



CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission
16089 N Bullard Ave,
Surprise, AZ 85374
Wednesday, January 7, 2026 @ 6:30 PM
Surprise Regional Library

- A. Call To Order
B. Roll Call
C. Pledge of Allegiance
D. Staff Reports
E. Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission Agenda

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

INSTRUCTIONS: In order to address the Board\Commission, you will need to fill out a Call to the Public Form available at the front counter, and then turn it in to the Secretary before the meeting begins.

Note: A.R.S. 38-431.01(H) - During this time members of the public may address the Board\Commission only on issues within the jurisdiction of the Board\Commission which are not an item on the agenda. At the conclusion of the open call, the Board\Commission may respond to criticism, may ask staff to review the matter or may ask that the matter be put on a future agenda. No discussion or action shall take place on any item raised.

CONSENT AGENDA:

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

- 1. Citywide Consideration and action pertaining to the December 3, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes. Sports, Entertainment, and Culture
2. Citywide Discussion pertaining to future SACAC commissioner appointment criteria. Sports, Entertainment, and Culture
3. Citywide Presentation and discussion pertaining to new artwork at Surprise Regional Library. Sports, Entertainment, and Culture

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - PUBLIC HEARING:

- F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items
G. Current Events and Reports
H. Adjournment

KRISTI PASSARELLI, CITY CLERK

POSTED: Monday, January 5th, 2026 @ 4:45 PM

SPECIAL NOTE: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS, INCLUDING LARGE PRINT MATERIALS OR INTERPRETER, SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE @ 623.222.1200 OR CLERK@SURPRISEAZ.GOV, BY NO LATER THAN 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING TIME.



CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission

Council Meeting Date: January 7, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Sports, Entertainment, and District: Citywide
Culture
Staff Recommendations:

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Consideration and action pertaining to the December 3, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

Motion:

I move to approve the December 3, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

Background:

N/A

Objective Analysis:

N/A

Policy Compliant:

Aligns with City policy.

Financial Impact:

None.

Budget Impact:

None.

FTE Impact:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 120325_SACAC Meeting Minutes_DRAFT
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CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission
16089 N. Bullard Avenue
Surprise, Arizona 85374
Wednesday, December 3, 2025 @ 6:30 PM
Surprise Regional Library Programming Room
Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

Chair Crystal Kupper, Vice-Chair Hassan Rasul, Katherine Dunphy, Susan deJong, Margaret Lieu, and Steve Walgren.

Absent: Dr. Charlotte Pullins

Staff: Julie Akerly – Arts & Culture Manager, Danica Marlin – Art in Public Places Coordinator

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Staff Reports

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

- Roots of Creation: Art and Nature Festival has been announced for January 24, 2026
- Traffic Cabinet Designs will be installed on Cactus Rd over the weekend. A reception and celebration will be planned with the artists in February.
- Maintenance and restoration work is planned for several works in the public art collection in January and February.
- The new Patron Services Coordinator will be starting on Monday, December 8.
- New “Get Involved” opportunities for residents in the public art process.
- New Surprise Arts branding is coming soon.

E. Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission Agenda

- Minutes
- iHOLA! West Valley Project
- SACAC commissioner appointment criteria
- Surprise Arts Presenting Program
- HeART and Culture of Surprise Award Design

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

None

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS – NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Consideration and action pertaining to the November 5th, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

- Commissioner Lieu moved to approve the November 5th, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner DeJong 2nd. 6 Yes votes. 1 Abstained. 0 No votes. Motion carried.

2. Discussion and review pertaining to the City's involvement in the iHOLA! West Valley Project.

- Ms. Akerly presented the following details regarding the iHOLA! West Valley Project:
 - The West Valley cities are pooling resources to accept applications.
- Commissioners agreed iHOLA! is a good opportunity for many new demonstrations and artworks, and offers the rare chance to network with other cities.

