this mural. It is expected to last about five to ten years. Mr. Medina plans to use

high-grade UV resistant paint so the colors will last as long as possible. Christina Ballew requested a quote for the proposed sanding and cleaning up of the wall. Mr. Medina will add that to the budget. Adam Amador commented on the importance of including those personal stories as well as historical stories. The neighborhood association, Las Esperanzas, has an ongoing oral history project called "Mis Memorias." This will be made available to Mr. Medina. The funds for this project were earmarked five years ago from the CIP fund. The current budget is about \$13,000. Some of the Others Present thought there was more money available. Ms. Vasconcellos said it started at \$40K which was a match for other project. Ms. Oliver-Lewis thought it came from legislative funding, not matching funds. Vasconcellos reminded that was Arts & Cultural District (ACD) money. Christina Ballew suggested they review the minutes from six or seven months ago to understand the specific discussions regarding the budget for this project. Those discussions centered on the fact that Parks and Rec has a master plan for Klein Park that includes renovation within the next five years or so, therefore, more substantial spending on art is not prudent at this time since such art may not work with those renovations. At the time, the Board felt that it would not make sense to place a large, expensive piece that could get damaged or destroyed during future renovations. Furthermore, Parks and Rec did not have any budget to help with infrastructure for something big. CAB decided to use some of the ear-marked money for a smaller project in Klein Park and use the rest of the allocated funds for other art projects like utility boxes or other. There was more discussion about the commitment to do an art project in Klein Park. Irene Oliver-Lewis feels that only \$13,000 is not paying Mr. Medina enough for this project. Christina Ballew reminded her that Mr. Medina was invited to provide as much or as little artwork as he felt appropriate for the \$13,000. The Others Present are still wondering what happened to the initial amount of \$40,000. Mr. Medina recalls that the original proposal was for \$10,000. Stated how the project can expand which would require an increase in budget. Councilor Flores wishes to arrange a meeting with Barbara DeLeon, herself, Ceci Vasconcellos, and the City Manager to track down where the original money went. Irene Oliver-Lewis is concerned about a \$40,000 grant originally given to the ACD years ago. The money funding Mr. Medina's mural is coming from the City's budget for the City Art Board's startup not ACD money. More discussion about ACD capital outlay funding and how it was used. Christina Ballew recommends attendees to go back through the minutes from 2018 on to see what the timeline has been with these funds. All the minutes are in the public record on the City's website. CAB was given the task of managing the Klein Park project and hopes there is still trust that the CAB can do that. Reality is CAB can spend \$40K on an art project that will not be successful or align with the park's master plan but would prefer not to. CAB chose to do something smaller now and use money for other art projects in progress. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin stated that decisions have been made based on survey results and asked if earmarked funding remains in place forever. Ms. Ballew recalled timeline of how the original amount evolved to the amount that is being discussed. Promise from five years ago is hindering

progress. Strategically change amount to be able to move forward with projects this fiscal year. Irene Oliver-Lewis thanks the Board for all their hard work and how much good they have been doing for the City. Asked if Councilor Flores could find out how the ACD budget was allocated. Requested the CAB consider increasing the budget for Klein Park project. David Chavez recalls that the money the ACD had was supposed to be used for infrastructure, to repair the bandstand, add lighting, etc. Could not be used for art. Art Board was filling this gap. Partnership did not happen as planned and no one knows the ACD status. Christina Ballew asked Mr. Medina if the proposed budget is sufficient for what he plans to do and if not, how much he would request the budget be increased. Ceci Vasconcellos is the official budgeting person, but Ms. Ballew wished to hear Mr. Medina's opinion. Mr. Medina basically said that more money would be nice, but he does not have a definitive number. He asked the Board for guidance regarding how much of an increase would be possible to make the project the best it can be. When more money is available, projects are able to flourish. Ms. Ballew said that it is possible that the CAB does another larger budget in Klein Park in future years. She reminded the Board that they need to use the money they have before they can request more in the next fiscal year, as the City Council is not likely to vote for any budget increases if the City Art Board is not using the monies they already have. Anything \$20,000 or more has to go to City Council for approval.

Dr. Adam Amador moved to increase the budget for the project up to \$10,000 because it needs to get done.

Mr. Medina based his proposal on doing all the walls. Ceci Vasconcellos thinks that adding oral histories to the project may be beyond the artist's scope of work and that the City Art Board should convene a committee to do that, if that's what's desired. She suggested that Mr. Medina review his budget and note any adjustments he feels are needed at this juncture. There is a motion on the floor, and it needs to be seconded or it dies. Ms. Ballew suggested that everyone go back to previous minutes and be sure that they understand all that happened before. She asked if the Board should be approving a budget or a concept. Chair Chandler reminded the Board that the Action Item today was to approve the concept. She suggested waiting to approve the concept until the Board is sure the money is available for Mr. Medina's requested budget increase.

Melanie Brown seconded Dr. Adam Amador's motion to expand the budget by up to an additional \$10,000. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin, Dr. Adam Amador, Melanie Grey Brown, and Katrina Chandler voted yes. Christina Ballew voted no. Motion passed.

