



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

The following are minutes for the meeting of the City Art Board held at 4:30 p.m. on October 12, 2023, at City Hall, 700 N. Main St., Las Cruces, NM, Conference Room 2007-A.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Adam Amador, Chair
Melanie Grey Brown, Secretary
Katrina Chandler, Member
Kayla Blundell, Member
Greg Smith, Member

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin, Vice Chair
Yvonne Flores, Councilor

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ceci Vasconcellos, Public Art Coordinator
Carol Brey, Director, Quality of Life
Diego Medina, Klein Park Artist
Nidia Jimenez, Videographer

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 September 14, 2023 MINUTES

The minutes were accepted as presented.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

6. STAFF UPDATE AND ACTION

- Ceci Vasconcellos, Art Project Coordinator
 - Earth and Cosmos Repair

Ms. Vasconcellos had hoped the mosaics would be transported this week, but the contractors are not ready and have not given her a projected date.

- Klein Park Project

Diego Medina reported that that he was away in New York for a while, but the entire perimeter (except the north wall) has been primed and the pattern is being painted on. This means that the project is already one-third finished. The east wall is very rough/pock-marked and the design may need to be modified at that spot because the paint is not sticking very well. Some of the NMSU students have been helping and it has been fun. Ceci Vasconcellos asked Mr. Medina to let her know when work is going on so she can get photos and video for the social media. Mr. Medina reported that he will be having some more students come to help soon. He will let her know when the date is sorted out. There are usually people there working on it every day. He will get the other walls done and correct before he begins assessing the east wall, as that cinderblock is very porous and will need special attention. He will submit any major design adaptations to the Board before proceeding. The neighborhood groups will also be helping with the painting. Mr. Medina was asked if he felt safe while working in the park. Mr. Medina reported that a little more than a week ago, his assistant had brought his young son and there were questionable people hanging around the park, sleeping in the bandstand and on the benches, doing drugs, and having loud arguments. It was not a good environment for a first-grader. Carol Brey reports that the new Parks & Rec Director has been asking about security measures he might implement, and she offered to get security for Mr. Medina and his crew while working there. Mr. Medina accepted the offer and will let her know when there will be large groups working there. Melanie Brown asked to also be notified when there will be a group painting day so she can stop by. Mr. Medina has not heard from Raquel, the artist who will be doing the mural for Las Esperanzas on the bandstand. Mr. Medina is usually out there painting by 9:00 or 10:00 a.m.

- Co-Op Position

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that she has posted the co-op position available on Handshake, the NMSU platform. She asked the Board to let college students know that it is there. Preference will be given to students who are in their third year and up, because they have more experience and may have more hours to devote to the job. Part of the position is to help Ms. Vasconcellos with the Community Collaborative Project, do research, do community outreach as opportunities arise, and anything else she can think of. Kayla Blundell volunteered to spread the word at the college and with

the department administrative assistants. Ceci Vasconcellos also sent e-mails to the students who attended the job fair a few months ago and has received one application so far. The application will include a requirement for both a resume and an unofficial transcript. This will help to determine the level of pay the intern will receive.

- Creative Industries Grant

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that the grant was approved for \$100,000 and will be available to help fund the workshops offered by the City. Ms. Vasconcellos plans to contract with Forecast Public Art. There will be a strategy meeting with the libraries and Economic Development, then she will report back to the Board. The money must be spent by June 2024. The library staff can also teach workshops and utilize the library's Maker Space. The Forecast workshops can be run virtually over a course of weeks or in person for up to three days, but Ceci Vasconcellos plans to have a one-day event to start with. The virtual classes will cost a little less due to lack of travel expenses.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- GO Bond Budgets

- Fire Station #9

Ceci Vasconcellos gave a presentation of recent Public Art costs and the Board followed along on their handouts. For Fire Station #3 the project was \$40,000. The plaque included was small and mounted on the building, so Ceci Vasconcellos ordered a larger one to place next to the art piece. The artist stipend was \$3,000. CaFE cost was \$575. There may have been a few other minor costs that did not make it into this presentation, but that is the majority of the expenses. Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley is still lacking the lighting which will be about \$1,000. The cement pad had to be installed at an additional cost, the artist's stipend was \$1500, CaFE cost was \$575. The budget was \$68,000, but has cost around \$84,000 so far. The overage was paid out of the General Fund for public art. The budget for Public Safety is \$200,000. Maintenance will be \$1,700 leaving the rest for purchasing new pieces. The two options for FS#9 would be a budget of \$90,000 and having the artist be responsible for all the associated costs, such as the cement pad, lighting, plaque, landscaping, etc. Any leftover money will be used for other art at other stations. Chief Smith is fine with a lower budget, but Ceci Vasconcellos is concerned that the piece would be very small. The area allocated for the CAB to add public art to is outside, near the street corner. The Call for Artists expenses come out of Ceci Vasconcellos' General Fund, except for the selected artist's stipend which can be paid from the GO Bond funds. Ceci Vasconcellos asked the Board to decide the amount to be dedicated to this project. The call must

be a national call and Board Members are excited about that. Chair Amador reminded the Board that just because the call is national does not mean that local artists cannot apply, and they should be considered equally qualified as any national artists that apply. He advised that it would be a good idea to let the art community know that the Call will be huge and to please apply and endeavor to elevate the quality of their art to be competitive at a national level. He suggested using the workshops to help the local artists hone their work. Any budget over \$40,000 means the call for artists must be national. Albuquerque invites local artists to a pre-call meeting to give them pointers on what they want to see for the proposed project. The Board feels like that is a great idea to give the locals a leg up.

