

Museum and Cultural Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular meeting at the Mesa Arts Center, One East Main Street, third floor, south Studios conference room, on March 24, 2016.

Members Present:

Dilworth Brinton, Jr.
Gladys Contreras
David Dean

Merlin Ellis
Michelle Streeter
Karina Wilhelm

Members Absent:

Nancy Aposhian
Melissa Sue Johnson
Robert Valverde
Alyssa Yingling

Staff Present:

Rob Schultz Tom Wilson
Jean Kaminski

Note: Dr. Robbi D. Venditti had to resign her position on the Board, as she accepted a position in Dallas, TX.

Dilworth Brinton, Jr., Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:28 p.m.; he was delayed from another meeting.

Public Comments: No members of the public were present.

Approval of Minutes from the January 28, 2016, meeting

Dilworth Brinton, Jr., Vice-Chair, asked for any additions/corrections/deletions to the minutes of January 28. There being none, David Dean made a motion to approve the minutes, and Karina Wilhelm seconded the motion. The Board members present unanimously approved the minutes of January 28, and they will be posted on the City's website.

Staff Reports

i.d.e.a. Museum – Rob Schultz reported in Sunnee O'Rork's Absence

- i.d.e.a. Museum has been awarded a Virginia G. Piper Trust Grant for \$207,500 for a program called *Securing Our Destiny: Bolstering Our Development*. The grant will assist the Board and staff in being able to increase fundraising efforts with individual donors and receive training in the Benevon model for sustainable fundraising.
- "Underwater FantaSEA" was successfully installed by the exhibition design team and opened on February 12 with 827 attending. The exhibition will continue through May 29.
- The education team hosted an Educator Preview event to highlight the "Underwater FantaSEA" exhibition and provided teachers with information on group visit opportunities for school groups.
- Darlene Zajda and Vicki Adair successfully carried out the *We Love Our Members!* event at the i.d.e.a. Museum on February 13 with over 350 attending.
- The i.d.e.a. Museum helped present the Southwest Maker Fest to the community and the Museums supported the event by being open free from 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. that day. There were 2,000 in attendance, excellent workshops, and a Maker Village at the Museum. Director, Sunnee, O'Rork; curator, Jeffery Morris; and Cindy Ornstein, Arts & Culture Director, are members of the Southwest Maker Fest steering committee.
- Thanks to the support of the Museum's *Access for All* Program and the Gila River Indian Community Fund, the i.d.e.a. Museum was open free on March 6; 1,029 attended.

Arizona Museum of Natural History – Tom Wilson

- Tom Wilson distributed the Museum's FY15-16 Revenue Obligations and Projections. Each organization within the Arts and Culture Department has an obligation to raise certain amounts of revenue for the City each year. The document outlined the obligation and projection for admissions and programs at the Museum. The admission numbers are based on patrons that come through the front door and school tours; programs are based on educational programs offered at the Museum – which includes overnights at the Museum, Egg Hunt, Beer 'N Bones, etc. The document shows that the Museum is experiencing a good year and will likely come in over the projected amounts. See Exhibit A

In March alone (from March 1 – 24) the Museum has received revenue of \$79,119. The Museum has never taken in more than \$100,000 in a given month, but if they match the remainder of March (March 25 – 31) with numbers from last year, the Museum will have their first month over \$100,000 in revenue. May, June, and July have always been good revenue months as well.

A good day at the Museum has revenue of approximately \$2,000 - \$2,500. During spring break last week, the Museum had a day of revenue of \$6,500, one of \$5,600 and one of \$5,200.

Dr. Wilson stated that social media, Light Rail, improved economy, baseball season, and a more active downtown have all played a part in the increased numbers at the Museum.

- The Museum received new collections that were donated and come from the Southwest and Mesoamerica areas – approximately \$2M worth of objects. The hope is that an exhibition of this magnitude leads to more, and it has. The Museum received another large donation from Chicago (approximately \$200,000 worth), and the other day, the Museum received another donation from a gentleman who was president of Chiquita Banana and lived in Costa Rica. He has donated a collection of materials from Costa Rica – 45 to 90 pieces of stone pottery. The value is unknown at this time.
- Dino Zone is set to open in May; the Dino facade is coming along; and on Friday night, the Museum will hold their annual Easter egg hunt.

Merlin Ellis added that he was happy to see the Museum represented with dinosaurs and other things at the Phoenix Marathon.

Mesa Arts Center/Mesa Contemporary Arts – Rob Schultz

- spark! Mesa's Festival of Creativity presented on March 18 and 19 was successful. The event was from noon until 10 p.m. bringing in a different audience at night and giving the festival a wide variety of approximately 10,000 attendees. Gladys Contreras attended as well and participated in creating a "nest" along with the other Creative Catalysts and guest artist Owen Fritts that sat in the arroyo at the south end of campus. It was created out of twigs, sticks and wood and looked much like a cocoon.
- The Arts & Culture Department is participating in the Arts and Economic Prosperity Study by Americans for the Arts – a national effort to gauge directly the financial impact of the non-profit arts sector on various communities throughout the country. Mesa is a participant and collects local data, and Americans for the Arts does extensive analysis on the information provided by Mesa's non-profits, combining it to determine the direct financial impact on the City of Mesa. The data includes budgets, attendees, what attendees spend, etc. The survey is conducted every five years; the 2010 study found over \$25M in economic impact in Mesa by Mesa's arts non-profits. Mr. Schultz is spearheading the gathering of information for the study – we are required to do 800 audience surveys from all Mesa-based arts organizations providing information. The survey will continue throughout 2016.

