



# City of Ann Arbor

## Meeting Minutes - Draft

### Ann Arbor Public Art Commission

301 E. Huron St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
[http://a2gov.legistar.com/  
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Wednesday, April 1, 2026

7:00 PM

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

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#### 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 7:03 PM.*

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

*Present city staff, speakers, and/or guests:*

- Christopher Cespedes (City Staff)
- Diana Marsh (Thistle & Bess)
- Avery Williamson (Artist)
- Krista Skytta (Artist)

**Present:** 9 - Allison Neal, Peggy Wier-Leonard, Marianetta Porter, Jamall Bufford, Mary Thiefels, Sarah Fuller, John Kotarski, Jenna Carter, and John Jourden

**Absent:** 1 - Cynthia Harrison

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

III.A.) Approval of Agenda

III.B.) Approval of Minutes

[26-0551](#) Ann Arbor Public Art Commission Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2026

**Attachments:** Public\_Art\_Commission\_03-04-26\_Meeting\_Minutes.pdf

**A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski, seconded by Commissioner Wier-Leonard, to approve the meeting agenda and the March 4, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. The Chair declared the consent agenda approved.**

**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.) Overview of Existing Public Art Funding Agreements (Christopher Cespedes) (30 minutes)

**26-0552** Overview of Existing Public Art Funding Agreements

**Attachments:** Art - Pass-Thru Fund Agreement.1.pdf, Jewett Chair Project MOU - fully executed.1.pdf, Art - Endowment Fund Agreement.1.pdf

*Discussion Highlights:*

- *Staff provided an overview of three funding mechanisms connected to the Ann Arbor Community Foundation.*
- *Endowment fund, limited to maintenance and preservation of existing public art.*
- *Commissioners stated that the endowment language had been updated in more recent years to allow broader uses, including maintenance, preservation, purchase, and installation.*
- *Discussion addressed whether the Jewett Chair fund and pass-through fund still exist as separate mechanisms or have since been folded into a larger fund structure.*
- *Staff described the pass-through fund as more flexible than the endowment fund, but subject to Foundation approval and nonprofit distribution requirements.*
- *Staff described the Jewett Chair project fund as a project-specific fundraising model and noted the contribution and administrative fee structure associated with that model.*
- *Commissioners discussed the historical development of these funds, the relationship with the Community Foundation, and the importance of clarifying maintenance responsibility for public art.*

VI.B.) Community-Initiated Proposal: Sculpture Plaza Enhancements (Allison Neal) (20 Minutes)

**26-0646** Proposal for Sculpture Plaza

**Attachments:** A2 Public Art Commission Proposal for Sculpture Plaza - 4\_1\_2026 - Avery and Krista.pdf

*Discussion Highlights:*

- *Diana Marsh introduced a concept for activating Sculpture Plaza through landscaping, additional public art, and community programming.*
- *Marsh described coordination with nearby stakeholders, including the People's Food Co-op and Gutman Gallery, and noted interest in hosting events such as Gallery Nights programming in the space.*
- *Artists Avery Williamson and Krista Skytta presented a concept involving colorful flower sculptures inspired by native Michigan plants, along with temporary sidewalk paint elements intended to create a more interactive and playful public space.*
- *Discussion emphasized the value of short-term activation as a way to build public interest and momentum for longer-term improvements to the plaza.*
- *Commissioners discussed possible coordination with the DDA, Parks, Sustainability, and other City partners, as well as potential private funding opportunities.*
- *Commissioners expressed support for the concept and encouraged the presenters to continue developing the idea and return for support as needed.*

**VII.) COMMUNICATIONS**

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

*Discussion Highlights:*

- *No additional staff updates.*

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

*Discussion Highlights:*

- *Commissioners shared information about upcoming arts-related events, including the Creative Washtenaw Art Party and the Ann Arbor Women Artists Guild Business of Art conference.*
- *Chair Thiefels acknowledged the passing of artist and early Public Art Commission leader and former chair Margaret Lee Parker, recognizing her contributions to public art in Ann Arbor.*

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

*Discussion Highlights:*

- *The CIP working group reported no new recommendations for the year.*
- *The Communications and Outreach group discussed strategies for improving the commission's social media presence, including Instagram collaboration, broader public engagement, and collecting community feedback on project ideas.*
- *Commissioners discussed the possibility of promoting Golden Paintbrush Award recipients through social media and linking to the City's press release.*
- *Commissioners also discussed building a stronger network of partner organizations and possible future tabling or outreach opportunities, including at the farmers market.*
- *Under Special Projects, updates were shared on the Golden Paintbrush Awards, including press outreach, recognition planning, and production of award impressions.*

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

- *The Chair invited suggestions for future agenda items.*

**IX. Adjournment (Mary Thiefels) – 2 minutes**

**A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Kotarski and supported by Commissioner Jourden. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 PM.**

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