Greg Smith motioned to make the budget for Fire Station #9 between \$90,000 and \$100,850. Kayla Blundell seconded. Ceci Vasconcellos proposed a friendly amendment to round the upper limit to \$100,000. Greg Smith and Kayla Blundell accepted the friendly amendment. Motion passed as amended.

- EMPRC

Ceci Vasconcellos reported that the available budget for EMPRC is \$100,000 and all of it should be used for this project.

- Art Stop Selections

The Selection Committee met last Thursday. There were several submissions with incorrect image ratios and/or orientation and had to be thrown out of contention. Only submissions that met the stated specifications were considered. The Selection Committee used a rubric developed by Melanie Brown, Chantelle Yazzie-Martin and Kayla Blundell. Ceci Vasconcellos presented the selected art pieces. Once the Board approves the selections, the artists will be notified of their selection or thanked for their participation and the next steps can be taken.

Greg Smith moved to approve the selections; Kayla Blundell seconded. Motion passed.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Buena Vida Park Selection Committee

The original plan was to include Councilor Abeyta-Stuve in the selection and have the community input meeting near the park to show the selections from the catalog and receive input. However, Councilor Abeyta-Stuve cannot have any public meetings right now because she is running for reelection. Ceci Vasconcellos asked who from the Board would be on the Selection Committee with Councilor Abeyta-Stuve and Cathy Mathews. Greg Smith volunteered, as

he is familiar with that district. Kayla Blundell also volunteered. Selection will happen after the elections.

- **Community Collaborative Projects**

This was included in the agenda because the Master Plan requires it; it is one of Ceci Vasconcellos' performance measures, and there has not been anything done to date. She hopes the new co-op intern will be able to help with that and asked the Board for ideas. She mentioned that all the art seems to be happening downtown and that the rest of the City needs to have more art. She suggested putting a call out for artists to give ideas and maybe bring in artists that live in the non-downtown districts. The basic idea is that CAB would sponsor an artist to run a community collaboration. It does not necessarily need to be a permanent art piece.

- **Committee Updates**

- **Communication and Public Outreach**

On October 21st CAB will host a table at the Farmers' Market. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin and Ceci Vasconcellos will do set up; from 8:30 to 10:30 Katrina Chandler and Greg Smith will manage the table; 10:30 to 12:30 will be managed by Melanie Brown and Chantelle Yazzie-Martin; 12:30 to 1:30 will be handled by Chantelle Yazzie-Martin and another person, probably Ceci Vasconcellos. Anyone is welcome to come help out on that day. Print-ready graphics are ready to send to Ceci Vasconcellos and Chantelle Yazzie-Martin will be taking photos of Diego Medina and his work to send to her as well. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin also wants to promote the Cruces Creatives mural so she'll send print-ready photos of that, too. Promotion of the Art Stop will continue. The community painting event at Cruces Creatives is happening on the 20th, 21st, and 22nd. She will also be adding more photos to the Interactive Art Map.

- **Research and Development**

The most recent project was developing the selection rubric for the Art Stop submissions and that is now complete. More projects are requested. Help with developing upcoming Calls for Artists was requested; meetings will be scheduled to work on that.

9. BOARD COMMENTS

Katrina Chandler agreed with Chair Amador on his statement that the CAB should be good stewards of art as well as finances. She encouraged Board Members to take their positions seriously and be community-focused.

Kayla Blundell agreed with Katrina Chandler.

Greg Smith thanked everyone for going to the Arts Council awards. He said that there have been rough spots in the collaboration area, but there are excellent opportunities ahead and things will run smoother in the future.

Melanie Grey Brown reported that the Arts Council event was nice and it was great to see Christina Ballew accept the award and give a speech.

Chair Amador mentioned that some of the local artists feel marginalized because the same group of people keep winning the Calls for Artists. Moving forward, he wants to address that in CAB policy and examine the Calls and their procedures to make them more attractive to local artists while still maintaining a high quality of art. He thanked everyone for their hard work and is pleased with all the progress the Board has been making.

Ceci Vasconcellos thanked everyone for their time and advice and asked them to take the treats home.

10. NEXT MEETING – November 9, 2023

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chantelle Yasmine-Martin
Chairperson