



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

The following are minutes for the meeting of the **City of Las Cruces City Art Board** held at 4:30 p.m. on May 11, 2023, at City Hall, 700 N. Main St., Las Cruces, NM, Conference Room 2007-A.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Katrina Chandler
Christina Ballew
Adam Amador
Greg Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Melanie Grey Brown
Chantelle Yazzie-Martin
Jack Crabtree

OTHERS PRESENT:

Yvonne Flores, City Councilor/Liaison
Ceci Vasconcellos, Quality of Life/Public Art Coordinator
Diego Medina, Artist
Mina Stafford, Quality of Life/Museums

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Katrina Chandler called the meeting to order.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Those present introduced themselves.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Greg Smith made a motion to approve the agenda. Christina Ballew requested to move the Klein Park Art Project discussion up to Item 6 so the Board can hear all the information before taking action. Greg Smith accepted the friendly amendment to his motion. Christina Ballew seconded the amended motion. The agenda was accepted as amended.

4. APPROVAL of April 13, 2023 MINUTES

Greg Smith made a motion to approve the minutes. Christina Ballew feels page 4, line 32 regarding the budget discussion with Mr. Medina is missing context. Discussion was had to request the transcriptionist to review and amend if there was an omission. Minutes were not approved.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

Ceci Vasconcellos introduced Mina Stafford to discuss the Pictograph Event coming up on Saturday. There are two walls in the kiln yard that will be painted on alternate years. Last year, they painted the west-facing wall and it will be left for next year. This year, the north-facing wall will be used. Next year, the west-facing wall will be repainted. Local artist Saba has invited several other artists and there will be painting demonstrations and a DJ in the courtyard. The theme will be how artists have expressed themselves throughout history, including rock art and other media. He plans to honor Chief Lozen Victorio's sister. Activities will begin when the Museum opens at 10:00 a.m. and continue until 2:00 p.m.

6. STAFF UPDATE AND ACTION

- Ceci Vasconcellos, Art Project Coordinator
 - Fire Station #3 Art Project
 - ASCMV Art Project
 - GO Bond Projects
 - Klein Park Art Project - Project History Clarification

Ceci Vasconcellos gave her updates. She met this morning with the contractor who will install the artwork onto the tower at Fire Station #3 along with Public Works staff, the Fire Chief, and the Battalion Chief to make sure everyone had their questions answered. They can now submit their documentation for permitting from the State. The projected installation date is May 22nd and 23rd, if the contractor can get the permit. She showed pictures of the pieces of the sculpture to the Board as a preview of what the art will look like. There will be three panels, one facing west, one south, and one north. The unveiling ceremony will be planned once the art piece installation passes safety inspections.

The ASCMV Art Project is waiting on the contractor to pour the concrete pad. He has ordered the utility line and Ceci Vasconcellos hopes to get that done next week, and then the concrete once poured takes up to 15 days to cure. After the concrete is cured, the artist can come and install the art piece. After installation and safety inspections, the piece can be unveiled.

Ceci Vasconcellos has begun the process for the GO Bond projects. She has scheduled the first meeting to gather information from Parks and Rec Special Projects Staff, the City architect, the GO Bonds Project Manager, Ceci Vasconcellos' Directors, and any City Art Board Member who wishes to attend on Monday at the East Mesa Public Recreation Complex at 8:30 a.m. She invited Board Members to come and will e-mail the information to anyone who wants to attend. They will look at the site to pick a location for the proposed art piece, discover what restrictions will apply to the art, choose the type of art it will be, i.e. a destination piece, a piece to tell a story, etc. The budget for this piece will be \$95,000. Ceci Vasconcellos will report on the meeting next month, even if no Board Members can attend on Monday. She reminded the Board that there are usually two Board Members on each Selection Committee when

the call for artists is done. Ceci Vasconcellos will have a meeting on Thursday, May 25th at 8:30 at City Hall with Chief Jason Smith and Public Works to talk about the art project for the new Fire Station #9. Their budget may be in the area of \$80,000 but is still under consideration. She again invited Board Members to come if they can and will send e-mail invitations to anyone who is interested.