3. Discussion pertaining to future SACAC commissioner appointment criteria.

- Ms. Marlin led a discussion on recommendations to council for future commissioner selection
- The Commissioners discussed:
 - Current strengths of the commission
 - Criteria to prioritize for future candidates
 - Skill sets that would balance the commission

4. Presentation and discussion pertaining to the Surprise Arts Presenting Program and updates thereof.

- Vista Facility Use Agreement has been approved by Dysart Unified School District and Surprise City Council.
- Ms. Akerly presented an overview of agreement's terms which included:
 - Background of the facility
 - Roles of partners
 - Definition of a presenting program
- Commissioners discussed their role in advising and advocacy as it pertains to Surprise Arts programming. The discussion included:
 - Goals for the Surprise Arts programming
 - Process for the Commission's involvement in planning:
 - Gather feedback from community
 - Review data and community input
 - Annual presentation from staff for guidance on future goals

5. Discussion pertaining to the HeART and Culture of Surprise Award Design.

- Commissioners provided feedback on the award mockup:
 - Commissioners enjoyed the overall vision of the artwork, the quail, the inclusion of earthy elements and colors, and aged looking elements and patina.
 - Commissioners advised to move forward with the design.

F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items

- Next meeting will take place on January 7th, 2026.

G. Current Events and Reports

- Commissioner deJong reports attending the Symphony and 2 Openings at Arts HQ and Groundfloor

- Commissioners Rasul, Lieu, and Kupper attended the SciTech Festival.
- Commissioner Lieu reported on Bowls of Hope which beat their record. Bowls are sold through December.
- Commissioner Lieu reported on an upcoming event: invitation to the December commissioner outing at WHAM
- December Commissioner outing: WHAM

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn at 7:22 p.m. – Commissioner Lieu motioned. Commissioner deJong 2nd. 6 Yes votes. 1 abstained. 0 No votes. Motion Carried.

	<hr/> Crystal Kupper, Chair
ATTEST:	<hr/> Danica Marlin, Art in Public Places Coordinator
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 3, 2025.	
	<hr/> Julie Akerly, Arts & Culture Manager



CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission

Council Meeting Date: January 7, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Sports, Entertainment, and District: Citywide
Culture
Staff Recommendations: None

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Discussion pertaining to future SACAC commissioner appointment criteria.

Motion:

None. Discussion only. Future action(s) may be taken to recommend criteria and/or questions to the Surprise City Council and its Boards and Commissions Nominations Committee for consideration. At this time, this is a discussion only item.

Background:

The Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission as requested an agenda item to discuss criteria for future commissioners as they relate to the mission, mandates, powers, and duties of the Commission. Individuals interested in serving on the Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission apply for the position using the general Surprise Commissions Application, and are appointed by Mayor and City Council.

Objective Analysis:

Objective Analysis:

Commissioners will discuss potential questions and criteria for new commissioners that relate to the mission, powers, and duties of the commission. The discussion may lead to recommendations to City Council to be considered for future commissioner appointments.

Policy Compliant:

Aligns with City Policy

Financial Impact:

None

Budget Impact:

None

FTE Impact:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Review of Commissioner Criteria
 2. Criteria & Interview Questions
-

SACAC Commissioner Appointment

Review of Proposed Criteria and Interview Questions

Purpose of Discussion

- Review draft of commissioner appointment criteria recommendations
- Review and edit interview question recommendations
- Edit, refine, and identify gaps
- Discuss next steps

Why Review Commission Criteria?

- Ongoing need to maintain a balanced, engaged, skilled commission
- Desire to reflect Commission's strengths, mission, and duties
- Support council in selecting candidates aligned with SACAC's objectives
- Opportunity to improve transparency and clarity in the appointment process

Summary of Draft Criteria

- Experience and background in arts and culture
- Commitment and engagement
- Cultural understanding and vision
- Collaboration, team fit and values
- Balancing current commission's skills strengths, and experiences

Discussion Prompts

- Are these the right questions for the criteria?
- What should be added, removed or revised?
- Which questions would be best for the application vs. interview?

