

## Museum and Cultural Advisory Board – Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular hybrid meeting via Zoom and at Mesa Arts Center on Thursday September 22, 2022.

### **Members Present:**

Katelyn Armbruster  
Kerry Lengel  
Greg DeSimone  
Theresa Schlechty  
Melvin Van Vorst  
Angela Buer  
Brad Peterson  
Ivan Martinez  
Annalisa Alvrus

### **Members Absent:**

Nick Willis  
Colleen Byron

### **Staff Present:**

Cindy Ornstein  
Illya Riske  
Randy Vogel  
Mandy Tripoli  
Jarrad Bittner  
Simon Tipene Adlam  
Alison Stoltman  
Sarah Goedicke

Ivan Martinez moved to start the meeting and Theresa Schlechty seconded. Katelyn Armbruster called the meeting to order at 4:05pm.

**Public Comments:** Virginia Pond of Arizona Girlchoir observed the meeting but had no comments or questions for the board.

### **Introduction of New Board Members:**

New Board Member Greg DeSimone introduced himself and the existing Board members introduced themselves.

### **Take Action: Elect a Chair for FY 2022-2023 – Nick Willis:**

Nick Willis was unable to attend the meeting, so Katelyn Armbruster led the board through the meeting. Due to a clerical issue, the board needed to redo their vote for Chair from the July meeting. Katelyn Armbruster nominated Nick Willis for Board Chair and Melvin Van Vorst seconded. There were no other nominations. Kerry Lengel motioned to take a vote and Annalisa Alvrus seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to elect Nick Willis as Board Chair.

### **Take Action: Elect a Vice-Chair for FY 2022-2023 – Nick Willis:**

Due to a clerical issue, the board needed to redo their vote for Chair from the July meeting. Melvin Van Vorst nominated Katelyn Armbruster for Board Vice-Chair and Annalisa Alvrus seconded. There were no other nominations. Melvin Van Vorst motioned to take a vote and Brad Peterson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to elect Katelyn Armbruster as Board Vice-Chair.

### **Approval of Minutes from the July 28 Meeting:**

Melvin Van Vorst motioned to approve the minutes from July 28 as presented and Kerry Lengel seconded. The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from July 28 as written and they will be posted to the city's website.

### **Discuss: Public Art**

With Nick Willis not present, Cindy Ornstein gave a brief reminder of what was reported last month and shared updates. Visit Mesa moved out of their old space to a building on Main Street and Economic Development will move into Visit Mesa's old space. Economic Development was able to set aside funds for an artist to incorporate art into a monument sign. Sarah and Cindy assisted them with their request for qualifications process and the department selected three artists to create a concept for a piece –

two metalworkers and one multimedia artist. Timing is unknown for when proposals will be due, but Cindy will share with the board once a selection has been made.

Cindy then gave a brief recap of previous discussions with Andrea Alicoate, Diversity Manager for the city, regarding the desire to have this board collaborate with the Human Relations Advisory Board on a project that will celebrate the culture and diversity of Mesa in public spaces across all council districts. The work would be built around the theme "Together Mesa," the city's diversity theme. The city manager is supportive of this project.

This project is to be informed by guidance and advice from both boards and is still in the conceptual stage. They are exploring some kind of public art activity with a takeaway activity in public spaces such as city parks. They are also exploring some kind of cumulative public artwork to be incorporated into a prominent location. The next step will be for Cindy and Andrea to meet with some arts and culture staff to brainstorm approaches, media used, and component pieces. Then Andrea will call a meeting with representatives from each board to come together and start shaping what this project looks like. There is currently no budget, as the city manager wants to see what kind of proposal comes out of these meetings.

We will need four to five board members to participate in an ad-hoc joint committee with members from the Human Relations Board. Theresa Schlechty, Katelyn Armbruster, Melvin Van Vorst, and Ivan Martinez expressed interest in participating on this committee. Nick Willis had previously expressed interest in participating. Ivan wants to make sure that the focus remains on creating an ongoing program with a clearly defined process rather than this becoming a one-off project. Cindy explained that is part of the work that the public art group is doing and this would be in addition to that work.

