



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

The following are minutes for the meeting of the **City Art Board** held at 4:30 p.m. on June 8, 2023, at City Hall, 700 N. Main St., Las Cruces, NM, Conference Room 2007-A.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Katrina Chandler, Chair
Melanie Brown, Secretary
Dr. Adam Amador
Chantelle Yazzie-Martin
Greg Smith
Yvonne Flores, Councilor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Kayla Blundell
Jack Crabtree

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ceci Vasconcellos, Quality of Life, Art Project Coordinator
Christina Ballew, Former Chair, City Art Board Member
Araceli Solis, DAAC Executive Director
Veronica Quezada, Visit Las Cruces, Event Manager
Carol Brey, Quality of Life, Director

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

April 13, 2023 MINUTES

The amended minutes were accepted as presented.

May 11, 2023 MINUTES

The minutes were accepted as presented.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

6. STAFF UPDATE AND ACTION

- Ceci Vasconcellos, Art Project Coordinator
 - Fire Station #3 Art Project
 - ASCMV Art Project
 - City Council Work Session

Ceci Vasconcellos reported on the Fire Station #3 Art Project. The artist installed the project on May 22nd and 23rd. The artist contracted with a local sign installer to install. The artist's work did not accommodate as-built conditions and did not fit the building correctly, with too-long screws and support brackets in the wrong place. The sign installer modified everything on-site. This caused it to take two days instead of the one originally planned for. Lessons should be learned from this experience for future Calls for Art. Once installed, it passed inspection. Ms. Vasconcellos has been receiving feedback already. The dedication ceremony is set for June 29, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. to avoid the heat. Greg Smith reports that when driving past the piece, he had to crane his neck to get a good look at it due to the depth of the projecting "fins". Drivers may not be able to see it well as they pass, but pedestrians should be able to view it more easily. An informational plaque will be installed by the sidewalk for people to read. Everyone is invited to the dedication ceremony.

The ASCMV project was installed yesterday, and it went very well. The piece cost \$68,000. It was specified to be a powder-coated finish but was finished with baked enamel instead due to concerns of damage during transport. Ceci Vasconcellos reports that the piece is 11 feet tall and has slightly more muted colors than she expected. It looks small considering the size of its area, but she is very pleased with it. It is very visible from the highway. The Shelter Director suggested that the piece not be a "photo op" piece. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin commented that her understanding was that a "photo-op" piece was what had been intended, but that access to it is difficult due to the rocky xeriscaping surrounding it. Furthermore, "photo-op" access must be ADA compliant, which will require some sitework. Ceci Vasconcellos hopes to make the grand opening of the new shelter coincide with the dedication ceremony for the art piece. The Shelter Director asked about lighting for the sculpture and Ceci Vasconcellos indicated that the CAB can do that later. Ceci Vasconcellos is not sure where the information plaque will be installed for this sculpture, either on the base or near the sidewalk.

The ASCMV has figured out a way to take a mural that is on the current building and use it in the new building. Ceci Vasconcellos is not sure how this works but is excited that they are considering adding more art to the new facility.

The CAB is invited to attend the June 26th City Council work session. The PowerPoint presentation is not finished yet. Ceci Vasconcellos needs feedback from the Board to complete it. This will be the yearly update to the City Council required by the Master Plan. The Annual Plan for next year includes an official assessment of the City's public art inventory, prepared by a professional art conservator to be hired by the City. The conservator's report will include which pieces need repair/restoration and which may be beyond help and just need to be disposed of. There was a preliminary assessment done by NMSU's graduate sculpture class and Ceci Vasconcellos will get a copy of that soon to share with the professional that will eventually be hired. It is incomplete and there are some privately-owned pieces listed in it, so it will not be recorded as an official report. Some money from the General Fund will be used to help with the assessment and maybe to do some small repairs. Requesting money from the General Fund is a long process. Carol Brey advised that \$20,000 has been allocated towards maintenance work on public art. The Budget Department starts working on next year's budget by July 1st and has a preliminary budget ready in early December. Input from Board Members is welcome, and July and August are the perfect months to receive that input. Ceci Vasconcellos suggested bringing up at the work session that more money is needed for art projects, the planned assessment, repairs of existing pieces, and other CAB activities. There was a significant budget increase for the Quality of Life Department this year, close to \$1.3 million. This is shared between several different sections such as the Library and Senior Programs, and will allow for some new activities and staff to be added.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- Chalk The Plaza - Christina Ballew

