



**City Art Board  
February 9, 2021**

The following are minutes for the meeting of the **City Art Board** held at 10:00 a.m. on February 9, 2021 remotely via Zoom.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Christina D. Ballew, Chair  
Susan Frary, Vice Chair  
Alysa Iyana Grayson-Aulbach, Secretary  
Chantelle Yazzie-Martin  
Katrina Chandler

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Saul Ramirez  
Susan Mcneill

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Ceci Vasconcellos, Art Program Coordinator, Quality of Life Dept.  
Greg Smith, Dona Ana Arts Council + ACDCC Chair  
David Chavez, recent past-chair Arts and Cultural District Coordinating  
Council Ikani Taumoepeau, Assistant City Manager  
Councilor Yvonne Flores, City Council Liaison  
Diego Medina, community member

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chair Susan Frary called the meeting to order.

**II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Those present introduced themselves.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

**IV. APPROVAL of JANUARY 12, 2021 MINUTES**

Two corrections to the draft: In the last paragraph on page two regarding the discussion of the Fire Station 3 and Animal Service Center art calls, the sentence

with the word 'why' in it shows the order transposed; Fire Station 3 was first, the sentence is backwards. On page three, second to last paragraph, topic of the Arts and Culture District Coordinating Council; the second sentence with their name refers to them as a committee instead of a council. Susan Frary congratulated the transcriptionist for catching the meeting details but is concerned about the use of the words "they" and "them"; within every paragraph it can be difficult to understand who "they" are.

The minutes were accepted with corrections.

## **V. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was none.

## **VI. STAFF UPDATE AND ACTION**

- Ceci Vasconcellos, Art Project Coordinator
  - Animal Service Center GO Bond Project CaFE Call
  - Fire Station 3 GO Bond Project CaFE Call
  - Quality of Life Policy Review Committee
  - PR, Livestream, Website & Social Media - (hardcopy master plan)
  - City Hall Lobby Art
  - Munson Senior Center

Ceci Vasconcellos began with an update on the Animal Service Center GO Bond Project CaFE Call. She is working on a draft for the entry which is almost ready for review. The changes to the language were incorporated as per the Board while keeping the language consistent with CaFE standards and between both projects; Fire Station 3 and Animal Service Center. Legal department reviewed and their phrasing was included. The draft should be sent to the Board this week with potential launch next week.

Fire Station 3 GO Bond Project art selection committee met to jury the top 10 applicants. Three applicants and one alternate were chosen. The notification letter was sent last week to invite the artists to present virtually; all three accepted the invitation. They will be added to the system for work on the proposals. This is the first virtual presentation. Staff is working out the details so that the designs can be viewed clearly and judged fairly.

Staff was asked to present to the Quality of Life Department Policy Review Committee on January 27th. Ms. Vasconcellos presented an update on what the City Art Board and LCPA program did in 2020. The presentation included the Master Plan approval, installing the Tree of Knowledge in Calle Abuelo Park, and many projects that were delayed due to COVID. There was positive discussion following the presentation which included comments about inclusivity in the projects, diversity on the Board and artists that work with the Board, creating mentorship opportunities, and providing educational opportunities and resources,

for local artists. These comments match with goals in the Master Plan which reaffirms the Board is on the right track.

Public art is no longer under the museums which means the Board will not be able to use their Facebook page; Quality of Life doesn't currently have a Facebook page. Staff is moving forward with creating a specific page for the City Art Board; the paperwork has been submitted to the City Manager for approval. Once it is approved they will begin creating content to launch it officially; a tentative launch date is the beginning of March. Ms. Vasconcellos sent out the first news release of the year and was told it would be included in this week's Las Cruces Bulletin. The Bulletin requested to do an article on the City Art Board. Ms. Vasconcellos will gather information from the Board and work with the writer for that article. She hopes to coordinate a Zoom meeting in order to have a picture taken of the entire Board. There was a question of live streaming on YouTube; since they moved to the Zoom webinar format the Communications Department no longer does the streaming on YouTube. A suggestion was made to post the meetings on YouTube afterwards until they are able to live stream on the Facebook page. Staff is currently working on content for the website in order to update it.