Since some time has passed since the last public art group meeting and the board has a few new members, Sarah and Cindy asked for the board to reiterate who wants to be included in the public art working group. Kerry Lengel and Brad Peterson want to join this committee and Sarah will send an email out after the meeting to reconfirm who wants to be included in this group. Nick was waiting for Kevin Vaughn-Brubaker, MAC's new Festivals Manager, to be onboarded so he could be included in the next meeting. Kevin used to manage public art and Canal Convergence at Scottsdale Arts.

### **Arts & Culture Department Update – Cindy Ornstein**

Cindy Ornstein stated that the department is still experiencing some challenges but ended the year in a solid place with a substantial reserve in the Arts & Culture fund, in part because of the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) funds received. The department received \$4.2 million from the SVOG and the Arts & Culture fund currently has over \$5 million. Important special needs and capital needs will be met with some of those funds in the coming year, including investment in some programs, marketing, website redesign across the department, staffing, software, and new collections management software for the museums.

The department depleted restoration funds with the refurbishing of the theaters at MAC, so some of our reserves will be used for the displaced capital projects and deferred maintenance. We are looking at our reserves as a multiyear opportunity to create a sustainable model moving forward to ensure funds in the future and more stability. Part of that is encouraging institutions to create more ways to get earned income.

The department continues to experience challenges with staffing, particularly hourly staffing, which is a universal problem across the country. Cindy is very excited about the coming year and the leadership team is positioning the department for success and growth in coming years. We are working on strategic planning and will bring that to the board for input once it has been shared with staff. The

department will go through an RFP (request for proposals) process for an external facilitator for strategic planning at each institution.

### **Staff Reports**

#### Mesa Arts Center (MAC) Update on Programs and Operations – Cindy Ornstein, Illya Riske, Randy Vogel, and Mandy Tripoli

Illya shared that MAC is in the middle of a large scale painting project. All theaters are getting new exterior paint and that should be complete by November. The department is also working on initiatives as part of Mesa's climate action plan by replacing two grassy areas with gravel and one grassy area to turf to reduce water usage. MAC will replace all non-theatrical lighting across campus in studios and MCA. The theaters will be replaced next year.

Cindy stated that things are going well with Performing Live, and we continue to add new sales every day. There have been some cancellations from tours but they have not had much impact. In fact, the new ticket sales are displacing those cancellations.

Mandy shared that MAC's Season Kickoff festival reached over 4,500 people before 9pm, when activities were closed down due to rain and lightning. The 17<sup>th</sup> annual Día de los Muertos festival is October 22 and 23 from 10am-5pm each day. Mandy will email the board regarding a new stage host ambassador volunteer opportunity this year. Mesa Contemporary Arts will host a free drink and draw event on October 14 and the first 200 people will get a free Moleskin sketchbook. The Collective, MAC's creative leadership program, is closing applications soon. Mandy asked the board to share this 12 week program with others who may be interested. Theresa Schlechty is an alumnus and shared that it was a wonderful experience, and she learned a lot. Her favorite part was the Ajo retreat.

#### Arizona Museum of Natural History (AzMNH) – Simon Tipene Adlam and Alison Stoltman

Simon Tipene Adlam, new AzMNH Administrator, introduced himself to the board and introduced Alison in her new role as Acting Deputy Director. Alison will eventually handle all outward facing elements and Simon will focus on core business such as research, collections, and exhibitions.

Early next year the museum will begin work on strategic planning. Some new things coming up are the new Southwest Gallery updates, led by Dr. Emily Early, and the Arizonasaurus, which is a new species discovered by a local Mesa paleontologist. Dr. Bob McCord and Dani Vernon are working together on a new visitor-focused small exhibit that will show how the museum is thinking differently.

