

## Museum and Cultural Advisory Board – Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular meeting at Mesa Arts Center, One East Main Street, on Thursday, September 26, 2019.

### Members Present:

Dilworth Brinton, Jr.  
Melissa Sue Johnson  
Tara Phelps  
K. Alycia Perry  
Nick Willis  
Angela Buer  
Michelle Streeter  
Jocelyn Condon

### Members Absent:

Ronna Green  
Ivan Martinez  
David Dean

### Staff Present:

Rob Schultz  
Sarah Goedicke

Alycia K. Perry moved to start the meeting and Jocelyn Condon seconded. Melissa Sue Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:04pm.

**Public Comments:** No members of the public were present.

### Approval of Minutes from the September 26 Meeting:

Melissa Sue Johnson, Chair, called for any corrections to the minutes of July 25. No one had corrections – Tara Phelps moved to approve the minutes, Nick Willis seconded, and Board members voted unanimously to approve the minutes from September 26 as written and they will be posted on the city’s website.

### Feedback on Día de los Muertos Festival

Jocelyn attended the festival, mentioned that it was very warm, and asked about the shade structure that was once proposed to put in over the parking lot. She had emailed Sarah Goedicke, who shared that our understanding is that the proposal was deemed too costly to move forward with.

### Discussion – Public Art Program

Nick Willis made a public records request and that information was provided to the Board by Sarah Goedicke when the records were received. Rob Schultz explained that any support or communication to City Council would carry more weight coming directly from the Board and that staff is ready and willing to support the Board in their efforts. The Board had confusion about the updates to the program and how funding was allocated and removed for the program. Based on the records received from the Clerk’s Office, the program appeared to be in the process of being defunded in 2003.

K. Alycia Perry reminded the Board that Carmen Guerrero’s request in the last meeting was for the Board to discover what the city has on the books regarding public art (a resolution vs. an ordinance). Nick Willis stated that since it’s just a resolution, the city has no obligation to continue funding the program. He suggested reaching out to Councilmembers to find a champion to help get a mandate and funding for the future of the program. Dilworth Brinton, Jr. brought up previous concerns over “what is art?” and what gets paid for by the city. Tara Phelps stated that she thought this was for private development. Rob Schultz explained that the Public Art Program was geared toward art going up in public places in the city as part of Capital projects. The resolution still stands, just the funding has been eliminated and the city is not mandated to fund public art.

The Board discussed other valley communities that have public art programs. Nick Willis mentioned the City of Tempe’s program, which Rob Schultz confirmed they have had for a long time. Rob Schultz said that Phoenix has one of the leading public art programs in the country that started in the 1980s. It’s funded by 1% of capital improvement projects. Artists are selected by community panels. K. Alycia Perry asked what the Board wants to do or can do in order to move this forward. They discussed private development dollars vs. city funding.

There was discussion about updating the public art master plan in addition to advocating for funding. Melissa Sue Johnson recommended listing prior projects to help the public see what art can be. K. Alycia Perry said it’s also about community building and investing in the community. Dilworth Brinton, Jr. said we should also pay attention to what our community panels are selecting, and not relying on just one opinion for art selection. Tara Phelps talked about the framing this in a conversation about “modern Mesa” and not just historical Mesa and bringing in more variety of art.

Nick Willis proposed forming a subcommittee to research this issue, as the Board will not have enough time in their normal meetings to address this issue. Melissa Sue Johnson recommended getting information on local city ordinances, as most Valley cities have something on the books, for reference. Angela Buer motioned to form a subcommittee to research public art programs and Dilworth Brinton, Jr. seconded. Melissa Sue Johnson called for a vote and the Board unanimously voted to create a research subcommittee. Melissa asked who would like to head the committee and Nick Willis offered to coordinate.

## **Staff Reports**

### i.d.e.a. Museum – Rob Schultz

Rob Schultz gave the update from i.d.e.a. in Sunnee O'Rork's absence. The museum ended FY19 with revenue and participation above goals. Revenue totaled over \$283,000 which was about \$6,500 more than the prior year and participation was 94,154 which was about 2% above the prior year. They discovered that about 29% of attendees are members of the museum.

The museum completed an audience survey with Morey Consulting and discovered that we have Millennial parents and need to move more into digital marketing. The Foundation's Capital Campaign committee met to discuss next steps. Sunnee O'Rork and Lindsay Hochhalter provided the current class of Mesa Leadership training and development with a tour of the museum and Sunnee was a guest interviewee at a session for the 2019-2020 ASU School of Sustainability Executive Masters in Sustainability and Leadership cohort. Social media is experiencing continued growth – Facebook is up 8200 followers, Instagram is up 2300 followers, and Twitter is up 1420 followers. Sunnee and staff did impromptu interviews with the City of Mesa Auditor regarding follow up status of their grant processes.

All are invited to Museum Discovery night from 6-10pm but Rob Schultz could not remember if it was December 6 or not. Sarah Goedicke will confirm and let the Board know via email.

### Arizona Museum of Natural History (AzMNH) – Tom Wilson

Tom Wilson stated that the dinosaur sculpture outside the museum is a public art piece and won an international award. He also explained that the Acrocanthosaurus breaking out of the external museum wall is a public art piece funding through other means, and it increased revenue by 17% the first year following installation. This shows how public art can be an investment. The dinosaur pieces on the north side that are brightly painted and made out of recycled car parts were made by one of the museum's curators.