Ceci Vasconcellos reminded the Board that this money is coming from the City Art Board's CIP fund and has nothing to do with the ACD funds. There is \$108,000 available in the CIP fund.

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin moved to approve the concept that Diego Medina presented today for the walls around Klein Park. Melanie Grey Brown seconded. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin, Dr. Adam Amador, Melanie Grey Brown, Christina Ballew, and Katrina Chandler voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

- **LCPA Annual Work Plan**

The Annual Work Plan is a basic list of projects that the Board would like to do within the next year. It lays out where funding will come from and what the process will be for projects, such as when to put out a call for artists and when to do public input meetings. There are monies available in the CIP Fund, General Fund, the 2% Program, and the Art in Public Places Program. The Art in Public Places money will roll over to another fiscal year, but not repeatedly for several years. The project list includes ongoing things like the ASCMV and Fire Station #3, community engaged collaborations that occur annually, programs, communications, collections management and the art inventory (which may be started this next fiscal year), future planning with the GO Bonds, and other things. CIP funds can only be used for permanent art installments. The General Fund can be used for temporary art. The Las Cruces International Airport has \$11,000 from the 2% program and the City Art Board can either supplement that or wait until the airport gets more money.

Dr. Adam Amador moved to approve the Annual Work Plan for Fiscal Year 23-24 as presented. Melanie Grey Brown seconded. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin, Dr. Adam Amador, Melanie Grey Brown, Christina Ballew, and Katrina Chandler voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The Annual Work Plan will be presented to City Council at the work session scheduled for June 12, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- "Chalk the Plaza" Update

Christina Ballew gave the update. Everything is on schedule. The call for art and call for artists have been completed. The award and art supplies are pending. Logos were completed and sent, and the meeting conducted. Katrina Chandler reached out to NMSU for volunteers. Ceci Vasconcellos said that the volunteers are being vetted through the City's Volunteer Network. There are four volunteers so far for Chalk the Plaza. Anyone who wants to volunteer must use the Volunteer Network. Day-of graphics and signage and other products are in the works. Christina Ballew, Ceci Vasconcellos, Katrina Chandler, and Chantelle Yazzie-Martin are continuing to work on that. There were nine respondents to the call for artists but there was no contact information on the forms. Ceci Vasconcellos has found seven of the nine artists, lacking only Autumn McPherson and a family who only gave their first names. She has posted another message on Instagram and Facebook asking applicants to

contact her. Hilary from Visit Las Cruces offered a logistics meeting and Ms. Vasconcellos accepted. They will meet at the site of the event Wednesday, April 19, 2023 after 1:00 p.m. to plan locations of the art blocks and driving routes, etc. Ceci Vasconcellos will send notifications to the artists tomorrow. Supplies have not been ordered yet. It was decided to use the list used for the recent Chalk Walk created by Brian Lee at the Museum of Art.

The itinerary for the day-of starts at 9:00 a.m. with Ceci Vasconcellos, Christina Ballew, Katrina Chandler, and Dr. Adam Amador meeting at the site and starting to set up. Visit Las Cruces and the Museums Department are providing tents and will be dropping them off that morning. City Art Board will need to provide weights. Other coordination will be planned next Wednesday at the logistics meeting. Artists will arrive at noon and begin making their art. Public voting for the "Peoples' Choice" artwork will close at 5:00 p.m. Melanie Grey Brown and Chantelle Yazzie-Martin will count the votes. The competition ends at 6:00 p.m. and the City Art Board will vote for their favorite artwork and who will win "Best in Show". Board Members will use a rubric to make their decision. Winners will be announced at 7:00 p.m. There will be two prizes, for Best in Show and People's Choice. Christina Ballew will send out copies of the updated itinerary. City Art Board volunteers are: For 9:00 a.m. setup will be Ceci Vasconcellos, Christina Ballew, Adam Amador, and Katrina Chandler. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin will be there after 11:30 a.m. All-day volunteers will be Melanie Grey Brown and Katrina Chandler. Greg Smith will not be able to attend.

- Committee Updates
 - Communication and Public Outreach
 - Research and Development

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin reported that everyone attended the outreach meeting and spread information about the Board and its activities. One of the attendees was interested in joining the Board and another wanted to do a public art piece.

There is no news to report from Research and Development.

9. BOARD COMMENTS

Melanie Grey Brown thought Mr. Medina's presentation and concept were great and she would like to see him get started as soon as possible. She hopes the conversation did not put him off. The Mayor has approved a new member who needs to complete his paperwork to join the Board.

Dr. Adam Amador said it was a good meeting.

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin is really glad Klein Park is making progress. She is excited for the new mural and thinks it is beautiful and wants it completed soon.

Ceci Vasconcellos thanked the Board Members for their hard work. Two big projects are nearing completion, and the unveilings and ceremonies are coming up.

Katrina Chandler thanked everyone for their hard work and appreciated their ability to take public input and give historic information effectively.

10. NEXT MEETING – May 11, 2023

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin moved to adjourn. Dr. Adam Amador seconded. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin, Dr. Adam Amador, Melanie Grey Brown, and Katrina Chandler voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.



Chairperson