Alison said the museum continues to have strong attendance and had a great summer. They aren't sure if those numbers are still from pent up demand or increased marketing. They should have a better idea in a few months. New Marketing Specialist Chad has ramped up marketing and online activity. IBCCES Autism Recertification is now complete for AzMNH with 100% completion. Paleontologist artist Benji Paysnoe was awarded a Lanzendorf PaleoArt prize, which is a highly coveted paleo art award. He will soon find out what level of prize he won.

Cindy added that all three Arts & Culture institutions are now officially recertified as Autism-friendly with IBCCES.

#### i.d.e.a. Museum – Jarrad Bittner

Jarrad shared a brief PowerPoint presentation with updates (**Exhibit A**), including the new Wing It! exhibit, a renovation update, membership and participation data, and the addition of Enchroma glasses. The Enchroma glasses allow colorblind visitors to see the full color spectrum.

Melvin Van Vorst shared that he attended the opening of the Wing It! exhibition and stated it was fantastic. The enthusiasm and crowd were great. Jarrad mentioned the museum's social media and Cindy shared that Arts & Culture has the two largest Facebook followings in the City of Mesa with MAC now surpassing AzMNH for the page with the highest following.

**Discuss any Projects, Initiatives, or Presenters of Interest & Report on Conferences and/or meetings/Performances Attended: Board Members – Information only**

Brad Peterson had a conversation with Mesa Public Schools (MPS) specialists and said they are trying to start a program in MPS to capitalize on students and their ability to design. This is launching as an intern program where they would go to local businesses and offer design services and could be a cool opportunity for the city. Cindy clarified that we are already a partner in that initiative, which is led by the Superintendent who was inspired by Artists for Humanity out of Boston. These would be paid internships and we are working with MPS on how we can support and would help with the development of programming. Mandy is actively involved, and the program would be housed in the original MAC.

Brad also attended Season Kickoff and thought it was a wonderful event and his daughter really enjoyed it. There were cool experiences, and the weather was very nice. Cindy said MAC really appreciated having the museums join for our Kickoff event.

Katelyn asked if the board could get a tour of, or hold a meeting at, the MIX Center with it opening soon. Or if the board could invite someone from MIX to give a brief presentation. Cindy said we could do all three at some point and staff will work on setting something up. Katelyn asked about public art in that facility and Cindy said we have not noticed anything specific but there will be many pieces of multimedia digital art created there and we can ask if there is any future plan for public art in the facility.

Angela attended the play "Mad Ones" at Mesa Community College Performing Arts Center, and it was fantastic.

Theresa went to the Millet House open house the previous Friday to see a new artist of theirs. The exhibition was "The Art of Wellness" and she loved his work. Cindy agreed that his work was wonderful and disclosed that both Theresa and Cindy are on the Millet House board. The Millet House will be open every Friday from 5-8pm in October for group exhibitions.

***The next scheduled meeting date is November 17, 2022 and will be a hybrid meeting.***

There being no further business, Melvin Van Vorst moved to end the meeting and Brad Peterson seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Cindy Ornstein, Director  
Arts and Culture Department

# Museum & Cultural Advisory Board Meeting Update



COME EXPERIENCE OUR GRAVITY-DEFYING EXHIBITION.  
AUG. 26, 2022 - JAN. 8, 2023



THE HOLLY BLANK FUND Museum Foundation



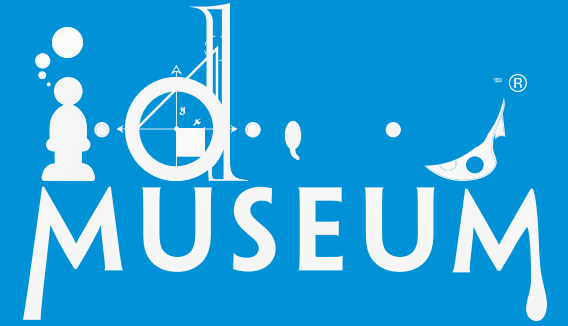
Receives support from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts

