

CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission
16089 N. Bullard Avenue
Surprise, Arizona 85374
Monday, January 6, 2025 @ 6:00 PM
Surprise Regional Library Conference Room
Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

Chair Pullins, Vice-Chair Kupper, Commission members Katherine Dunphy, Margaret Lieu, Steve Wallgren, Hassan Rasul, and Susan deJong.

Absent: None

Staff: Vice-Mayor – Chris Judd, Julie Akerly – Arts & Culture Manager, Alexandra Giambalvo – Arts & Culture Assistant

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Staff Reports

Ms. Akerly, Arts & Culture Manager, reported on the following items:

- City Hall Gallery Reception for Dysart Students on January 22, at 6pm. Volunteers needed from 5pm-7pm for this event.
- Surprise Community Resource Center groundbreaking event on January 15 at 9am next to Hollyhock Pool.

E. Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission Agenda

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

None

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS – NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Consideration and action pertaining to the December 9, 2024 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Rasul moved to approve the December 9, 2024 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Lieu 2nd. 7 Yes votes. Motion carried.

2. Presentation and update from Theatre DNA on Vista Center for the Arts Study.

Alex Hargis and Benton Delinger from Theatre DNA presented data collection on the following topics as part of the Vista Center for the Arts study:

- Market Analysis
- Community Survey Results
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Engagement
- Facility Inspections
- Future Stakeholder Roles
- Next Steps

Following the presentation, the Commissioners, Vice-Mayor Judd, and the presenters [TheatreDNA] held a discussion that included:

- Commissioners appreciated the depth of information, and use of data to validate assumptions and show what direction we need to move in.
- Commissioners like the idea of branding the production company and having mobility.
- Commissioners expressed a concern over shared partnership agreements, commitments, and responsibilities, and hope to see these addressed in future agreements. TheatreDNA shared that many of these concerns will be addressed in the study's final recommendations, and assured commissioners that leadership amongst all partners has moved in the direction of mutually beneficial support.
- TheatreDNA shared some creative approaches that could be implemented by the City to present local theater, and acknowledged the challenges of regularly presenting a traditional in-house community theater due to space limitations and availability.
- TheatreDNA shared recommended priorities for facility improvements that included exterior branding and production systems.
- The Commission discussed their role in the study as advocates to the community and advisors to the City.
- Vice-Mayor Judd shared that all stakeholders have been working together towards a shared goal of providing a community benefit and increased quality of life to Surprise residents and visitors.
- TheatreDNA plans to have the study completed study in March that will be ready for public presentation with stakeholder leadership and community members.

1. Report and discussion of HOLA West Valley panel review.

Ms. Akerly led a discussion with the Commission to discuss the upcoming selected iHOLA! artist for the temporary installation at Asante Library in Surprise. The following topics were addressed:

- Details about the iHOLA! program, including new multi-city initiatives, mentorship for artists, and sharing resources across 6 West Valley cities
- Commissioner deJong served as an iHOLA! panelist, and shares: "We all thought we wanted something very colorful. We had 22 applications, and in the end, we all agreed on our top choices as we wanted something bold and colorful. We are working with Tiesha Harrison – she's a storytelling visual artist. She believes that art creates community, dialogue, and stories. She believes that art heals. I hope Tiesha will work multiple times with us throughout the 2 years and talk about her art, installations, and other things because she likes storytelling and wants to create community."

2. Presentation and discussion regarding an annual arts and culture festival.

Ms. Akerly and Ms. Giambalvo led a discussion with the Commission and presented a potential theme for the 2026 City of Surprise annual arts and cultural festival. Topics included:

- Inspiration from other festivals
- Ideas for activities
- Partnerships
- Names

The Commission shared the following feedback:

- Support the ecology/nature theme
- Excited by activities involving native Arizona foods and plants
- Would like to see activities that build practical skills and not one-off crafts
- Advised for the festival to be inclusive and accessible to local artists
- Recommend incorporating performing arts and cultural groups in event
- Preferred the name: Roots of Creation: Surprise Arts and Nature Festival
- Recommend for the City to continue exploring more culturally-specific events

3. Discussion pertaining to the Commission cultural support calendar.

Ms. Akerly led a discussion with the Commission to follow up on monthly events selected by Commission members to attend and support.

- The entire commission will be attending the MLK Day of Service Event on January 18, 2025
- Vice-chair Kupper selected the following event for the February support event: Pops Orchestra - Sunday, 02/02/25 at 4:00pm at the Vista, bring items to the food pantry for entry fee.
- March: Commissioner Lieu's pick
- April: Commissioner DeJong's pick

F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items Steps

- Next meeting will take place on February 3, 2025.
- How can the SACAC support community that asks questions at events.

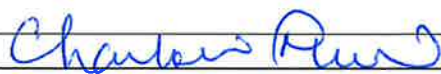
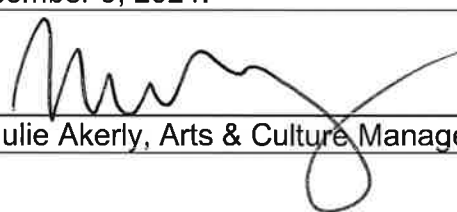
G. Current Events and Reports

- Commissioner Rasul went to the SciTech festival
- Commissioner deJong attended the following events: Lunchtime theatre, opening of the mural at the WVAC, retirement party for Mayor Skip Hall
- Vice-chair Kupper and Commissioner deJong received positive feedback about the new traffic boxes
- To be announced: Celebration party for the traffic box artists at Actors PLAYGround

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. – Commissioner deJong motioned. Vice-chair Kupper 2nd. 7 Yes votes. Motion Carried.

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	 Dr. Charlotte Pullins, Chair
ATTEST:	 Alexandra Giambalvo, Arts & Culture Assistant
CERTIFICATION: I, Julie Akerly, Arts & Culture Manager for the City of Surprise Arts, Culture & Library Department, Maricopa County, Arizona, do hereby verify that these are the true and correct minutes of the Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission meeting held on December 9, 2024.	
	 Julie Akerly, Arts & Culture Manager