

ERIN MENDENHALL  
MAYOR



LORENA RIFFO-JENSON  
DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT of ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Salt Lake Art Design Board Meeting**

Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

5:00 – 5:30pm

**PRESENT:** Tiffini Porter Colour Maisch Jen Lopez  
Nate King

**STAFF MEMBERS** Renato Olmedo-González, Public Art Program Manager, Arts Council  
Amy Childress, Public Art Program Coordinator, Arts Council

**EXCUSED:** Michael Mejia

**GUESTS:** N/A

*Mission: To amplify art in Salt Lake City to enrich, enhance, and build a dynamic city where art and artists thrive.*

**AGENDA**

**I. Call to Order, Introductions, and Welcome**

Ms. Colour Maisch welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated the Art Design Board's mission.

**II. Approval of February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Jen Lopez put forward a motion to approve the minutes with the amendment to properly spell Tiffini's name on the minutes. Ms. Maisch seconded. Everyone in attendance voted for approval.

**III. Art Design Board vacancies**

The Art Design Board currently has two vacancies on the board. Five candidates were interviewed over the past three weeks. Board members Jen Lopez and Michael Mejia split attendance across the interviews, with Lopez attending three and Mejia attending the other two. The interview committee, comprised of the Public Art Program, Arts Council staff, and Art Design Board members, prioritized applications from candidates from Districts 1 (West Side, including Rose Park and Fairpark) and District 6 (East Bench, near Emigration Canyon and Donner Trail Park). There has been no representation from District 6 on the Board for the past three years. Before the meeting, all board members received the candidates' applications, resumes, and interview transcripts.

From District 1, two candidates were interviewed: Mr. Wisam Khudhair and Ms. Heather Francis. Mr. Khudhair, originally from Iraq, has a strong background in community outreach. He works for University Neighborhood Partners and was a stakeholder during the artist selection process for the Glendale Park Commission. Ms. Francis, a dancer and dance educator, currently works for an engineering firm and expressed a desire to contribute to the arts community. Both candidates bring

unique skill sets, with Khudhair focused on community engagement and Francis bringing a passion for the arts.

District 6 had two candidates interviewed: Ms. Michelle Buhler, a photographer and marketing professional recommended by Board member Tiffini Porter, and Ms. Alexandra Smith, a marketing professional with experience in RFQ/RFP processes who holds a master's degree in contemporary art. Both candidates expressed a strong commitment to the arts and a desire to connect more deeply with the Salt Lake City cultural community. In addition, one candidate from District 5, Ms. Sabrina Sanders, works for the Utah Division of Arts and Museums and holds a master's in Museum Studies. Ms. Sanders is well-connected with the local arts community and would bring a fine arts perspective to the Board. Currently, District 5 is represented by Board member and current Chair Ms. Maisch. By ordinance, the Board cannot have more than 2 members representing the same district.

The Board members discussed their thoughts on the five candidates interviewed for the two open positions. Ms. Maisch suggested that the Board focus on the applicants from Districts 1 and 6, as they appeared strong enough to meet the Board's needs and felt it was important that all City Districts be represented on the Board. Mr. Olmedo-González read an email from Board member Mr. Mejia, who was unable to attend the meeting. In the email, Mr. Mejia expressed strong support for Mr. Khudhair, highlighting his valuable insights during the Glendale Park public art project and his important connections to the West Side. Despite Mr. Khudhair's lack of an arts background, Mr. Mejia felt he would bring a fresh perspective and preferred him over Ms. Francis. For District 6 candidates, Mr. Mejia was particularly impressed by Ms. Buhler and Ms. Sanders, noting that Ms. Buhler's work as an artist could serve as a counterbalance to Mr. Khudhair.

Ms. Lopez also expressed strong support for Mr. Khudhair, recalling her experience working with him during the Glendale Park public art project. She emphasized his deep community involvement through his work and believed his perspective from the West Side was important. In terms of the District 6 candidates, Ms. Lopez favored Ms. Buhler over Ms. Smith, noting Ms. Buhler's curiosity and thoughtful approach. She also stressed the importance of finally having representation from District 6 on the Board, as it had been unrepresented for several years.

Ms. Maisch agreed with Ms. Lopez's assessment, particularly on the value of having a non-art background like Mr. Khudhair's on the Board. She supported focusing on candidates from Districts 1 and 6 to fill the vacancies. Ms. Tiffini Porter also supported Mr. Khudhair, emphasizing that the vacancies should prioritize underrepresented districts, especially District 6. She spoke highly of Ms. Buhler, whom she has worked with professionally for about a decade. Ms. Porter highlighted Ms. Buhler's artistic eye, thoughtful demeanor, and decision-making skills.

Mr. King, though not personally familiar with Mr. Khudhair, shared the Board's positive views on him. He mentioned having previously worked with Ms. Smith but felt that Ms. Buhler's resume and experience would be a better fit for the Board. Mr. King believed Ms. Buhler seemed approachable and likely to be a strong collaborator on the Board. Overall, the discussion showed strong support for Mr. Khudhair and Ms. Buhler.

Ms. Maisch made a motion to recommend Mr. Khudhair and Ms. Buhler for appointment to the Art Designed Board. Ms. Porter seconded; all Board members in attendance voted in approval. The Public Art Program will forward this recommendation to Mayor Mendenhall for appointment and subsequent advice and consent by Council.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

No Public comments received

**V. Other Business / Adjourn**

The Public Art Program continues to work closely with the *Wake the Great Salt Lake* team. The project team is hoping to make an artist selection for the signature commission by the end of March. The commission announcement will happen once the commissioned artist is under contract. Mr. Olmedo-González estimates that the announcement will happen in April or May. Mr. Olmedo-González thanked all the Board members who were able to attend the “Life on State” artist celebration and community walking tour. The “500 North Fair Park Calming Measures” public art project is tentatively going to be installed the week of March 17<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Maisch made a motion to close the meeting.