



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>

Wednesday, September 3, 2025

7:00 PM

Electronic Meeting

This meeting will air live on CTN Channel 19, 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 meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

Staff/Guests: Christopher Cespedes (Staff Liaison)

Present: 8 - Allison Buck, Peggy Wier-Leonard, Marianetta Porter, Jamall Bufford, Cynthia Harrison, Mary Thiefels, Sarah Fuller, and John Kotarski

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

III.A.) Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski, seconded by Vice Chair Fuller, to approve the agenda as presented. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

III.B.) Approval of Minutes

25-1572 AAPAC - Meeting Minutes_August 2025

Attachments: AAPAC_08-06-2025_Meeting_Minutes.pdf

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski, seconded by Vice Chair Fuller, that the Minutes be approved by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council by 10/06/2025. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

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

No public comment.

V.) BUSINESS

V.A.) No Business Items Scheduled

VI.) INFORMATION OR DISCUSSION

VI.A.) Dunbar Tower Call for Art – RFQ AAHC-25-121(Mary Thiefels) (30 minutes)

25-1571 Dunbar Tower Public Art RFQ (AAHC-25-121)

Attachments: dunbar-tower-public-art-rfq-q-a-20250819 (1).pdf,
dunbar-tower-public-art-rfq-20250730.pdf

Discussion highlights:

- *Call was distributed regionally (within Michigan/Detroit area).*
- *Submittal deadline August 31, 11:59 p.m.; now closed.*

Shortlist notification anticipated in early October.

- *Project summary restated: six-story affordable housing with ~63 apartments, community spaces; approximately half the units for artists, half for residents experiencing or exiting houselessness.*

- *Commissioners recognized the project's significance for artist housing and thanked Commissioner Bufford for his role and ongoing work.*

Received and Filed

VI.B.) Collaboration with City Art Initiatives to Amplify the Community's Voice (Mary Thiefels) (30 minutes)

Discussion highlights (initial partner list; not exhaustive):

- University of Michigan: Stamps School of Art & Design; Humanities Institute; UM Arts Initiative; UMMA (family day/dragon project, Sept. 21).

- Local/Regional organizations & venues: Creative Washtenaw; Ann Arbor Art Center; Potters Guild; music venues (Blind Pig, The Ark); Neutral Zone; Destination Ann Arbor; Hands-On Museum; Embracing Our Differences Michigan; Cluster (artist/community space founded by Thea Eck); Main Street Area Association; neighborhood business associations (Kerrytown, State Street, South U., etc.).

- Education/Government/Philanthropy: AAPS/Public Schools; Community Foundation; DDA (noting new Percent for Art program).

- Neighboring public art programs: references to Chelsea and Jackson/Bright Walls festival as models to learn from.

- Commissioners noted the list could become very large; focus should remain on public art–relevant partners and Ann Arbor–based efforts, especially in anticipation of a mini-grant program.

VI.C.) TreeTown Murals General Services Agreement - DRAFT (Mary Thiefels) (30 minutes)

25-1573 TreeTown Murals General Services Agreement - DRAFT

Attachments: TreeTown Murals - General Services Agreement (1).pdf,
R-25-269 Murals That Bridge Project on North Main.pdf

Staff update: Contract is with the City Attorney's Office for review; upon approval it will be routed for signatures. Staff anticipates execution within the next 1–2 months, barring unforeseen delay. Project schedule shifted to Spring 2026 due to external coordination.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski, seconded by Commissioner Neal, to recommend that City staff proceed with executing the General Services Agreement for the “Murals That Bridge” project at the Watco Bridge (Main Street underpass). On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

VII.) COMMUNICATIONS**VII.A.) Staff Report and Updates (Christopher Cespedes) (5 Minutes)***Discussion Highlights:*

- Mayor expected to nominate two new commissioners soon (targeting 9/15; otherwise next Council cycle).
- Closing gaps on Legistar: backfilling 2023–2025 agendas, minutes, and recordings.
- New AAPAC public-comment email established; messages will be attached to agendas with personal contact details redacted.
- Instagram refreshed with the new commission logo.
- October info session with Public Works (Paul Matthews) on winter maintenance and art preservation (e.g., Eberwhite roundabout).
- Advancing administration items: developing a uniform CIP integration process; Finance/Legal reviewing mini-grant logistics.
- Public art map update underway with IT; inventory being validated prior to regular updates.

VII.B.) Liaison Reports (Mary Thiefels) (5 minutes)*Discussion Highlights:*

- Vice Chair Fuller: Will sit on the Fire Station review team; expects to report back after application review in September.

VII.C.) Commission Member Communications (Mary Thiefels) (5 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *Kiana Clark's UM Dance thesis performances (Sat—UM Dance Theatre; Sun—Wheeler Park); will share flyer and post on Instagram.*
- *UMMA Family Day (Sun, Sept 21) launching a collaborative dragon-building project; community participation encouraged.*
- *"Street Art Encounter" (Fri, Sept 12; Main Street Area Assoc.); noted local-artist outreach gaps and need to improve coordination.*
- *House budget proposes eliminating arts/culture funding; rally "Fund Michigan Arts & Culture Day" Tue, Sept 16 (9 a.m.–3 p.m., Lansing).*

VII.D.) Reports from Working Groups (Mary Thiefels) (5 minutes)

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

- *Informational session: Public Works winter maintenance practices and art preservation (roundabout installations; speaker: Paul Matthews).*

- *Additional items to be coordinated by staff/Chair as needed.*

IX. Adjournment (Mary Thiefels) – 2 minutes

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Allison Neal and seconded by Commissioner Kotarski. Voice vote: Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.