



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, January 14, 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 Thiefels called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. on Wednesday, January 14, 2026.

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

Present city staff, speakers, and/or guests:

- Christopher Cespedes (City Staff)

Present: 9 - Allison Buck, Peggy Wier-Leonard, Jamall Bufford, Cynthia Harrison, Mary Thiefels, Sarah Fuller, John Kotarski, Jenna Carter, and John Jourden

Absent: 1 - Marianetta Porter

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

III.A.) Approval of Agenda

III.B.) Approval of Minutes

26-0102 Dec 3rd 2025 - AAPAC Minutes

Attachments: Dec 3rd 2025 - AAPAC Minutes.pdf

A motion was made by Commissioner Allison Neal, seconded by Commissioner John Kotarski, to approve the meeting agenda and the December 2025 meeting minutes as presented. On a unanimous voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

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

No members of the public spoke during public comment.

V.) BUSINESS

V.A.) 2026 Officer Elections - Bylaws Article 6.1 (Mary Thiefels) (15 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *Commissioners discussed the process for confirming officer nominations for the 2026 term.*
- *It was noted that the existing officers were willing to continue serving in their respective roles.*
- *No additional nominations for Chair or Vice Chair were brought forward.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski, seconded by Commissioner Leonard, to elect Mary Thiefels as Chair and Sarah Fuller as Vice Chair of the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission for the 2026 term. On a unanimous voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

V.B.) 2025 Golden Paintbrush Award (Mary Thiefels) (15 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *Commissioners received an overview of the 2025 Golden Paintbrush Award review process and the judges' recommendations.*
- *Commissioners discussed the approach of recognizing multiple projects, consistent with past Golden Paintbrush Award practices.*
- *Commissioners reviewed and confirmed the five projects selected to receive the 2025 Golden Paintbrush Award: (1) Power Art Boxes (2) A2AC Murals and Planters (3) Murals at the Bridge (4) Dragons Everywhere All at Once (5) Corridor of Colors*

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski, seconded by Commissioner Neal, to award the 2025 Golden Paintbrush Award to the five projects brought forward for consideration. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

V.C.) 2026 Bylaws Review – Annual Check-In (Mary Thiefels) (15 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *The Commission conducted its annual January review of the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission bylaws.*
- *Commissioners discussed the option to propose amendments or to maintain the bylaws as currently written.*
- *Chair Thiefels noted that the most recent bylaw amendment occurred during a prior Council liaison’s tenure and addressed participation by actively working artists, allowing participation with required recusals.*
- *Commissioners did not identify any bylaw provisions requiring revision at this time.*
- *Commissioners noted that bylaw amendments may be proposed at any point during the year, subject to City Council approval.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski, seconded by Commissioner Neal, to maintain the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission bylaws as currently written for the 2026 year. On a unanimous voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

VI.) INFORMATION OR DISCUSSION

VI.A.) 2026 Annual Plan Development - Bylaws Article 3.2 B (Mary Thiefels) (15 minutes)

26-0099 Public Art & CIP Background Materials

Attachments: draft of survey of public art types.pdf,
final-draft-updated-fy26-31-cip-project-report.pdf

Discussion Highlights:

- *Commissioners discussed updating the 2026 Annual Plan for submission to City Council in February.*
- *The Commission reviewed working group structure and membership and identified the need for updates.*
- *Key priorities discussed included communications and outreach efforts, promotion of public art and the mini-grant program, and coordination with fundraising activities.*
- *Commissioners discussed incorporating measurable goals into the Annual Plan to better track progress.*
- *The relationship between the Annual Plan and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) was discussed, with further review to occur through the appropriate working group.*
- *Staff and Commission leadership will refine draft language and circulate the updated Annual Plan for future Commission review and approval.*

Received and Filed**VII.) COMMUNICATIONS**

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

Discussion Highlights:

- *Staff provided brief updates on public art integration research and upcoming coordination with City departments.*
- *Staff noted continued work related to the Annual Plan and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) review.*

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

Discussion Highlights:

- *Commissioners discussed a conceptual proposal for a citywide public art vision plan and agreed that further exploration would require staff leadership.*
- *Commissioners shared updates on upcoming events and projects, including an artist conference, a fire station public art project nearing selection, and the DDA-led Elevating History mural project.*

VII.C.) Reports from Working Groups (Mary Thiefels) (10 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- *The CIP Working Group and Fundraising Working Group will continue coordination on CIP review and development of the mini-grant program.*

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

- *Review and approval of the 2026 Annual Plan.*
- *Capital Improvement Program (CIP) coordination and follow-up.*

IX. Adjournment (Mary Thiefels) – 2 minutes

Chair Thiefels adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

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