# Wing It!

THINGS THAT FLY



COME EXPERIENCE OUR GRAVITY-DEFYING EXHIBITION.  
AUG. 26, 2022 - JAN. 8, 2023



COME EXPERIENCE OUR GRAVITY-DEFYING EXHIBITION.  
AUG. 26, 2022 - JAN. 8, 2023



THE HOLLY BLANK FUND Museum Foundation



Receives support from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts





We loved all the new wing it exhibit! This might be our favorite one yet. I liked that all the crafts and activities appealed to all ages where in the past a lot of it seemed "not interesting" for younger kids



90% of the visitors gave the exhibit a rating of 10 (63.3%) or 9 (26.7%). The remainder gave 8 (6.7%) or 7 (3.3%).









I loved the theme and how all the activities related to it. The silhouette puppet show was especially fun. The flight simulator was also cool. I really can't say one specific favorite because everything was just so incredible. The paper airplane launcher was exciting for kids and adults. It was also fun to see the birds



Small blue informational tag below the painting.



INSPIRED BY  
THE WING IS IT?  
4  
CURIOUS & CREATIVE



I liked the private tour; it was fun to get background on why and how the installations were done. I also loved the use of so many local artists

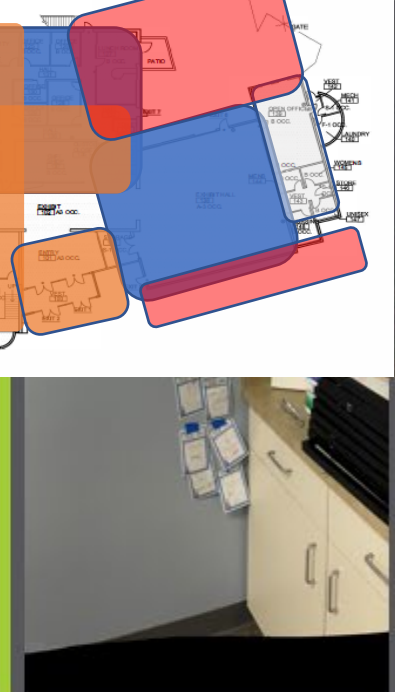
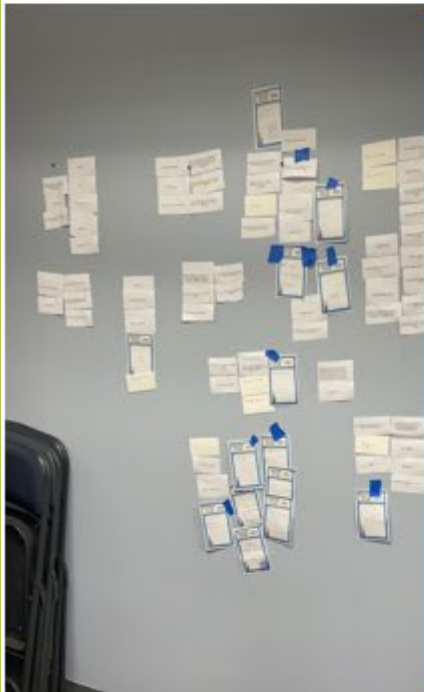
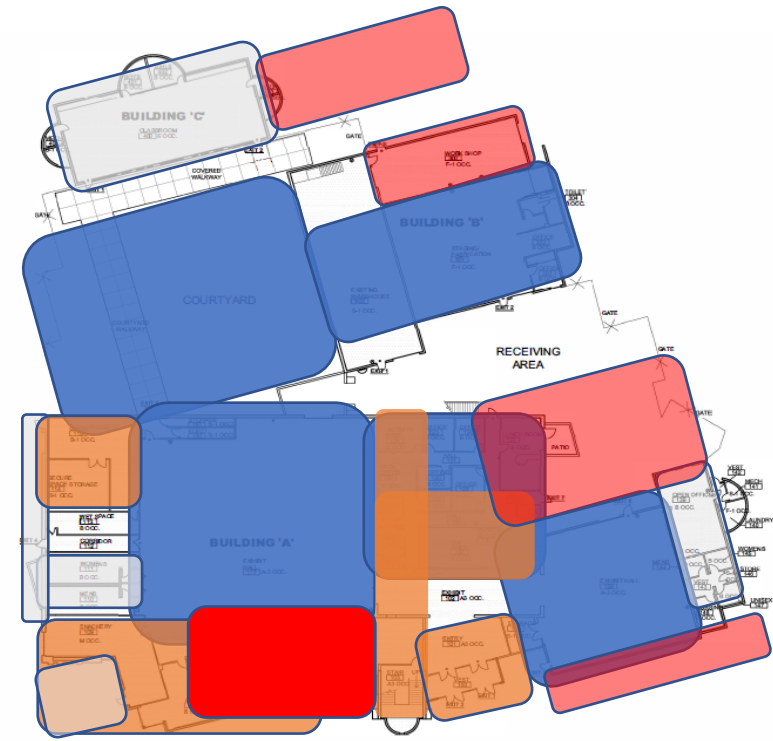