Christina Ballew presented a slide show and handout summarizing the CTP event. For background, Visit Las Cruces approached the Board in January with a request to be a partner in a public art project during their inaugural Miral event. The Board has a record of the original proposal as well as how this project supports the CAB Master Plan. Projects such as this elevate Las Cruces as an arts center by allowing local artists to interact with the public and receive publicity for their artwork, collaborate with the City's museums, and to add visual interest and beauty to Las Cruces. There are plenty of resources to enable these types of street-chalking events, e.g., partnering with Visit Las Cruces and MVEDA. The community becomes engaged in the creation of art in the Downtown area. These types of projects support the goals for public art in Las Cruces. Today, the Board will vote to continue or not.

The Chalk the Plaza event was held Saturday, April 29, 2023. Estimated attendance was 8,500 throughout the day. The event was a success, with all the swag being taken by attendees. There were ten artist participants and over 700 voters who voted for the winning art project. CAB was responsible for overall organization and management of the event, which included creating the project plan, designing the art call graphics, vetting the artists, setting up and volunteering the day of event, counting votes (people's Choice), voting (Best of Show), awarding artists, and breakdown/clean-up. Ceci Vasconcellos procured artists' supplies, did as-needed printing, managed the call for art on the website, and other logistical tasks leading up the event. Ceci Vasconcellos also handled communications with the selected artists, press releases, and promotional aspects as well as volunteering the day of the event, including set-up and breakdown/clean-up. Visit Las Cruces provided tents, funds for purchase of art supplies, food for artists, and prizes for winning artists. Mira Las Cruces also did promotions for the event. There were some attendees who are social media influencers, and they posted the event on their sites. They were very impressed with the event and enjoyed it immensely. New Mexico True representatives attended also and enjoyed the event. Mira and Visit Las Cruces are already planning to repeat the event next year. Christina Ballew offered the benefit of her experience to be next year's event coordinator and work with the CAB and Visit Las Cruces. She also offered to volunteer on the day of the event next year.

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that she had difficulty distinguishing who was responsible for the actual legwork needed to prepare for the event. She would like to see all the Board Members doing more of the work and not only the Executive Board of the CAB. Katrina Chandler pointed out that the Executive Board took care of the planning and then brought the plan to the Board to be voted upon. Ceci Vasconcellos apologized for her misconception but expressed frustration with the way so much became her de facto responsibility. To avoid such confusion in the future, a roster was suggested that would assign CAB members to detailed tasks in order to spread out the workload.

Greg Smith wished to avoid turning the event into a huge thing that must be planned for months; keep it small and simple to make art accessible to the public. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin agreed and suggested providing more food to the artists and volunteers next time. Dr. Amador suggested that everyone spend the entire day at the event to help with the set-up, take down after the event and return of the equipment to its City storage area, instead of departing before the work is done and leaving Ceci Vasconcellos alone to transport the equipment and put it away. Christina Ballew reminded everyone that the project plan has an itemized list of everyone's responsibilities. She suggested speaking with Carol Brey about volunteers' duties. Melanie Brown agreed and suggested trying to get more staff to help Ceci Vasconcellos in her duties. Veronica Quezada, the event manager, did not notice Ceci Vasconcellos overworking herself and reminded the Board that Visit Las Cruces has nine

staff members to do much of the setup and takedown and offered those personnel to help CAB at the next event. Araceli Solis reminded the Board that the first time there is an event, it takes extra work and then subsequent events become gradually easier. She suggested getting more volunteers from the other arts groups in Las Cruces. Next year's event will take place on April 22, 2024.

