

Museum and Cultural Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular meeting at the Mesa Arts Center, 1 East Main Street, third floor, south Studios conference room, on June 14, 2006.

Members Present:

Kimberly Grace
Crista Cloutier
Peter Cook
Lennee Eller
Daniel J. Harper
John Hohmann
Andrea Soto
Laurent Teichman
Ramona Tecumseh

Members Absent:

Toni Brucato-Kobet
Douglas Brimhall

Staff Present:

Rob Schultz
Tom Wilson
Jean Kaminski
Randy Vogel
Sunnee Spencer
Carrie Brown

Guests Present:

Sharon Thompson
Kim Steadman
Natalia Cody

Kimberly Grace, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Kimberly Grace, Chair, called for any additions/corrections/deletions to the minutes of May 10. Daniel Harper stated that on page four, second last paragraph that reads, "Daniel grew up taking Mesa Arts Center classes and now works for Governor Janet Napolitano," was incorrect. He works for the Government Information Technology Agency. He requested the sentence be changed to ". . . and now works for the state of Arizona at the Government Information Technology Agency."

Ramona Tecumseh made a motion, Crista Cloutier seconded, and all Board members present voted unanimously to approve the minutes of May 10, with the change noted above. The sentence was corrected and the approved minutes posted on the Website.

Public Comments

Kimberly Grace, Chair, recognized three guests at the meeting: 1) Kim Steadman, Senior Planner for the City of Mesa; 2) Natalia Cody, Arizona Partners; and 3) Sharon Thompson, a student at Mesa Community College (MCC).

Crista Cloutier informed the Board that Luis Jimenez, one of the first artists to exhibit in the new Mesa Contemporary Arts space, passed away on Tuesday while he was working on a sculpture. One of his pieces is still at the entrance of Mesa Contemporary Arts and another in the courtyard. A memorial is being planned. Ms. Cloutier will inform the Board of the date and time of the service.

Discuss and Take Action – Election of New Chair for FY06-07 – Kimberly Grace

Kimberly Grace, Chair, reviewed the duties of the chair: 1) represent the City of Mesa; 2) show up and start meetings on time; 3) be visible at City events; 4) be informed on Mesa and the surrounding communities; 5) capable of taking time off work; 6) build a working relationship with staff; 7) assist in preparing the agenda; 8) allow each person uninterrupted time to speak; 9) listen carefully; 10) be fair; 11) respect others viewpoints; and 12) no "whining" allowed!

With that said, Ms. Grace opened the floor for nominations. Ms. Grace nominated John Hohmann, Peter Cook nominated Daniel Harper, and Ramona Tecumseh nominated Laurent Teichman. Daniel Harper and Laurent Teichman declined the nomination. John Hohmann accepted.

Ms. Grace called for a vote. All members present voted unanimously to elect John Hohmann as the chair for FY06-07.

Discuss and Take Action – Election of Vice-Chair – Kimberly Grace

Kimberly Grace, Chair, called for nominations for Vice-Chair. Ramona Tecumseh nominated Andrea Soto and Daniel Harper nominated Peter Cook.

Ms. Grace called for a vote by a raise of hands. Peter Cook received seven "yes" votes; Andrea Soto received two "yes" votes. The vote went to Peter Cook who is re-elected as Vice-Chair for FY06-07.

Discuss and Take Action – Consider Approval of Public Art Project – Prototype Designs for Transit Shelters by Mary Lucking – Carrie Brown

Carrie Brown showed slides of the two final bus passenger shelter prototypes ("bands" and "leaves") designed by Mary Lucking. Her final shop drawings have been reviewed by Transportation and other City staff and are ready to go. The shelters are designed to be smaller than the standard shelter cutting cost and accommodating spaces with little right-of-way availability. The design was to include a shade structure, seating for two, trash receptacle, bike loop, solar lighting, and ADA

accessibility. Her final designs incorporated suggestions from City staff, as well as those of the Museum and Cultural Advisory Board.