Next Steps

- Determine Commission appointed representative
- Staff updates criteria and interview questions
- Share with Commission for final review via email
- Commission takes formal action at next meeting to approve recommendations
- Recommendations presented to Council Nominations Committee

SACAC COMMISSIONER

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERVIEW CRITERIA & QUESTIONS

Candidate Characteristics

A strong candidate is someone who:

- Is passionate about arts and culture
- Is a connector within the community
- Is reliable, committed, and engaged
- Represents community perspectives or sectors not currently represented on the Commission
- Is collaborative, works well with others, and is respectful of the views, opinions and perspectives of others

Criteria Overview

- Experience and background
 - o Involvement with the arts and culture community and experience in advocacy work
 - o Understanding of the local arts and culture ecosystem
 - o Community and business connections
- Commitment and engagement
 - o Community participation
 - o Willingness to serve beyond meetings
 - o Reliability and work ethic
- Cultural understanding and vision
 - o Understanding of culture in surprise
 - o Vision for cultural growth
 - o Connection to history
- Collaboration, team fit and values
 - o Working with others
 - o Approach to conflict or differing opinions
 - o Community-driven motivation
- Balancing the commission's needs
 - o Complementing the current commissions skills, strengths and experiences
 - o Community representation

Interview Question Ideas

EXPERIENCE & BACKGROUND

- *Tell us about your involvement in the arts or cultural community in Surprise or the region. What has your advocacy looked like?*
- *What arts organizations, programs, or initiatives have you participated in or supported, and in what capacity?*
- *What do you see as the key strengths and opportunities within Surprise's arts and cultural landscape?*
- *Can you give an example of an arts-related project or community effort you have personally contributed to?*
- *What connections do you have within the Surprise community or local business community that may support the work of the Commission?*
- *How do you see yourself serving as a connector between the City, arts organizations, and the community?*

COMMITMENT & ENGAGEMENT

- *Tell us about the cultural events, performances, exhibitions, or community programs you attend regularly and why you participate in them.*
- *How do you demonstrate consistent engagement with the arts in Surprise?*
- *Being a commissioner requires engagement beyond monthly meetings. How do you envision your participation outside of formal monthly meetings?*
- *Can you share an example of a time you took initiative in community or organizational involvement?*
- *Serving on this Commission requires preparation, collaboration, and follow-through. How do you manage commitments and ensure consistency in volunteer roles?*

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING & VISION

- *How would you describe the current cultural identity of Surprise?*
- *What do you see the culture of Surprise growing into over the next 5–10 years?*
- *How do you believe the Commission can support or influence that growth?*
- *How important is historical context in cultural planning, and how would you incorporate it into your approach as a commissioner?*

COLLABORATION, TEAM FIT & VALUES

- *Tell us about a time you collaborated successfully with a group. How did you contribute to the success of the team?*
- *What do you believe makes a commission or committee function well together?*
- *How do you navigate differing viewpoints in group settings?*
- *Can you provide an example of when you helped build consensus or bridge perspectives?*
- *Why do you want to serve on the Surprise Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission?*
- *What impact do you hope to make as a commissioner?*

BALANCING THE COMMISSION'S NEEDS

- *What skills or experiences do you feel you bring that may not currently be represented on the Commission?*
- *How would you complement the strengths of the existing commissioners?*
- *Which communities, networks, or cultural groups in Surprise do you feel connected to, and how might you represent them?*



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Culture
Staff Recommendations: None

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Presentation and discussion pertaining to new artwork at Surprise Regional Library.

Motion:

None.

Background:

The Arts and Culture Division and the Surprise Arts and Culture Advisory Commission developed a five-year Percent-for-Art Plan, with implementation beginning in FY25. As a part of this plan the Surprise Regional Library was included as a project site. Artist was selected from the City's pre-qualified muralist list following the approved selection process. The selected artist met with project stakeholders to better understand the space, user groups, and project priorities, and then created a site-specific, custom proposal responsive to the facility and community. The resulting artwork proposal reflects Surprise Regional Library stakeholder input and aligns with the objectives outlined in the Percent for Art Plan.

Objective Analysis:

The final design artist, Adrian Ramirez, will share their design with the commission for feedback and input.

Policy Compliant:

This item aligns with City Policy.

Financial Impact:

None.

Budget Impact:

No additional budget is required.