Co-Chair Christina Ballew recapped City Art Board minutes regarding Klein Park from 2018 to clarify the discussion from the April City Art Board meeting. She will send the minutes to Board Members. Tina summarized and gave a timeline of past to present Klein Park discussions: According to the past CAB minutes, Amy Bassford presented the Our Town Grant before the Arts and Cultural District (ACD) even existed. Discussion included one large and two small pieces anywhere in the Mesquite area, painted electrical boxes and trash bins, and that the DAAC and ACD planned to support where they could. It was discussed that the City Art Board may match \$50,000 based on a conversation with Armando Morales and Garland Courts. The City Art Board allotted a budget of \$30,000 for the City Hall art and \$15,000 for maintenance. They suggested that the \$50,000 would still potentially be available for ACD even if their grant did not go through. Susan Frary moved to commit \$15,000 but the motion died. Susan McNeill moved to commit \$50,000 and it passed. Garland Courts mentioned working with David Chavez and Irene Oliver-Lewis, as they are a great resource for Klein Park. Tina was not on the board at this time.

The City Art Board continued the discussion in their August 2018 meeting regarding the Our Town Grant. They hoped for one major art piece in the ACD and two smaller public projects. They again discussed that they would commit \$50,000 even if the grant did not come through. By September 2018 meeting, the ACD had been established and the City Art Board was designated to organize the call for artists. Discussion included getting things ready ahead of time so that when the grant became available work could start immediately. David Chavez and Irene Oliver-Lewis attended that meeting as ACD representatives. In October 2018, the Our Town Grant was not awarded but the City Art Board would still award \$50,000 plus additional money from ACD for fundraising. There is nothing more in the minutes regarding the Mesquite District or ACD until October 2019.

At that time the Parks and Rec Master Plan for Klein Park was presented and included sculptures. Catherine Mathews suggested options for adding sculptures at Klein Park. Renovating the bandstand was suggested but Catherine Mathews believed that there was no budget to do so.

In November 2019, a committee was formed to investigate the bandstand and it was discussed that ACD would have to wait until the new roof was installed. They wanted to put out a call for art before the new budget year. Focus was on putting artwork on the bandstand at this point.

In December 2019, ACD and CAB members met at Klein Park to discuss funding, and moving the utility boxes on the bandstand, which ACD would fund themselves. The process was expected to take two years and the ACD would contact Public Works regarding utility relocation. CAB committed to the project plan for the bandstand there. Focus became Klein Park specific, not Mesquite Historic District.

In early 2020, it was hoped to have a prospectus and calls for art approved in February. The expected budget was \$40,000 plus a \$15,000 stipend for finalists, and a \$900 budget for the call for artists. Christina Ballew believes that when the ACD was brand new, the CAB was offering to support them with a gift to match their funds. As far as she can tell, ACD has not come up with any funds for updating the bandstand or anything they promised at the time. In January 2020 the call for artists was being prepared, but ACD still had not received funds to work on the bandstand. In February 2020, Lorenzo discussed that the RFQ would take six months and reported partnering with another department for more funds.

In March 2020, types of artwork were discussed for the bandstand and the timeline was flexible, depending on ACD's funding for infrastructure and improvements. Then, the pandemic happened, and everything came to a halt.

The Klein Park discussions were resumed in January of 2021, and the Board realized that the funds had never actually been voted on. There was pressure on the Board to actually spend the money and get more art for the community. The discussion was tabled until ACD representatives could be present. The ACD seemed to be having issues that month, so nothing was done.

In February 2021, the ACD presented a history of Klein Park. David Chavez was present and stated that there were funds to move the electrical boxes. However, the City did not wish to move those boxes. ACD said they would do all the improvements on the bandstand. Diego Medina was invited to join the discussion about art in Klein Park.

A new Klein Park committee was established with Susan Frary on the Selection Committee. Once Frary left, Katrina Chandler and Chantelle Yazzie-Martin joined the committee for Klein Park. There were \$30,000 encumbered and discussion included up to \$50,000. The Klein Park Survey draft was presented in March 2021 and in December the results were shared. It was discussed that without co-funding, the budget would be \$30,000 to \$50,000 and it was recommended that half go to murals and half to functional art. Survey results included temporary art, mural art, and functional sculptures.

In 2022, ACD was working on organizational infrastructure. CAB invited them to chat about Klein Park and wanted to vote on the funds and move forward, recapping the history of the project including the Our Town Grant. CAB had recommended \$50,000 out of the Capital Fund in 2018 understanding that the

ACD would match up to \$100,000. As the funds were not matched and the grant was not approved, only \$30,000 would be allotted. The artwork would no longer go on the bandstand because signage was installed.

The new Board needed to approve a budget and project plan for the new art purchase. After discussion with Parks and Rec, the board learned the original Klein Park mentions a sculpture garden at the entrance. ACD has infrastructure development to work on and is happy with whatever the Board would give them and would work within CAB's parameters to create art in Klein Park.