Laurent Teichman made a motion, Peter Cook seconded, and all Board members present unanimously approved the final shop drawings produced by artist Mary Lucking for the fabrication of two passenger shelter prototypes for the City of Mesa.

Discuss and Provide Direction – Design Element to be Included in Project at Southeast Corner of McKellips and Greenfield Roads – Carrie Brown

Natalia Cody, Arizona Partners, distributed information on the artistic design incorporated in their development project.

Kim Steadman, Senior Planner for the City of Mesa, provided some background on the project. Falcon Gateway is a commercial center at the southeast corner of McKellips and Greenfield Roads. Dorothy Chimel, Principal Planner for the City of Mesa, wrote in her staff report that this was a significant site to Mesa's citrus area and as such could be developed as a gateway. It has the opportunity to provide focal points of interest through the architecture, landscape, signage, and design elements. She further stated that the arterial intersection corner provides the logical location for a design feature. City staff recommended that a design feature be incorporated into the site plans in order to enhance the design, reflect its unique setting, and serve as a distinctive gateway. Ms. Chimel's report turned into a condition of approval that was carried through to the Planning and Zoning Board and City Council. The condition of approval states, "Provide a design element at the intersection corner that will be a feature in scale with the center's size and significance to be reviewed and approved by the Public Art Coordinator and Design Review staff."

Arizona Partners is in the process of developing the corner and will be providing the artwork. Directly behind the Falcon Gateway signage wall, the ground drops for a retention area. This is the area that is being considered for the artwork. Mr. Steadman showed a slide presentation of the art project.

Lyman Whitaker, an artist who works out of Sedona and has a degree in sculpture, began creating his wind sculptures approximately 20 years ago and has copyrighted his designs. The wind sculptures are made of copper and stainless steel providing beauty and strength, with an applied patina that advances the natural verdigris of aged copper. They rest on a sealed ball bearing at the top of the vertical rod, providing maintenance-free life. Each sculpture comes with a ground mount receptacle for simple installation. Each piece will be 27-feet high and eight-feet wide allowing for clear visibility from the roads. The height will also protect the pieces from vandalism. The designs move with the smallest degree of wind and are not affected by heavy winds.

The project is titled "Wind Forest" and will consist of various cup shapes and forms. The developer is considering at least three pieces in the space, but there could be more. The developer and artist are working together to determine what the appropriate number would be and choose specific designs and shapes that work best in the 20 x 20 allotted space in that location on the site. The artwork will stay with the landowner.

The Board made several suggestions/recommendations: 1) The developer donate the artwork to the City of Mesa. The City would acquire a beautiful piece of Public Art and would assume the responsibility of maintaining it in the future. This would protect the artwork if the property changed hands; 2) When the project is finished and the artwork installed, the Board be notified so they can send a letter to the media expressing their appreciation of the project and attend the dedication (if there is one); 3) There be a plaque identifying the artist and the name of the project; and 4) The project be lighted. Ms. Cody stated she would take their suggestions/recommendations to Arizona Partners.

The Board commended Arizona Partners for incorporating artwork into their development project and stated it would be nice to have other developers/business follow their lead.

Carrie Brown will keep the Board posted on the progress. Arizona Partners hopes to have the project completed by September.

Information and Discussion – Update on Division Financial Status – Rob Schultz

Rob Schultz reported on behalf of Gerry Fathauer regarding the impact of the election results.

Mesa Southwest Museum – The Museum will reduce hours open to the public from 39 to 30 per week. A 50% cut in budget resulted in a substantial reduction in staff making it a tremendous challenge to maintain the present level of operation. Staff was reduced by 11.5 full time employees (FTEs), of which five were vacant and have been eliminated completely. Division Management has been meeting with affected staff to explain their options and worked to find placements wherever possible within the City.

Mesa Arts Center – Mesa Arts Center and the Arizona Museum for Youth have had their respective Friends organizations step up with private funding; however, this has had an impact on staff. Even though they will remain City employees and retain their benefits, the positions will be grant funded and are only guaranteed for one year. Some employees have resigned as a result.

