

**CITY OF SURPRISE**  
**Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission**  
**16089 N. Bullard Avenue**  
**Surprise, Arizona 85374**  
Wednesday, September 10, 2025 @ 6:30 PM  
Surprise Regional Library Programming Room  
**Meeting Minutes - FINAL**

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

Chair Crystal Kupper, Vice-Chair Hassan Rasul, Steve Wallgren, and Susan deJong.

Absent: Commissioners Dr. Charlotte Pullins, Katherine Dunphy, and Margaret Lieu

Staff: 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 received a \$14,000 grant from the AZ Commission on the Arts
- Department name has officially changed to Sports, Entertainment and Culture. The Arts and Culture Division is still a branch within the overall Department.
- Commissioner outing in September is Backyard Bash on September 24 at Mark Coronado Park.
- We will be discussing HeART and Culture of Surprise nominations at our November meeting.
- New First Fridays in Surprise event - [www.firstfridaysurprise.com](http://www.firstfridaysurprise.com)

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 July 30th, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes.
  - Commissioner Rasul moved to approve the July 30th, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner deJong 2<sup>nd</sup>. 4 Yes votes. 0 No votes. Motion carried.

2. Presentation and report of FY25 Arts and Culture division programs and events

- Ms. Akerly presented the following details:
  - Event audience reach grew 50% from the previous year
  - Pilot programs grew: LIVE at Asante and outdoor public art sketching tours
  - Increased collaboration with other City departments
  - In progress: Roots of Creation Festival – January 24, 2026
- Goal: Increased access to programs and resources
  - 20 new artworks installed, hosted 16 events on weekends
  - Interdepartmental collaboration: created the Summer Reading Artist program
  - In progress: 12 new artworks underway
  - Non-profit organizational development support
    - The City provided free development training to 14 Surprise-based arts and culture organizations through Capably
- Commissioners are proud of the amount of involvement and programming Arts + Culture has accomplished in the City of Surprise

3. Discussion pertaining to the FY27 Percent for Arts plans.

- Ms. Akerly led a discussion for the FY27 Public Art Plan
  - Public Art Pan Goals:
    - Community survey priorities include parks, neighborhood, community center and libraries, opportunities for local artists, easily accessible, city center/art corridor placemaking, original town site, and mural replacements
  - Municipal Arts Fund balance update
  - Considerations for approved projects
    - FY26 Traffic Cabinets – 163<sup>rd</sup> Ave
      - Commissioners want to keep the student mentorship program
      - Commissioners discussed themes: homes, family, desert, **community**, sports (Pat Tilman Blvd.), curiosity, learning, people-focused
        - Selected Theme: Community - what makes a community?
      - Upcoming projects: Countryside Recreation Center; Dick McComb Park residency
  - Commissioners discussed existing arts plan
    - Commissioners discussed need for art in Original Town Site, and recommended changing the planned Elm St. project to an Original Town Site project
    - Commissioners like the idea of keeping Countryside Rec Center project as it has high visibility and high impact
    - Commissioners would like to keep the traffic cabinets art calls
    - Commissioners want to keep the mural replacements and decided substitute HOLA budget into mural replacement
    - Commissioners recommended moving the planned neighborhood pilot project to FY28

F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items Steps


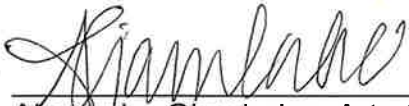
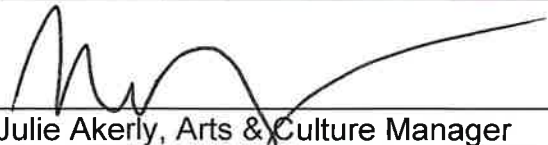
- Next meeting will take place on October 1st, 2025.

G. Current Events and Reports

- Commissioner deJong reports attending: Wanderlust opening at Arts HQ; City Hall Gallery – Viva la Cultura; attended the MLK Meeting
- Commissioner Rasul reports attending: Wanderlust opening at Arts HQ and spent time getting to know the artists; attended the MLK Meeting
- Chair Kupper and Ms. Akerly have a meeting planned to discuss Home School Arts programming
- Viva la Cultura event: 09/19/2025
- Next Commissioner outing: Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – Surprise Backyard Bash @ Mark Coronado Park (5-9pm)

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn at 7:36 p.m. – Commissioner deJong motioned. Commissioner Rasul 2<sup>nd</sup>. 6 Yes votes. 0 No votes. Motion Carried.

	 <hr/> Crystal Kupper, Chair
<b>ATTEST:</b>	 <hr/> Alexandra Giambalvo, Arts & Culture Assistant
<b>CERTIFICATION:</b> 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 September 10, 2025.	
	 <hr/> Julie Akerly, Arts & Culture Manager