# Renovation progress



## Expanded Age Range

- Most specifically requested item from parents
- Oldest child ages out, the entire family ages out
- Divide space creates challenge for whole family experiences
  - Integrate and layer learning experiences across all age ranges

## Hands-On/STEAM

- Robotics
- Experiments
- Prototyping
- Digital Media
- Coding
- AR/VR

## Lego/Building

- Current exhibition is building these, and does not include legos, which we believe is impacting this volume
- Great intersection between art and science, form and function

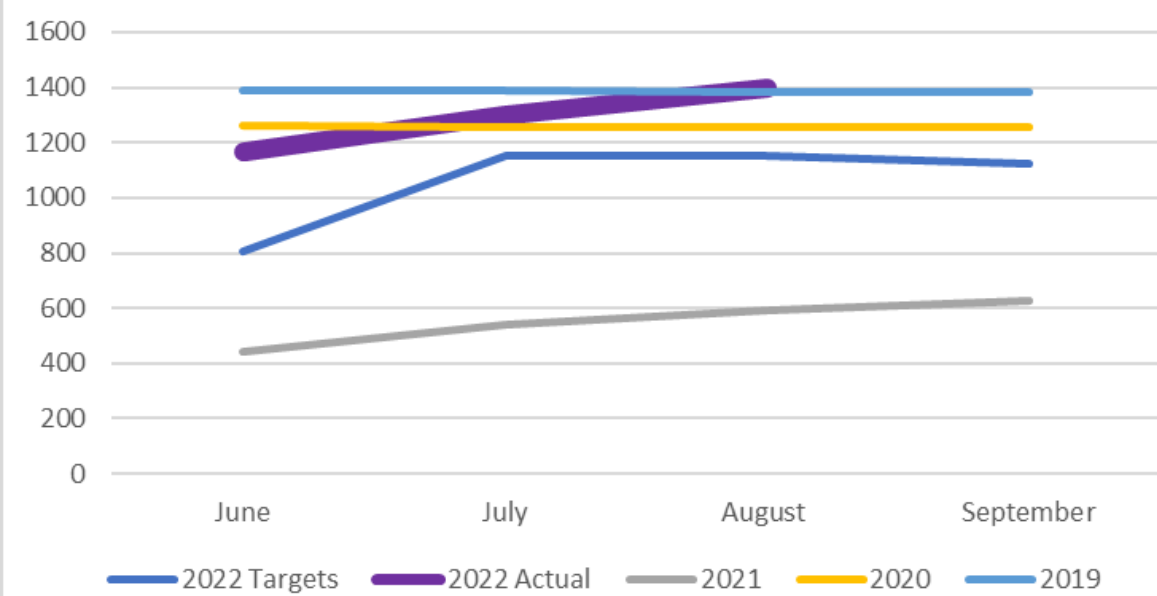
## Art & Art Classes

- Painting
- Drawing
- Pottery/Clay
- Art/Theater/Music Classes

## Motor Skills/Play

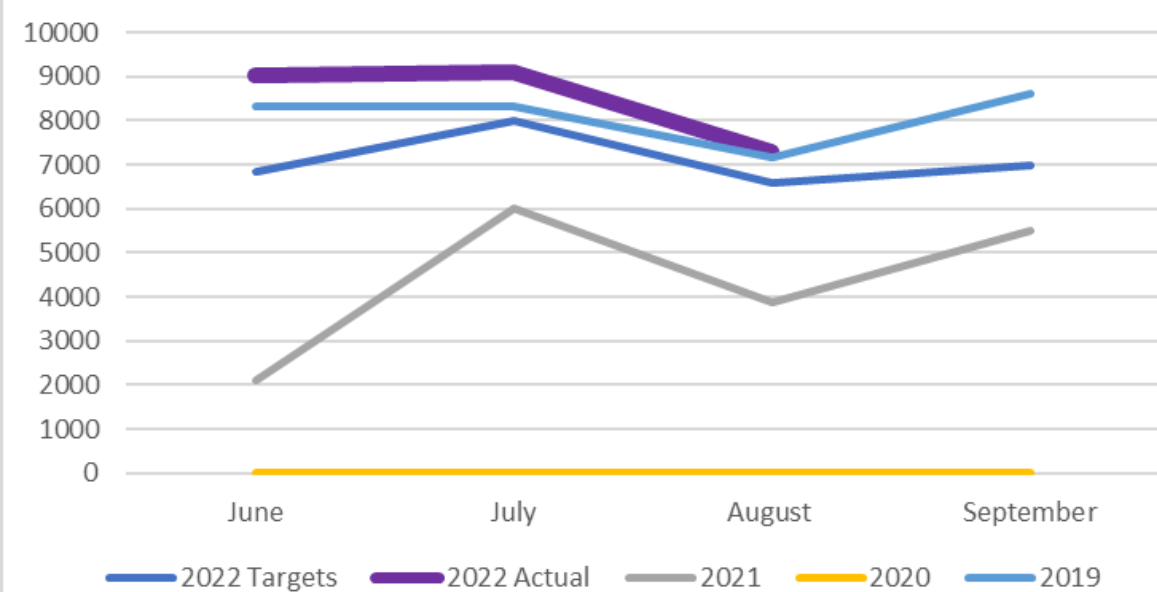
- Large climbing structures
- Playground/Slides
- Water exhibits/Splash Pad
- Ball exhibits

### Membership 2019-2022



# Data

### Participation 2019-2022



Team	Position	Total Positions	Resignations	Turnover Percentage
idea Museum	Visitor Services	4	3	75%
idea Museum	Gallery Educator Aide	2	2	100%
idea Museum	Gallery Educator	5	5	100%
idea Museum	Lead Gallery Educator	5	1	20%



*The Collective*

**LEADERSHIP +  
CREATIVITY =**

*Yours New*

**SUPER POWER**



An Initiative of Mesa Arts Center

*The Collective*

**A CREATIVE  
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

If you have a desire to build your leadership skills through creative thinking and practices, and you are motivated to make positive change in your organization or community, then this certificate program is for you.

Creativity is an essential ingredient in making your work competitive and relevant, across all sectors. Throughout this 12-week program, The Collective brings creativity to the forefront of the conversation by intentionally weaving it into every session on leadership, collaboration, failure, problem-solving and mindfulness. Tap into your own creative superpowers!

**APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 1**

**Learn More:**

[MesaArtsCenter.com/TheCollective](http://MesaArtsCenter.com/TheCollective)



Powered by:  MESA ARTS CENTER