The general fund subsidy to Mesa Arts Center Stageworks has been eliminated. Mesa Arts Center Foundation stepped in and committed \$170,000 to Stageworks. That commitment combined with ticket sales revenue will achieve a 100% cost recovery for Stageworks.

The general fund subsidy to adult visual and performing arts classes has been eliminated. Through partnering with Mesa Community College (MCC) Mesa Arts Center will be able to offer for-credit adult classes.

Mesa Arts Center will be offering for-credit classes through the Maricopa Community College system. Mesa Arts Center instructors will continue to teach the classes. Students who are seeking for-credit classes will need to be admitted to Mesa Community College (MCC) and register for classes through MCC. Mesa Arts Center will provide computers that will allow students to register through MCC's Website in the Registration Lobby. As MCC's horizon is far beyond Mesa Arts Center's for preparing class brochures, MCC will begin to advertise adult classes offered at Mesa Arts Center in their 2007 summer brochure. Mesa Arts Center will continue to provide a brochure of youth and adult classes offered on our campus. MCC will be paying the teacher salaries and a rental fee for use of the classrooms, which will go to the City of Mesa. MCC receives their revenue from the state of Arizona based on the head-count of students.

Question: Is MCC considering moving their arts classes to the downtown area and considered offering classes in archeology or museum related classes? Mr. Schultz responded that moving the arts classes is not being considered at this time. Dr. Tom Wilson reported that he is already teaching three anthropology classes a year in conjunction with MCC at the Mesa Southwest Museum.

Youth visual and performing arts classes were also eliminated from the general fund budget. The Foundation again stepped in with a commitment of \$145,000 to fund the operation of the youth classes. That combined with revenue from class registrations will achieve 100% cost recovery for the youth visual and performing arts classes.

The Mesa Arts Center Foundation's goal last year was to raise \$400,000 to support programming. They are planning to raise a similar amount for FY06-07.

Question: Would the Foundation share their organizational budget for FY06-07? Rob Schultz said he believed that they would provide that information.

The Community Aid Grants and the Mini-Grants were also eliminated from the general fund subsidy. Gerry Fathauer sent a letter to the FY05-06 recipients to let them know that next year's funding has been eliminated.

The Affiliate program needs adjusting. One criterion to becoming an Affiliate is that an organization receives a Community Aid Grant. Affiliates receive the lowest rate for rental, and as an incentive, were given a gradual discounted rate (i.e., 10% the first year, 5% the second year, full Affiliate rate the third year). The Affiliates have experienced a huge impact from the failure of the property tax measure. Mesa Symphony Orchestra has canceled their July 1 concert, "Let Freedom Ring," the Chamber Concert Series, and two other bookings at the Mesa Arts Center. Southwest Shakespeare and East Valley Children's Theatre had successful seasons at the Mesa Arts Center, but losing the grant money will force all the Affiliates to take a hard look at how they will function next year.

The Mesa Arts Center did receive a \$10,000 grant from the Arizona Community Foundation to help support the ticketing services and training of Affiliate staff on the system. There are eight Affiliate organizations and no plans to increase that number at this time. Staff wants to focus on strengthening and supporting the current Affiliates. The Affiliates are responsible for doing their own marketing. Mesa Arts Center is not in the position of using City funds to market shows we are not presenting. The Mesa Arts Center does post Affiliate performances on the Web page and includes their scheduled performances in the season brochure.

Arizona Museum for Youth – The Museum had to absorb a 50% cut in budget and staff. This was a catastrophic loss to the Museum and they are fighting to meet that challenge. The Arizona Museum for Youth Friends have stepped up with a substantial underwriting figure that will allow the Museum to re-hire the Gallery Educators and other part-time staff. Museum hours that are open to the public were to go from 48 to 24; however, with the Friends underwriting, they believe they will be able to be open to the public for 34 hours per week, which will help to increase revenue for programs.

Peter Cook stated that as president of the Mesa Southwest Museum Foundation, they are attempting to respond to the crisis at the Museums. One of their goals is to instill a higher degree of collaboration and cooperation between the Museums and their support organizations. To that end, the Mesa Southwest Museum Foundation is hosting an initial meeting of these organizations on July 17 at the Mesa Southwest Museum. Board Members are welcome to participate.