Greg Smith moved to continue the partnership with Visit Las Cruces and Mira Las Cruces and continue doing the Chalk the Plaza event annually going forward. Dr. Adam Amador seconded. After discussion, Chantelle Yazzie-Martin moved to take the vote on Greg Smith's motion. Dr. Adam Amador seconded. Motions passed unanimously.

- Dedication Ceremony/FS #3 and ASCMV - Ceci Vasconcellos

Ceci Vasconcellos discussed the dedication ceremony for Fire Station #3. There will be speakers, dignitaries, the Mayor, the Councilor for that district (Councilor Bencomo), Councilor Liaison (Councilor Flores), Katrina Chandler, and one of the Directors of the Quality of Life Department, which will probably be Rebecca Slaughter. Everyone is invited to attend the ceremony. She asked if the CAB wanted to have a part in planning the ceremonies or just attend. Melanie Brown suggested that the CAB should have an active role in the ceremonies as this is public art and the Board was instrumental in acquiring the art. Councilor Flores suggested that indigenous peoples should be represented, as the art is about them. Ceci Vasconcellos asked the Board to help set the agenda and guest list. This will allow Ceci Vasconcellos to concentrate on tents, refreshments, chairs, etc. PIO will take care of the press release. The ceremony will be on June 29, 2023. The draft press release should be submitted to the PIO by June 15, 2023. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin volunteered to generate an agenda and guest list with assistance as needed from Dr. Amador and Melanie Brown. Speakers should receive their invitations by the week of June 19, 2023. The entire ceremony should take about an hour.

Plans for the ASCMV dedication ceremony will be discussed at a later date, after the Fire Station is taken care of and a date has been set for the ASCMC opening.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- DAAC Arts Award - Araceli Solis, DAAC Director

The CAB won the DAAC's Art in Public Places Award last year with the agreement that, henceforth, the Board would take charge of the process for choosing the next recipient of this award. In this new role, the CAB will actively solicit nominations. The call for nominations ends July 16, 2023. The DAAC will forward any nominees they receive to the CAB, who will then choose a winner from all the nominations received. The CAB will present the award to

the winner at the DAAC ceremony on October 8, 2023. Penny Peace is the lead person at DAAC organizing this event. It was suggested that a rubric will be important in the selection process, which CAB has already been developing. Ms. Solis advised that DAAC has some selection criteria currently in place and suggested that CAB review/compare. An updated press release was suggested which would announce that the Art in Public Places Award is now being done in conjunction with the City Art Board. Voting for the winner will be done at the August CAB meeting. The City Museums and Library have outreach programs to the schools that could be solicited for artist nominations, as well. It was mentioned that the City has not given any financial support to the Dona Ana Arts Council. Ceci Vasconcellos offered to add Araceli Solis and Penny Peace to the CAB email list to help bring the new Council Director up to speed with CAB activities and promote more opportunities for collaboration.

- GO Bond Projects
 - Recap of Stakeholders Meetings - Ceci Vasconcellos
 - Call for Artist
 - Selection Committee

Ceci Vasconcellos reported on the following projects. She distributed examples of project plans to the Board for their examination.

Regarding Fire Station #9:

There have been two meetings with Fire Station personnel and representatives from Public Works and Quality of Life. They discussed their vision for what art will be placed there. Someone has donated an antique fire engine and it was suggested to create a museum-style environment for it as a piece of public art. Ceci Vasconcellos asked if there should be committee meetings outside of the regular Board meetings to create the call for art and get public input, etc., as she has not done this kind of art installation before and needs guidance on how to proceed with project plans. There was discussion as to whether this might be better served through the museum system as it may involve architectural services.