In April 2022 CAB passed a \$37,000 budget and discussed various types of art including murals for Klein Park. It was mentioned that CAB could lower the amount for a local artist and possibly fix the retaining wall but that going to ACD for funding would prolong the project. Frary proposed a budget from \$2,000 to \$5,000. Anything over \$20,000 would have to go to a nationwide bid, so not a local artist call; \$30,000 could provide a \$20,000 functional sculpture with two \$5,000 community mural projects. CAB would have to be responsible for financing, updating, or building new walls for artwork. Still, CAB does not have funding to fix the walls. Parks and Rec will not assist with the funding for improving the perimeter wall and does not recommend any functional art pieces. The survey did not take into account Parks and Rec's Master Plan. CAB discussed using local artists and possibly doing the retaining walls at \$15,000 to \$20,000 for each wall, using the \$6,000 wall at the library for comparison.

In May 2022 a budget of \$37,000 was passed, with sculptures that could be moved in the future considered. This was discussed with Parks and Rec, who have sculpture in the Master Plan. They also plan to replace the main wall but the lower walls could be used instead. The sculpture garden was discussed and that would likely take more than \$20,000 as quality over quantity is essential. Art that can be moved during the park renovations was approved by Parks and Rec. Parks and Rec's Master Plan intends to renovate the bandstand, therefore art on the bandstand is not a good option. The Board moved to use the entire \$37,000 budget to place a sculpture in the future southwest entryway to the park. Councilor Flores mentioned that discussion at the time included that sculpture is probably not a good idea because children will climb on it and that would be a liability to the City.

In August 2022, Susan Frary presented an analysis of the survey. Discussion included letting artists propose what they would do with a set budget. Survey respondents indicated that 37% of them wanted a mural, 27% wanted functional art, and indigenous consultation or native New Mexican heritage represented. Discussion again included ACD fixing the bandstand and installing a mural, Frary recommended using \$7,000 to \$10,000 for a mural, with the Board deciding not to consider the bandstand any longer. CAB tried to use the information from the survey and consider Parks and Rec's requirements, as they were only consulted after the survey was done. Ferrary said that anything over \$25,000 needs to be a national call. Setting a budget

and letting the artists decide what they would propose was discussed. If the Board exceeds \$37,000, they must present to Council. Christina Ballew wrote a letter to CAB and proposed: 1) To re-vote on the funds for Klein Park and meet the community's request, based on the survey, for one mural somewhere on the existing quarter wall. The wall will not be treated or patched with the understanding that the mural may be temporary. She recommends a budget of \$5,000 as that was the budget that was originally discussed in 2018. The proposition allows fair compensation for a community mural, and we are honoring the promise to provide artwork in Klein Park. 2) CAB can expand on the promise with the ACD by supporting another project piloted a couple years ago, which was the electrical boxes, which was the first thing art project discussed in 2018. We did do that by giving ACD \$5,000 for that and it was a hit. CAB has not done it again since, and Christina Ballew estimated that that might be another \$10,000. The remainder of the earmarked budget could be used for art in another district, as Council has said that some districts do not have any art. The split would be \$10,000 for Klein Park, \$10,000 for utility boxes, and then \$10,000 for another district. This would get artwork in Klein Park, hopefully before the end of the fiscal year. Later, the Board raised the budget to \$10,000.

In November 2022, Diego Medina was invited to participate in the mural project and present before the Board. The \$10,000 budget and which walls to use were discussed but ultimately the Board left it up to the artist, as he planned to paint all the walls. Parks and Rec still did not have funds to fix the walls but allowed that another funder could do it with permission from the City, and the Board would need a quote for that.

In 2023, the budget was increased by \$3,000 and CAB requested to see Mr. Medina's concept, which was presented at the last meeting. Christina Ballew completed her summary.

Board Members believe that the Board should move forward with their own plans and not worry about the ACD, as that organization is focused on the Downtown area at the moment. Apologies were given to Mr. Medina for the slow process and extra discussion delaying him from starting work. Christina Ballew reminded everyone that if they are interested in more information, the minutes are all in the public record, apologized to Mr. Medina for taking so long, and suggested that the Board should have contracted with him five years ago. The Board agrees to move forward from here and leave the history of this project behind and not try to partner with the ACD again, as it did not work out at all here.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- Klein Park Art Proposal - Diego Medina
Diego Medina brought a new budget proposal for his mural project. He is finishing up a similar project at NMSU and has been able to make more