The City Hall Lobby Art has a tentative installation date in June; the artist is prepared to make the trip then. The contract for the artwork from New Mexico Art for the Munson Center is currently with the City Manager. Once it is sent to New Mexico Art there will be delivery of the two pieces for installation; "Happiness is the Path" and "Bluecorn".

There was a discussion regarding ideas for the Facebook page; Alysa Grayson will give a presentation later in the meeting regarding that. There was agreement of excitement on the move forward. A suggestion of creating committees for the social media upkeep was made; the City has guidelines for social media which will be e-mailed to the Board. There was a discussion regarding Fire Station 3 and the design committee review done roughly a year ago during a design charrette; there was a lot of design discussion as far as themes. A suggestion was given to supply the artists doing the presentations a copy of that review.

## **VII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

- Board member introduction
- Klein Park
- Rotating Art Project
- Division of Labor Presentation

There are two openings for the City Art Board; the link can be found on the website for people who may be interested. There was a question as to when Susan Frary's last meeting is; the City Clerk will need to state when the official last day is. Katrina Chandler introduced herself as she is a new Board Member. She currently works at New Mexico State University as a student media adviser for the student run radio

station and newspaper. She is working towards her Master of Fine Arts with specific interest in graphic art and design. She has worked as a graphic designer for over 10 years and has recently gone into more illustration type work. She works on social constructs, ideas of feminism, and the history of feminism marketing and how it constructs the ideals of who we should be. She has two children, one is in school.

Susan Frary reviewed the Klein Park project. At the beginning of 2020, the committee for Klein Park met with representatives from the City and the Arts and Cultural District to discuss the overall history and topic of art in the park. The Klein Park Master Plan was developed by Parks and Recreation Department prior to the ACD being officially approved; ACD overlay includes Klein Park. There were conflicts which have been worked out resulting in modifying the plan for Klein Park. Because of how unclear certain areas of the plan are, the committee focused on what was clear: the band stand which is on the state's historic registry. There was an agreement to put a permanent mural or art piece on the rear of the band stand; it just needed utilities and electrical moved from the building. City Utilities would need to install a separate, free standing utility box. At that point a possible budget of \$40,000.00 was discussed, specifically for the bandstand alone. The Klein Park Master Plan has other locations where the park planners considered putting art. There is a suggestion to reopen the discussion of where the art should be in the park, what the scope is of the Art Board's financial contribution, and other contributor funding possibilities. The art is expected to be a landmark piece. As it is a historical area, include the historical, neighborhood, and cultural usage. There was suggestion to have input from all stakeholders before deciding what and where to place art.

David Chavez stated that there were five or six meetings at the time regarding Klein Park. There is an okay to move the electrical and ACDCC had funds to contribute for that, however the City is concerned about moving the electrical service since it feeds into the rest of the park. The building itself is in good shape. There is 2020 Capital Outlay funding for a study for a new roof which hasn't begun due to the pandemic; a new roof would not interfere with the art. Mr. Chavez met with Greg Smith regarding the entire building. The front of the building is lacking art. It was suggested that with the funds they could design the entire building while limiting the artwork inside the bandstand to the two columns and the front of the stage; any type of entertainment will obscure art behind. The previous art liaison had notes from the meetings as well as notes from organizations around the neighborhood as to subject matter, topics, and collection of history. A suggestion of creating something representative of the neighborhood in a contemporary version was made.

Greg Smith added that he had a conversation with Chris Favre who said the City would like to avoid moving the electrical service; it is extra expense and would leave the electrical exposed and vulnerable to damage. Favre suggested options of enclosing them and either painting over that or just having the mural centered

between the two buttresses at the back of the stage. Mr. Smith agrees with Mr. Chavez that putting something along the bottom of the stage and a design band around the interior of the stage would present well and not be blocked. However there is a question on what distraction the art work would be in those locations during performances. There was discussion of doing a mosaic with either stone or tile on the exterior. There was a question if there was already a survey done in the area regarding themes. Mr. Chavez stated that Las Esperanzas and Mesquite Historic Preservation Society suggested the following topics: pre-Camino Real, Native American, Camino Real, settlers that came through. The only topic they did not want for was conquistadors. There was a suggestion to do another survey of themes desired.