As an example, the mural done by Visit Las Cruces was brought up. Ceci Vasconcellos reported that the artist call was developed in meetings with the Assistant City Manager, Visit Las Cruces, and the CAB. The process included inviting the stakeholders into the CAB meetings, with Ceci Vasconcellos creating a draft call for art based on that conversation, and then the CAB and stakeholders heard the draft at the next meeting, where it was put to the vote. After the call was created and voted upon, a selection committee was put together and the call was put out. Given the more complex nature of this project, Melanie Brown suggested creating a subcommittee to better understand the physical parameters in order to fine tune call for art so as to reduce the number of kinks that may occur in the process. It was suggested to involve Public Works early in the process to facilitate the installation of art

pieces. Ceci Vasconcellos remembered that Susan Frary had created the draft call for art for the ASCMV piece and then gave it to Ceci Vasconcellos to finalize. She has continued to use that draft as a template for subsequent calls for art. The Fire Chief has definite ideas of what he wants for art in the Fire Station. The meeting notes indicate that the antique engine still functions and that bay window doors are desired to allow driving it in and out. They want a museum-like display with the engine as a centerpiece. The CAB may not have enough money or expertise to undertake a project like that, but it might be useful for the Board to learn how to merge history with art in the future. The architect for FS#9 has not been chosen yet, but once selected, they will definitely need to attend a stakeholder meeting:

Regarding the East Mesa Public Recreation Complex (EMPRC):

Potential locations for art at the East Mesa Public Recreation Center were explored. It is difficult to choose an appropriate location for an art piece, given physical on-site constraints. "Real art" is desired: possibly controversial, not sports-oriented, made of metal, and not on the grass. The same process that was suggested for the Fire Station call for art, meetings, and planning, will be used for the Sports Complex art.

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

Communication & Public Outreach:

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin has made a timeline for the Board's activities already accomplished and planned through October. Timeline items from September have since been moved to October and need to be updated. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin will update her timeline and email it to Board Members. She enquired about the Public Arts Fine Arts Flea Market and its times for First Friday of August. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin asked for ideas for other tabling events coming up as well. There may be time for one more workshop this year. Only one workshop idea and speaker are needed at this point. She asked that ideas be sent to her via email. She is not sure if the Rotating Art event will be happening in October, but she will find out. The Executive Summary press release should be started in November so it can be posted and shared in December. This should include all the Board's activities for the past year. The social media needs updating. Newer Board Members need to answer the prompt "What does public art mean to me?" with a photo and send it to Chantelle Yazzie-Martin. The website, social media, and Board applications need a QR code. People have requested a paper copy with addresses and descriptions for the Interactive Arts Tour. She will do a press release for the repair of Earth and Cosmos. Finally, she would like to create coloring pages for the Board's use/distribution at events.

Ceci Vasconcellos asked Board Members to do guest blogs for the Rubber Ducks blog, as she has been too busy to do it. She has been talking with Economic Development about inviting a traveling nonprofit group to do an all-day workshop for local artists to develop their businesses during the next fiscal year. The Dona Ana Arts Council collaborations press releases need to be done by the end of June, and the winner of the award can be announced in October before the award ceremony. The Board needs to research what award can be given without violating the Anti-Donation Clause. It is believed that only a certificate can be awarded.

Research & Development:

Melanie Brown has nothing to add other than the issues discussed during the AIPP Award and developing/finalizing the rubric, already in process.

9. BOARD COMMENTS

Dr. Amador is pleased with Board activities except meetings are a bit too long.

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin has no comment.

Melanie Brown feels that the Board is getting a lot done and is excited about the two pieces that have most recently been installed and the challenge of the two coming up. She was very pleased with Chalk the Plaza.

Ceci Vasconcellos thanks the Board for everything they do and gets grumpy when the meetings get long. She mentioned the rebranding of the City logo and will email the new CAB logo to the Board Members.

Katrina Chandler is sorry the meeting went so long and is excited for the activities coming up. The new member, Kayla Blundell, should be in attendance at the next meeting, along with Jack Crabtree.

Councilor Flores commented that this is the best Art Board ever and is pleased that Carol Brey is here. She mentioned that the Board she started with was difficult. She thanked Carol Brey for being accessible and complimented Ceci Vasconcellos for her excellent work.

10. NEXT MEETING – July 13, 2023

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin moved to adjourn. Adam Amador seconded. Motion passed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. A. [unclear]".

Chairperson

