



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, December 3, 2025

7:00 PM

Electronic Meeting

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

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

Present city staff, speakers, and/or guests:

- Christopher Cespedes (City Staff)
- Hannah Kirkpatrick (Ann Arbor Art Center)
- Sandra Andrade (Downtown Development Authority)
- Joyce Hunter (Ann Arbor African American Cultural and Historical Museum)
- Lawrielle West (Ann Arbor African American Cultural and Historical Museum)

Present: 6 - Allison Buck, Marianetta Porter, Jamall Bufford, Mary Thiefels, Sarah Fuller, and John Kotarski

Absent: 4 - Peggy Wier-Leonard, Cynthia Harrison, Jenna Carter, and John Jourden

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski seconded by Commissioner Buck to approve the agenda and the November 2025 meeting minutes as presented.

On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

III.A.) Approval of Agenda

III.B.) Approval of Minutes

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

No members of the public spoke during public comment.

V.) BUSINESS

V.A.) Appointment of Commission Representative to the DDA's "Elevating History" Mural Selection Committee (Christopher Cespedes) (10 minutes)

Discussion Highlights:

- Commissioners discussed the purpose of the selection committee and the anticipated scope of involvement.*
- Time commitment and coordination with partner organizations were noted.*
- The importance of alignment with the project's goals and community focus was discussed.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski, seconded by Commissioner Buck to appoint Chair Thiefels as the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission representative to the DDA Elevating History Mural Selection Committee. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

VI.) INFORMATION OR DISCUSSION

VI.A.) Elevating History: A Mural Series from the Living Oral History Project – DDA/AAAC/AACHM Presentation (30 minutes)

26-0096 Elevate: Public Art and Placemaking Program

Attachments: Elevating History - Mural Series.pdf

Discussion Highlights:

- Presenters explained that the *Elevating History mural series is grounded in the Living Oral History Project and is intended to elevate stories connected to Ann Arbor's Black history.*
- The roles of partner organizations were described, *including project coordination by the Downtown Development Authority, artistic administration through the Ann Arbor Art Center, and historical content support from the Ann Arbor African American Cultural and Historical Museum.*
- Presenters outlined the general artist selection process and noted the formation of a mural selection committee that includes representation from partner organizations.
- Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding how oral histories are translated into mural concepts, how artists will engage with historical material, and how community voices are incorporated.
- Timeline considerations and coordination between the selection committee and partner organizations were discussed.

Received and Filed

VII.) COMMUNICATIONS

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

Discussion Highlights:

- City staff discussed upcoming end-of-year and early-year Commission obligations.
- Staff reminded commissioners of the need to advance Golden Paintbrush Award planning, including confirming nominations and committee coordination in early 2026.
- Staff noted that January also includes Commission officer elections, which adds to the scope of business typically addressed at the first meeting of the year.
- Staff raised the question of whether the originally scheduled January meeting date would allow sufficient time to address elections, annual planning, and Golden Paintbrush Award business.

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

Discussion Highlights:

- Commissioners discussed the scope of items customarily addressed at the January meeting, including officer elections, the annual plan, and Golden Paintbrush Award nominations.
- Commissioners noted that additional time would be beneficial to adequately address these items in a single meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kotarski to move the January 2026 Ann Arbor Public Art Commission meeting from January 7, 2026 to January 14, 2026.

The motion was seconded, by Commissioners Fuller.

On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

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

Discussion Highlights:

- Commissioners discussed that the annual plan often includes ongoing work, with working groups continuing efforts such as Special Projects and Communications-related work (e.g., outreach and social media).
- City staff raised the option of considering bylaws updates at the start of the new calendar year, particularly to clarify how the Commission's subgroups/working groups are reflected in the bylaws.
- Commissioners provided updates on Special Projects, with particular focus on the Golden Paintbrush Award, noting that work is actively underway and includes coordination on nomination timing, committee logistics, and next steps.
- Commissioners discussed Communications and Outreach efforts, including how Commission activities and opportunities are promoted and shared with the public.
- Commissioners acknowledged that work across multiple areas will continue into the annual planning process.

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

- Officer elections
- Annual plan development
- Golden Paintbrush Award Nominations

IX. Adjournment (Mary Thiefels) – 2 minutes

Chair Thiefels adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

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