Beer n' Bones on October 18 had over 900 guests and was well received. The museum made over \$20,000 on the event. Board members talked about how fun it was, how packed, and how it sold out. The museum is updating their strategic plan, and the Foundation will update their strategic plan to better serve the museum. The museum was a partner in the Water Public Art Challenge, Water=Life. The museum is performing archaeological mitigation for the site of the new soccer fields near Lehi that is north of the 202. This will be a major mitigation, but they already know what is there from prior work done when the 202 was constructed. The mitigation will take place before any construction begins on the soccer fields.

Grub with Grubb on October 26 was an opening for Mesa Grande to honor the generous donation of 500 objects and \$75,000 to document the objects and do the exhibition. Tom Wilson also secured \$7500 from the Grubb family for two additional years of educational programming. The museum has new programs which align with new Arizona state standards and new exhibition at the museum.

### Mesa Arts Center (MAC)/Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum (MCA) – Rob Schultz

Over 20,000 people attended Día de los Muertos over the 2-day celebration. There was great weather and a great awards breakfast ceremony for the community altar contest. Over 50 vendors participated and The Store did very well in their sales. MAC again worked with the Mexican Consulate and the Consulate General spoke at the end of the procession on Sunday afternoon, along with Mayor Giles.

MAC started another season of Out to Lunch concerts but today was cancelled for rain. Fall concerts typically attract 500-800 people and spring concerts have larger audiences due to Snowbirds. Spring concerts are usually 800-1200 and the record was around 1500 attendees. Mesa Leadership held their Arts day at MAC on Nov. 1, holding meetings at MCA and viewing the exhibitions. They also received a tour and hands-on art experiences.

## **Director's Report – Cindy Ornstein**

Currently searching for a Deputy Director of Arts and Culture – Administration and Operations. Many strong applications have already been received and the application will close in early December. There will be a community panel to rate the applicants in the first round and a member of this Board will be invited to participate.

Water=Life, a 9-day art installation, had its Opening Celebration on Nov. 16. About 600 people attended the Opening and we have received very positive feedback from the community. We invite the Board to visit the piece at Mesa Riverview when the rain stops. Sarah Goedicke stated that the sound domes and television are currently unplugged for safety during the heavy rain but will be plugged back in on November 22 after the forecasted rain is done. They will also clean up the site as the wind has been intense. The only casualty due to weather was part of the "stream" of the piece was blown over but the artist will go out and fix it after the weather clears. The piece is located just southwest of the bathroom building in Riverview park and there is 24-hour security. Rob Schultz gave kudos to Sarah Goedicke for all the work and coordination on this project and a seamless event on Saturday. Sarah said we had fantastic partners, particularly Parks and Recreation, for this project and that made a huge difference.

Recently we had two community engagement events for the Mesa Prototyping Project's selected prototypes to get community feedback, dialogue, and ideas. The projects for the festival on March 21, 2020 are diverse, exciting, and engaging. Sarah Goedicke corrected that the second community engagement event is actually this evening from 6-8pm at Catholic Charities Care Campus and invited the Board members if they can attend. There will also be food and hands-on activities. Sarah can give the exact address after the meeting for anyone who needs it.

The Arts and Culture Department exceeded 700,000 visits/services for the first time in FY19. Performing Live tickets sales are currently slightly over \$2.1 million.

## **Discuss any Projects, Initiatives, or Presenters of Interest – Board Members**

Melissa Sue Johnson asked for everyone to go around and introduce themselves for the benefit of new member Angela Buer since the Board did not do so in the last meeting.

Nick Willis recommended inviting Dennis Kavanaugh to speak to the Board because he is an advocate for the arts and was a Councilmember for the Fiesta area and involved in Public Art. K. Alycia Perry said she could invite some people from ASU as well.

## **Report on Conferences and/or meetings/Performances Attended: Board Members – Information only**

Tara Phelps went to the Water=Life Opening Celebration and took her kids. It was a lot of fun. She also attended the Blue Man Group at Gammage, which was also fun. She also attended the Marching Band Championships and Desert Ridge HS placed third in the state. It was a spectacle with themes and costumes and other effects. Melissa Sue Johnson also attended the Water=Life Opening Celebration and loved the performances she saw. The event was nice, great weather, everyone seemed happy and relaxed for the event.

Nick Willis went to Spark@Dark this past weekend. The staff was great, particularly Jen Gastelum, but the comedy wasn't fantastic. The great staff made it worth the experience even if the comedy wasn't their thing.

Angela Buer attended the Reptile Expo at Mesa Convention Center. It was very popular, with the line extending into the parking lot.

Michelle Streeter said that Visit Mesa has geocaching tours as part of the city's Autism certification. It's guided and geared to a younger audience and they hope to expand it. There are currently ten stops.

*The next scheduled meeting date is January 23, 2020.*

There being no further business, Dilworth Brinton, Jr. moved to end the meeting and Michelle Streeter seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:08pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy Ornstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'C' and a long, trailing flourish at the end.

Cindy Ornstein, Director  
Arts and Culture Department