



City of Ann Arbor

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Ann Arbor Public Art Commission

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
[http://a2gov.legistar.com/
Calendar.aspx](http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx)

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

7:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St, Second
floor, City Council Chambers

This meeting will air live on CTN Channel 16, ATT Channel 99, and online at a2gov.org/watchCTN. To speak at public comment, call 888-788-0099 or 877-853-5247 (Toll Free), enter Meeting ID: 932 8112 0347 and Passcode: 199831

I.) CALL TO ORDER (Mary Thiefels) (1 Minute)

Chair Mary Thiefels called the electronic meeting of the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission to order at 7:04 PM.

II.) ROLL CALL (Christopher Cespedes) (2 Minutes)

Present city staff, speakers, and/or guests:

• *Christopher Cespedes, City Staff*

Present: 8 - Allison Neal, Peggy Wier-Leonard, Marianetta Porter, Jamall Bufford, Mary Thiefels, Sarah Fuller, Jenna Carter, and John Jourden

Absent: 2 - Cynthia Harrison, and John Kotarski

III.) CONSENT AGENDA (Mary Thiefels)(2 Minutes)

Approved as presented

III.A.) Approval of Agenda

III.B.) Approval of Minutes

26-0967 April 2026 - AAPAC Mtg Minutes

Attachments: April 2026 - AAPAC Mtg Minutes.pdf

A motion was made by Commissioner Porter, supported by Commissioner Neal, to approve the meeting agenda and the April 1, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. The Chair declared the consent agenda approved by the Commission and Forwarded to the City Council due back on 7/6/2026

IV.) PUBLIC COMMENT - 3 MINUTES PER SPEAKER (Christopher Cespedes)

Public comment was opened. No members of the public spoke during public comment.

V.) BUSINESS

V.A.) No Business Items

VI.) INFORMATION OR DISCUSSION

VI.A.) Proposed Public Art Jury Rotation Process (Mary Thiefels) (20 Minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *Chair Thiefels introduced a proposed rotation process for future commissioner participation on public art review or jury panels.*
- *Staff described maintaining a rotating list of commissioners so opportunities can be offered more evenly as requests are received.*
- *Commissioners expressed general support for the rotation process and discussed ensuring that commissioners who have not recently served on review panels have opportunities to participate.*
- *Commissioners briefly discussed volunteer status and potential conflict of interest considerations for review panel participation.*
- *Staff will coordinate with commissioners as future jury or review panel opportunities arise.*

VI.B.) Public Art Grant - Maintenance and Preservation Eligibility (Mary Thiefels) (20 Minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *Chair Thiefels introduced a discussion regarding whether the proposed public art grant program should include maintenance and preservation as eligible uses.*
- *Commissioners discussed allowing maintenance-related requests on a case-by-case basis while avoiding the creation of ongoing maintenance responsibilities for the Commission.*
- *Commissioners noted that maintenance of City-owned public art should generally remain the responsibility of the appropriate City department.*
- *Staff reported that recent communication with the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation clarified that the public art fund may support both new public art installations and maintenance of existing public art installations.*
- *Commissioners discussed including maintenance-related questions in the grant application, including anticipated maintenance needs for proposed projects.*
- *Staff suggested that the fundraising/grant working group refine language on maintenance eligibility for inclusion in the draft grant program proposal.*

VII.) COMMUNICATIONS

VII.A.) Staff Report and Updates (Christopher Cespedes) (10 Minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *Staff reported that the Foundation may be able to disburse funds directly to the organization selected to administer the grant program, provided the organization is properly identified.*
- *Staff noted that an official grant program proposal would help guide future discussions with Creative Washtenaw or another potential administrative partner.*
- *Staff offered to prepare an initial draft grant program proposal for Commission review.*
- *Commissioners discussed how the public art fund could be more clearly communicated to the public, including potential donation or fundraising opportunities.*
- *Staff reported that coordination with the Downtown Development Authority is underway to provide more regular updates to the Commission regarding downtown public art projects with the first quarterly update being planned for the June 3, 2026 Commission meeting.*
- *Staff also noted that the DDA appears to be moving forward with support for the Sculpture Plaza concept presented at the prior Commission meeting, though the final scope is still being developed.*

VII.B.) Commission Member Communications (Mary Thiefels) (10 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *Commissioner Porter shared information about her upcoming exhibition at Stamps Gallery, scheduled to open June 4, 2026.*
- *Commissioners shared information about upcoming arts-related events, including Art Birmingham, Embracing Our Differences programming, Diversity Day at Washtenaw Community College, and the Ann Arbor Art Fair poster unveiling.*
- *Chair Thiefels shared an update on the Murals That Bridge project, including recent media coverage and the status of MDOT permit review.*
- *Chair Thiefels noted that the next Commission meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2026, and that the Commission is not expected to meet in July.*

VII.C.) Reports from Working Groups (Mary Thiefels) (30 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *The fundraising/grant working group discussed next steps for refining the proposed public art grant program, including maintenance eligibility language.*
- *Commissioners discussed adding Commissioner Jourden to the fundraising/grant working group.*
- *Under Special Projects, commissioners discussed the Golden Paintbrush Awards, including production of the award impressions and potential timing for recognition at a future City Council meeting.*
- *Staff noted that August may be a more workable timeframe for Council recognition if June is not feasible.*
- *Under Communications and Outreach, Commissioner Bufford provided an update on the Commission's Instagram account and discussed sharing public art updates with the community.*
- *Commissioners discussed artwork being installed at Dunbar Tower and the possibility of inviting artists to a future Commission meeting.*

VIII. Next Agenda Items (Mary Thiefels) (3 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *The Commission is expected to receive a pilot quarterly public art update.*
- *The fundraising/grant working group will continue refining proposed grant program language.*

IX. Adjournment (Mary Thiefels) – 2 minutes

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Porter and supported by Commissioner Jourden. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM.

All persons are encouraged to participate in public meetings. Citizens requiring