Assistant Director's Report – Rob Schultz

The public opening of the Musical Shadows Project, designed by Daily tous les jours of Canada, on the north plaza, will take place on Saturday April 9, including a ribbon cutting ceremony, from 2 – 3:30 p.m. The project consists of a series of colored tiles set into the concrete; many of the tiles have a sensor that detects changes in light. When people interact with these tiles, their shadow will set off the sensors and create different sounds; the sounds change four times each day. A dance troupe has been commissioned to perform a dance piece with the artwork at the grand opening.

Last night, Wednesday, March 24, was the annual Governor's Arts Awards. The i.d.e.a. Museum's Board of Directors and Mesa Arts Center Foundation each reserved a table and several staff from the Arts & Culture Department attended; Mesa was well represented. Gladys Contreras asked if there were any activities here in Mesa that were talked about at the Governor's Arts Awards such as projects that are getting out into the greater Phoenix area that they wish they would have. Mr. Schultz said that Street Pianos was being discussed quite a bit; awareness of the Museums and MAC, awareness that downtown is more vibrant than in the past, and awareness of the impact the arts play in Mesa's downtown district were all topics he heard in discussion.

Tom Wilson, who is the Vice-Chair of Arizona Citizens for the Arts and sat on the election committee for the awards, said there are eight categories and they received 77 nominations that consisted of approximately 500 pages of nomination materials ranging from the smallest communities to the largest; competition was strong.

On April 5, MAC is hosting a special evening gathering of ArtPlace America, a consortium of major national funders who fund arts activities. ArtPlace is holding their national Summit in Phoenix this year. MAC will host a big Summit party that evening. Dilworth Brinton, Jr. asked if the Board could help with greeting visitors or be of service in any way. Mr. Schultz said he thought it was covered, but would let Cindy Ornstein know they are available, if needed. ArtPlace funded the Musical Shadows Project, with a \$300,000 grant, on MAC campus that will be opening Saturday, April 2.

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

Dilworth Brinton, Jr., asked if there is any feedback on Street Pianos. Rob Schultz reported that feedback has been universally positive and a lot of people are interacting with the pianos. There have been multiple videos and pictures posted on Facebook. He added that financially, it was successful as well. The Mesa Arts Center Foundation funded the project and also obtained funding from donors. Michelle Streeter, of Visit Mesa, added that they are hearing great feedback

from visitors as well. She stated that organic activity downtown is being ignited and she feels the pianos have helped do that.

Rob Schultz mentioned that the Mesa Artspace lofts project is moving forward. We expect to see construction begin next year eventually providing 50 artist live/work spaces, which will also help to energize downtown.

Dilworth Brinton, Jr. attended the opening at Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum exhibitions in February. He particularly liked the quilt work in the craft exhibition. He added that he likes there is something for everyone's taste.

David Dean visited the Botanical Gardens and saw the Bruce Munro light exhibition. He found some to be cool and engaging and some not as good. Mr. Dean also attended the Tempe Catch A Wave car show, and he really enjoyed it.

Michelle Streeter reported that Visit Mesa worked with Mesa Arts Center to host a tour for media, as part of a spring training story in the Vancouver province, focusing on Mesa Arts Center. The article went across post-media and Visit Mesa is tracking where it was picked up in other provinces. Visit Mesa also got the Mesa Historical Museum and their "Play Ball" exhibition featured in the Sunday travel edition of the *Chicago Tribune*; the article went on-line and was picked up through *Tribune* media services.

Merlin Ellis visited the opening of the "Ecosystem" exhibition in Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum and really enjoyed seeing how artist Bradley Hart worked with bubble wrap. Michelle Streeter added that her daughter wrote a paper on how the artist processes his artwork. Mr. Ellis added that he really enjoyed the band that evening as well – Vintage Wednesday. Mr. Ellis was asked by a friend who had a booth at the Scottsdale Art Festival to fill in for her when she wasn't able to be there – he said it was a great setting, fun experience, and he saw some interesting art.

The next scheduled meeting date is May 26, 2016, 4 p.m. at Mesa Arts Center, One East Main Street.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cindy Ornstein".

Cindy Ornstein, Director
Arts and Culture Department

Exhibit A

FY 15-16 Revenue Obligations and Projections

	Obligation	Projection	Delta
Admissions	\$615,167 (w/o grants)	\$729,000	\$113,833
Programs	<u>\$ 25,000</u>	<u>\$ 46,000</u>	<u>\$ 21,000</u>
Sums	\$640,167	\$775,000	\$134,833

March 2016

March 1-24 \$ 79,119

March 2015

March 25-31 \$ 21,858

Sum \$100,977