There is concern on the electrical service. The building is historic so adding a cover built over them would not be appropriate; that was the reason for the suggestion of a new utility box in the area to run the electrical through. A picture of the bandstand was shown; it is a semi-circle. The area between the two buttress columns is roughly a third of the total back of the building. There is a possibility of placing art in the other areas shown in the Master Plan if they only do a small section of art on the bandstand. One possibility, because of the significance of the building and the scope of improvements needed, is to leave the building for its own Capital Improvement Project while putting art in other areas of the park. Another suggestion was made of putting a freestanding art piece or structures around or near the bandstand instead of directly on the building.

There was a question of who to talk with regarding updating the bandstand; Sonja Delgado is the department head for Parks, but this may be a building & maintenance issue instead. Mr. Chavez reported that some improvements to the building have been made. The bandstand was repainted when plaster work was done in the park, roughly five years ago. There was \$30,000.00 of electrical done to the structure. The main issue currently is the performers complain of headaches due to vibrations off the metal roof. The front of the bandstand has some chipping on the edge; the building would need to be treated to prepare for artwork. An electrical company did come in to look at the possibility of moving the electrical service components and agreed it was possible. It is the main source of power into the park. There would need to be a large free-standing electrical box which would be visible at the southwest edge of the bandstand. The neighborhood and committees involved with the park would be happy with art being placed around the park rather than specifically on the bandstand if that is the decision. The park was created in 1953 and is lacking art, color, and culture for the neighborhood. There was a rhetorical question as to why there has been many years of discussion for a mural on the bandstand when it sounds as though there is hesitation of doing that versus putting art around the park.

Mr. Chavez commented that the funds for moving the electrical and anything structural for the bandstand would come out of the Arts and Cultural District

Capital Outlay funds. The hope is for future development of Organ Street from Main Street for walkability in the arts and culture district and therefore more people would see artwork on the back of the bandstand. The suggestion of putting art on the front of the bandstand as well is so people can see it from Mesquite Street. Mr. Chavez added that he likes the idea of having art in other locations of the park but does not wish to leave the bandstand out; perhaps do something to the bandstand as well. Chair Christina Ballew suggested adding a structure at the corner of San Pedro; perhaps sculptures would entice people from Main Street.

Susan Frary alerted the group about an old firetruck that used to be in the park; it is a sensitive subject. It was removed due to dangerous condition. Council voted funds for it to be retrofitted and saved but that didn't happen. There is a question as to where the money to use on that went. Ms. Frary believes art that included a piece of that firetruck history may heal up some old wounds. Mr. Chavez reports the firetruck is currently sitting in a City yard. A few people looked at restoring it but feel it is beyond restoration. Nathan Small and Greg Smith, former councilors, put aside \$30,000.00 toward restoration almost 10 years ago. Mr. Chavez is uncertain where those funds went; possibly back into the general fund. A firetruck, in Indiana, from the same year with the original engine was available for \$15,000.00 or \$18,000.00 as a replacement. The original firetruck will probably never return to the park. Roughly 10 years ago people were willing to donate an engine, tires, etcetera, but that may not be the case now.

There was discussion as to whether the bandstand has been subject to graffiti over the years. The gang issue at Klein Park has been eliminated and the park was repainted during a lull from graffiti. There was some graffiti in the center of the bandstand last year and the City repaired it. The new neighbors around the park are fairly vigilant about what goes on in the park. Doing a mural or mosaic tends to cut down graffiti. There was a question as to the time frame of deciding; there currently isn't one. There are some issues with receiving more money for the public art program as the Board hasn't spent what they've been given. Therefore they need to move forward on this project. Greg Smith suggests setting a reasonable timeline for a decision and when the money should be encumbered. Ms. Vasconcellos suggested establishing a committee to work and set the timelines for this project.

