

Museum and Cultural Advisory Board – Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in an ad-hoc hybrid meeting via Zoom and at Mesa City Center on Wednesday August 23, 2023.

Members Present:

Nick Willis
Kerry Lengel
Melvin Van Vorst
Andre Miller
Katelyn Armbruster
Angela Buer
Annalisa Alvrus
Colleen Byron
Greg DeSimone
Brad Peterson

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Chris Brady
Illya Riske
Andrea Alicoate
Kristin McLeod
Simon Tipene Adlam
Jarrad Bittner
Randy Vogel
Mandy Tripoli
Ana Pereira
Kevin Christopher
Marissa Sanchez
Amanda Urrea
Tiffany Fairall

Nick Willis called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Hear a brief update from Mesa City Manager Chris Brady and provide feedback related to next steps for the Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum on exhibition curation and a proposal to draft a new curation policy based on best practices (which will be presented to the Board in the future)

City Manager Chris Brady gave a brief overview of the city's financial commitment to the arts over the past five years. Between FY20 and FY24, the city's general fund contribution to the Department of Arts and Culture has increased 50%. He explained that this general fund also supports departments such as police and fire, and the city has to maintain a balance based on needs across all departments.

Chris Brady stated that the city manager, mayor, and city council are doing their best to support the entire community, including policies and how they spend money. There is an ongoing conversation around meeting the needs of the community and the city does this in different ways. They are always aware of community needs and expectations. He went on to explain the context and progression of recent events related to Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum's (MCAM) planned fall exhibition. This situation has given the city time to pause and reflect on current policies and procedures related to art exhibitions. The city will include time for board feedback as it clarifies MCAM policies and procedures.

Board members and the city manager discussed how this situation at MCAM came about, what the city's concerns were, why the exhibition was paused, existing policies in place, what future policies might need and look like, and how rescheduling the artists will happen. Nick closed out the discussion by stating that the board is eager to help and recognize that Mesa values art and the board wants to support that.

The next scheduled meeting date is September 28, 2023 and will be a hybrid meeting on zoom and at the Arizona Museum of Natural History.

There being no further business, Kerry Lengel moved to end the meeting and Colleen Byron seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Illya Riske, Interim Director
Arts and Culture Department