Question: Is the Arizona Museum for Youth utilizing volunteers? Sunnee Spencer replied that they have not used volunteers in the past, but the Museum has begun working closely with Courtney Tjaden, Volunteer Coordinator at the Mesa Arts Center.

Information and Discussion – Schedule New Meeting Date and Time for Financial Stability Committee – John Hohmann

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Financial Stability Committee had to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. The new date and time is set for Thursday, June 22, 5:30 p.m. in the Mesa Contemporary Arts classroom space at 1 East Main Street.

Since the Financial Stability Committee consists of a quorum of the full Board, Jean Kaminski will check with the City Attorney's Office to see how the posting for the meeting should be worded.

Staff Reports

Arizona Museum for Youth – Sunnee Spencer

- The Museum for Youth Friends has stepped up to cover part-time staff (Gallery Educators), and the Museum is beginning to look at utilizing volunteers.
- The Museum is now in "down-time" and changing to the next exhibit, "PurrFection: Cats in Art."
- The Museum is changing how they do the opening receptions. The gallery openings will take place in the evening and will be a VIP event, with a member event the following day. However, for "PurrFection," the opening will be a "family event," which will also be the member event, on July 1 from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. The Museum is collaborating with Valley Youth Theatre and the Arizona Humane Society on this exhibit. Both will have a presence at the opening.
- Rebecca Akins and Shelly White attended the 2006 Annual Conference of the Museum Association of Arizona in Flagstaff from May 17 through May 20.
- Darlene Zajda met with Courtney Tjaden, Volunteer Coordinator at Mesa Arts Center, to discuss collaborating and volunteer programming.
- Mark Fromeyer met with Tim Walters, Museum Exhibitions Coordinator at Mesa Southwest Museum, to assist with the de-installation of the "Inuit" exhibit, installation of the "Cats" exhibit, and to discuss collaborating on other exhibits throughout the year at both Museums.
- The exhibit design team met to devise an exhibit schedule for the upcoming year. One concern is that during the "down-time," (nine weeks out of the year) half the Museum is closed to the public. In light of what has happened with the election, the Museum needs to find increased revenue and audience contacts. The design team has an idea of splitting the main gallery into two galleries. One area will be a "school gallery," which will be a curriculum connected show, and the second gallery will be a juried student art exhibit. Staff continues to work out the details of making this a reality.
- Splitting the main gallery in two will also solve a problem for ArtVille. Parents like the themes in ArtVille to change quicker, as their children return often and are looking for something new.
- The Desert Pergola ground-level tile design has been removed. The sidewalk underneath the mosaic is cracked and will need to be replaced.
- Submitted a grant for \$10,000 to Target for program support.
- Total attendance in May was 5,317 with revenue of \$16,770.
- The Museum has realized \$10,882 in revenue since raising fees from \$3.50 to \$5.00.
- The Gallery Shop has temporarily closed for revamping. It is hoped that it will re-open by August.
- Melissa Tornquist, Community Arts Coordinator, resigned. The Museum will advertise to fill the position.

Mesa Southwest Museum – Tom Wilson

- There were 13 positions lost at the Museum. Prior to the election, the following positions couldn't be filled for one reason or another: Keith Foster, Curator of History; Anna Sanchez, Volunteer Coordinator, Kristin Pumo, Museum Educator, Franak Hilloowala, Museum Collections Specialist, and Cindy Diaz, Marketing/Communications Specialist. Positions lost due to the outcome of the election are: Paul Liken, Museum Registrar (who is moving to Lead Collections Specialist, which was also vacant); Norma Devoy, Museum Collections Specialist in Photo Archives; Gerri Green, head of Development; Gene Letson and Carlos Hernandez, Museum Exhibits Preparators, Kate Litteral, head of school programs; Yvonne Petersen, Curator of the Sirrine House, and Nikki Bunnell, Museum Education Assistant.