Diego Medina gave a history of his connections with Klein Park. He works at the Indian Arts Research Center in Santa Fe and is a member of the Piro-Manso-Tigua tribe. His family lives on San Pedro Street and has been there since 1839. His grandfather used to coach the first all Indian baseball team in Las Cruces, which won City championships. The tribal baseball team used to practice at Klein Park. A professor of anthropology at UTEP documented the baseball team's history. He commented that there hasn't been a mention of tribal consultation in regard to the original community and neighborhood; it is

important to protect their heritage from being erased from the neighborhood. He pointed out that there isn't any public art made by a tribal member in Las Cruces and the representation is needed. He offered to be involved in the project or put the Board in touch with the tribal governor. There was discussion on the type of art preferred; historical representation which includes tribal. A suggestion was made to get in contact with Mr. Medina's family that lives on San Pedro St. to gain more history. Perhaps a mural of the baseball team is an art theme to consider.

Chair Christina Ballew invited Mr. Medina or the tribal governor to be on the committee in some sort of capacity. She also suggested he submit art for this project if he is not on the committee. Mr. Medina will give them the contact information for the tribal governor, Andy Roybal. Mr. Chavez commented that the first money received from the ACD Capital Outlay was specifically for bringing Native American art to the area as much of the history has been lost. Others agreed with bringing more Native American art to the area. Mr. Smith added they must be careful as there are several different tribal groups, and they need to not show favoritism to any one group; he would love to see them work together for a project. There was a suggestion to explore how all groups can be included while being productive and not cause contention. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin suggested pan-indigenous art that would relate to the tribes overall. She would also like to be a part of the committee once it is created.

There was discussion on Susan Frary's involvement in the committee; she would need to be replaced once she left. She would then be eligible to be on the selection committee as a community artist. There is a minimum for a selection committee, but it is uncertain if there is a maximum number of members. There was a suggestion of either having a large committee or holding a round table discussion prior to writing the call for art. Another suggestion was to have Chantelle Yazzie-Martin and Katrina Chandler be a part of the committee in some form. Susan Frary offered to step aside from her spot to allow another Board Member to take her position; she would be an adviser instead. Mr. Chavez would like to be added to the committee for Klein Park. There were comments of excitement made for the direction of the project. Chair Christina Ballew will coordinate with the committee and everyone who wishes to be involved.

Chantelle Yazzie-Martin presented on the rotating art project. An e-mail was sent to the Board highlighting the points looked at. After a presentation of a Keith Haring vinyl graphic to go over the fitness center the Board decided it would be a better opportunity for local artists to do rotating annual arts. The first structure considered is the fitness structure. Another option includes a City-wide project with bus stops; research of which are most frequented and have internal lighting needs to be done. The project would include annual themes, a stipend for the artist, and either doing a vinyl sticker or a painting on the wood panel. Pictures of potential options were shown. The fitness center may not be the best option as it is in an area with minimal pavement and access. There are also already some stickers on the court with the

City's logos; the structure is roughly only four feet high. Another option for the fitness center includes suspending art that could potentially float from the top, but the wind may cause issues.

The bus stop option could potentially include artwork on the back and front of the stop although people may not see art on the back. Some bus stops have a space on the front which seems fairly easy to install a wood piece for art. Another option is to have a vinyl sticker inside the top of the bus stop so that the patrons can look up and see art; it would be easy installation, longevity, and maintenance. The next step is to find what bus stops are most active within each district. There is minimal graffiti on bus stops. The hope is to increase bus stop usage and public relations. Ideas included having a City-wide scavenger hunt, possibly using QR codes. Questions that have been asked in the committee meetings included who uses the bus system and how can it be made more accessible to everyone. Possibly use the art to encourage people to explore the City using the bus system.

Councilor Flores thanked the committee for their work. The more artwork that is throughout the City, the more people will go out to explore. The Council are working on having hybrid buses and making bus transportation free. The artwork would enrich the people. Bright colors are happy. Councilor Flores suggested doing historic pictures on the fitness center; if people know where it's located it could draw them in. Greg Smith added that if a historical structure is located on a bus route we could have artwork of the historical structure on the bus stop. Alysa Grayson commented that multiple network effects are tied into these options where additional value can be gained; she congratulated the committee on their suggestions and their brilliance.