accurate predictions for costs of materials and labor. He e-mailed his budget request to Board Members, and it was reviewed in real-time. The line for "surface preparation" does not refer to fixing the wall, only cleaning and priming it for painting. Christina Ballew clarified that raising Mr. Medina's budget to \$18,500 will at the same time lower the budgets for utility box painting and putting artwork in another district. Board Members understand and agree. The ACD already has more art than other districts, and the ACD Board has their own money to increase art in the area. Mr. Medina is eager to get started. Ceci Vasconcellos mentioned that this could be done with a purchase order rather than a contract, which would make the process faster. Mr. Medina also needs to get insurance before starting the project. The hope is to get the project done before the end of the fiscal year. Diego Medina will begin coordinating with Ceci Vasconcellos immediately. Ceci Vasconcellos will notify the ACD that work will begin soon on the mural.

Greg Smith made a motion to approve the new proposed budget and encourage Diego Medina to move forward with the project. Christina Ballew seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- **CAB Protocols - Review**

Katrina Chandler reminded the Board that Robert's Rules of Order is available for review and that this Board uses these rules so that everyone has an opportunity to speak without interruption. She read aloud a few points regarding discussion and motions to help remind Board Members how to go about it, for example that a motion that is not seconded dies and that no discussion can be had until the motion either dies or is seconded. Ceci Vasconcellos also reminded the Board that making a second is not the same as voting for the motion. Katrina Chandler also created a handout with the most pertinent points included for Board Members. Public input can be restricted by the Chair to time limits, when the public is allowed to speak, and the Board can require that the public submit their input 72 hours ahead of time for approval.

- **"Chalk the Plaza" Debrief**

Christina Ballew reported that the event was wildly successful. The Board received many compliments. Christina Ballew asked Board Members to write down questions, impressions, and suggestions for improvements for the next time the Board does the event and submit this to her for compilation. She will share the results at the next meeting, including the results of the survey that Ceci Vasconcellos gave to the participating artists. Overall, she believes that people were very happy with the event. Some participants felt that the event should be more accessible for people with disabilities and there were a few other comments for improving the event. Yvonne Flores suggested adding a question regarding special needs accommodations on the artists' applications. Greg Smith asked about a press release after the event, as he could not find any mention of the event in the papers. Ceci Vasconcellos put the information

on social media and was waiting on professional photos. The photos were sent to her e-mail, but she never received them. Yvonne Flores mentioned that the e-mail system is currently unreliable due to a change in the system. Board Members agree that the social media should be updated with the nice photos and a press release should be made. Yvonne Flores commented on the negative stories taking precedence over anything positive in the newspapers, even using non-local news. The Bulletin does a better job of keeping things local and positive. Christina Ballew will present the report on the event in the next meeting with a recap, then the Board can vote on whether to do it again next year. Ceci Vasconcellos thanked everyone for their hard work. Christina Ballew commented that the community has received CAB outreach projects very well and the Board should do more.

- Committee Updates
 - Communication and Public Outreach
 - Research and DevelopmentNo updates.

9. BOARD COMMENTS

Greg Smith was sorry to miss Chalk the Plaza, as he was attending other events. He is excited with the public response. He is looking forward to seeing what Diego Medina does with the Klein Park project.

Adam Amador is very pleased with Chalk the Plaza and very much enjoyed the event. He heard many compliments and interest from the attendees, including adding children's activities into the event.

Christina Ballew is pleased with the recent Board activities and hopes the momentum will continue, along with the good teamwork she enjoyed with this event.

Katrina Chandler was happy and excited with Chalk the Plaza's success, even though it was exhausting. She complimented Christina Ballew and Ceci Vasconcellos on their hard work. She is very happy to move forward with Klein Park and pleased that the recap is done and now it is over.

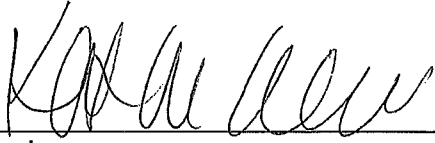
Ceci Vasconcellos thanked the Board for bringing Chalk the Plaza and reminded everyone to thank the City's workers for their behind-the-scenes participation. The Mayor has chosen a new potential Board Member pending approval at Monday's City Council meeting.

There was discussion that there will be further vacancies coming up soon, as Jack Crabtree has yet to formally resign after he left town for an extended period immediately after accepting a position on the Board. There is another applicant waiting for a vacancy, as well. Christina Ballew is considering staying on the Board.

10. NEXT MEETING – June 8, 2023

11. ADJOURNMENT

Christina Ballew made a motion to adjourn, and Adam Amador seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Christina Ballew", written above a horizontal line.

Chairperson