FTE Impact:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Surprise Regional Library Proposal Presentation
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Surprise Regional Library Mural Proposal

Artist: Adrian Ramirez

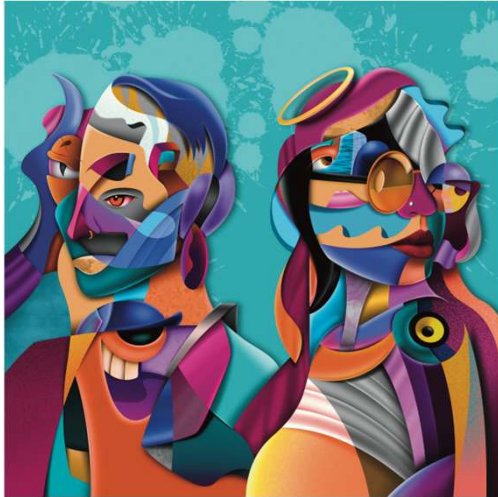
Artist Bio

- Phoenix, Arizona–based visual artist and designer
 - Works across murals, sculptures, and illustrations
- Draws inspiration from music and cultural heritage
- Invites viewers to contemplate perception and emotion as core elements of his practice

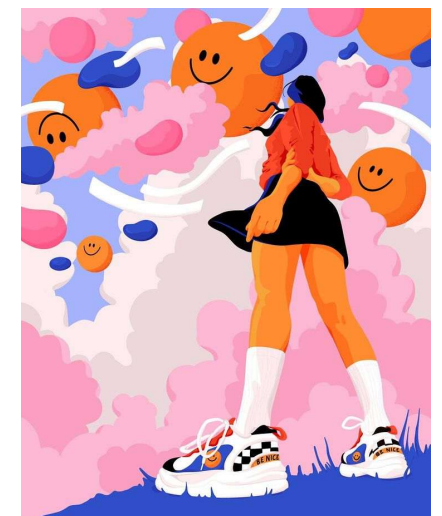
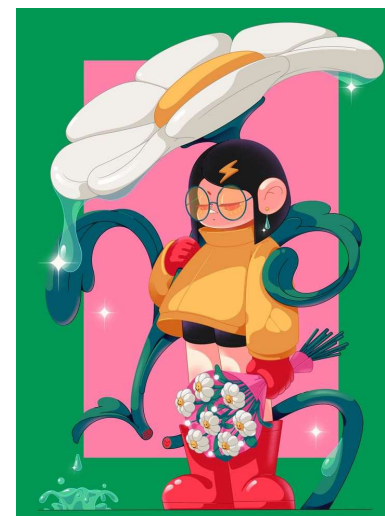
Artist Portfolio



Work Samples

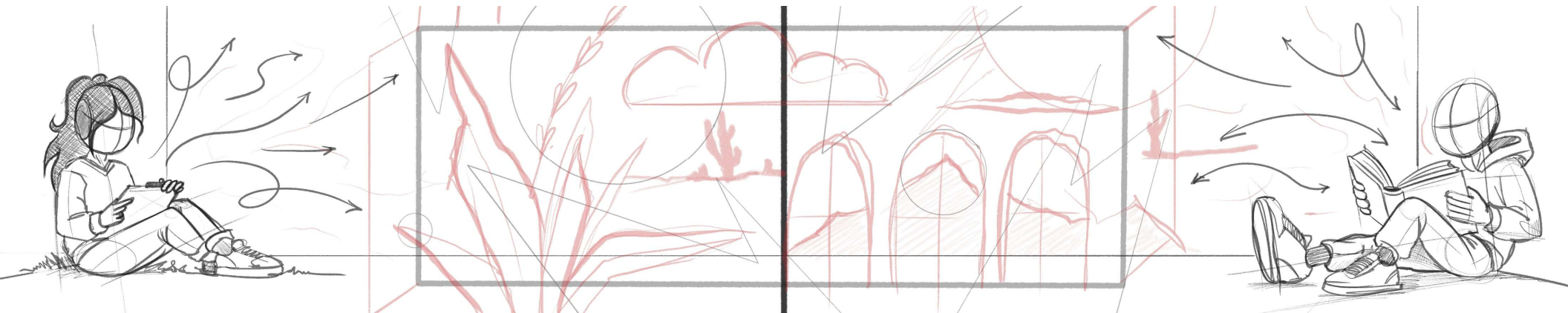


Inspirational References



Surprise Regional Library Mural Proposal

Concept Sketch



Community Engagement Plan

Artist Talk + Live Demo

Collaborative Community Artwork Buildout

Summary & Feedback