There was agreement that the bus stops should be first rather than the fitness center. It is an opportunity to have transit involved and encourage bus ridership. Susan Frary would still like to put art at the fitness center; having public art at sports locations would be beneficial as there have been times when the sports community felt disrespected by the cultural programs. There was a discussion of El Paso's art, specifically the baseball stadium; the art is impactful and receives a lot of attention. There was a suggestion of doing art panels on the chain link fences around the sports areas. A suggestion was made to begin with the bus stops and then move to the sports areas. Alysa Grayson commented that she believes it's ironic that sports wish to be included in arts when there are arts being defunded in lieu of sports. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin mentioned that the bus stops are solidified and being used due to necessity, but the sports areas are still taped off at the moment due to the pandemic.

More research needs to be done. If the Board moves forward with the bus stop artwork, then there will need to be conversations with Transit; regulations and standards must be met. Other items to consider include logistical questions, insurance, maintenance, and etcetera. A suggestion was made to have the

committee focus on a rough budget for the artist and invite Transit to the next Board or committee meeting. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin asked what else needs to be done before voting and sending out a call to artists. Susan Frary stated that the committee does not issue a call, only develop items for the Board to approve. Chair Christina Ballew added that they may be able to put this forward for a vote in the next meeting if more information is given. Once approved it will move forward with the artist call.

Susan Frary suggested sending a copy of the presentations given to Ms. Vasconcellos prior to the meetings to expedite presenting to the group. Alysa Grayson gave a presentation on division of labor within the Board. She views the Board as though it is a startup company and has ideas for change. Ms. Grayson discussed high risk challenges associated without clear openness, inclusiveness, connection, and clear governance. A slide was shown on ideas of the roles of the Executive Committee. The Chair does recruitment of volunteers, committee members, and Board Members; the Vice-Chair does orientation and works with the Board Members to understand them and provide enriching knowledge; the Secretary does presentation liaison with guidelines and expectations.

There should be a Community Relations Development Committee, Program Development Committee, and Market and Research Development Committee. The community relations would handle social media, be a contact agency, and work on major events. The program development would handle certain programs and being in the community with programs such as holiday insights like steel arts day, training and education, and small public activities like Public Artist at Work. The market and research development would handle identifying art space, where it can go in the City, research art innovations, and use design thinking tools to use technology at its fullest. Ms. Grayson suggested using Google Earth to note where ongoing art projects are and update them for the community to view as an internal system for the Board and partners to utilize.

Ms. Grayson suggested using FEED leadership when there is organizational change management or doing multiple projects. FEED leadership focuses on educating and encouraging development. This can be adapted to the project management to show a graph of what has been done and what needs to be done. She asked for the Board to keep in mind that volunteering for different committees and subcommittees is beneficial for everyone; don't be afraid to try new things.

Using a decentralized way of communicating allows the committees to put items such as photos, documents, and calendars where everyone else can access the materials. Each committee would have an e-mail such as LCCAB.[position]@gmail.com. This would allow items to be streamlined without using personal e-mails; all items in one place so there is no backtracking. A graph of group development stages was shown; forming the group, storming is working hard, norming is making things normal, and performing is having projects move

effortlessly. Technology needs to be leveraged in order to help the Board keep from backsliding during projects. By utilizing the technology and decentralizing communication the Board could be performing within two years. There was agreement on the suggestions and excitement for the direction of the Board. Alysa Grayson was thanked for her presentation. There were comments of how important continuity is.

## **VIII. BOARD COMMENTS**

Susan Frary commented that she likes the new directions and suggestions. An item she would like to bring back for discussion this year is the size and scope of public art collection; what venues are there to show the collection and the idea of art donations. Alysa Grayson requested the organizational management division of labor be brought up in the Executive meeting so they can assign and direct people to the committees. Chantelle Yazzie-Martin thanked Alysa for her presentation and loves the idea of incorporating technology. Katrina Chandler is excited to be a part of the Board, and the committee, and she complimented Ms. Grayson's presentation. David Chavez thanked the Board for their meeting and for allowing him to be a part of the committee. He hopes to bring more Native American topics to the table. Ceci Vasconcellos thanked the Board for their engagement and is happy to see the projects move forward. Greg Smith would like DAAC to coordinate with the Art Board, specifically with education. He intends to attend more meetings. Chair Christina Ballew asked Alysa Grayson and Chantelle Yazzie-Martin to send their presentations to the Board.

## **IX. NEXT MEETING, March 9, 2021**

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**



Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_