- This year's operating budget will be approximately \$150,000. Putting that in perspective, the "Croc" exhibition cost \$85,000, and "Sue" cost \$95,000. If the Museum has just one blockbuster exhibition (which draws the large crowds) it would take up approximately two-thirds of the operating budget.
- Because of losing the marketing/public relations and development person, these functions will fall upon other staff or disappear.
- The exhibition program will be significantly cut back by either running exhibits longer (six to eight months and chancing them getting stale), or closing galleries. Staff is looking at the options.
- In collections, the photo-archives will be closed to the public, staff will curtail loans to other institutions, and staff will slow the documentation process on collections.
- In education, staff has gone from a staff of six/eight to two. Summer Camps have been cut, Boys and Girl Scouts programs will cease, the home school program may be closed, and the Sistine House will be closed to major programming.
- Overall, it is obvious there will be a decline in attendance. This year saw approximately 130,000 visitors, which is one of the best years at the Museum. Dr. Wilson anticipates a 10 – 15 percent (%) decline and a lot of those will be school children.
- The store at the Museum has also been impacted and will adjust their hours.
- Hours open to the public will change. Tuesday through Friday will go from closing at 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday the Museum will open at 11:00 a.m. instead of 10:00 a.m.
- The Mesa Southwest Museum Guild has agreed to fund the Volunteer Coordinator position in hopes to revamp and restructure the volunteer program and utilize more volunteers in the operation of the Museum.
- On the bright side, the Museum is still here, has a budget of \$1.3M; has 13 staff left, and has next year's exhibitions planned.

Mesa Arts Center/Mesa Contemporary Arts/Development – Rob Schultz

- User group sales are in excess of \$4M.
- Enrollment for summer session, which began June 2, is approximately 2,800 and revenue approximately \$97,000, which eclipses last year's numbers.
- Stageworks presented their final play of the season in April. The performance, "Sarah, Plain and Tall," is a record in the history of the company selling 1,335 tickets and realizing revenue of approximately \$14,000.
- In May, 316 volunteers contributed approximately 4,500 hours for a value of approximately \$80,000.
- Mesa Contemporary Arts drew over 900 patrons in May; 130 attended activities and artist talks in the lecture hall.
- To date, over 400 have renewed/joined Members Circle realizing slightly under \$200,000 in revenue.

Question: Will the number of exhibits remain the same at Mesa Contemporary Arts or be cut back? Rob Schultz responded that there are 14 exhibitions planned for installation in the next fiscal year, creating a new exhibit about every six to eight weeks. This is an increase over last fiscal year.

Kimberly Grace, Chair, commended staff for their professionalism given all they have been through these last months. Rob Schultz replied that having to let staff go, through no fault of their own, was a difficult task. Mr. Schultz expressed kudos to Dr. Tom Wilson and Sunnee Spencer on keeping their staffs together during this difficult time.

Public Art Program – Carrie Brown

- A Public Art Projects Status Report was distributed.
- The artist for the Banner Baywood Medical Center artist-designed passenger shelter is currently in New Hampshire at the Lightblocks Company working out the design of the overhang for that structure. The bus pullout is complete. Installation remains a few months away.

Update Events – Board Members

Peter Cook, Vice-Chair, stated he found the outcome of the election distressing and was disturbed by an article he read this morning, June 14, in the *Mesa Republic*. He feels people continue to believe the deficit is due to the arts.

Daniel Harper stated that he made the decision to invest the money he would have spent in property taxation by buying tickets to Affiliate, Stageworks, and Performing Live shows. He is encouraging Board members and City Councilmembers who are homeowners to do the same.

Daniel Harper congratulated the Arizona Museum for Youth for acquiring the "extravagantly, cool artwork" of Board member Lennee Eller for their upcoming exhibit.

Ramona Tecumseh reported that she would be attending the Arizona Historic Preservation Conference in Glendale.

On behalf of Gerry Fathauer, Rob Schultz bid farewell to two-year Chair and six-year member Kimberly Grace. Ms. Grace stated that she would continue to support and advocate for arts and culture.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerry Fathauer, Director
Arts and Cultural Division