**Salt Lake City Arts Council Board Meeting Minutes**
May 20th, 2026
5:30 – 7:00 P.M.
54 Finch Lane – SLC, Utah 84102

**ATTENDANCE:**
**Board Members in Attendance:**

- Matthew Coles
- Cuauhtemoc "C-moc" Sandoval
- Eugenie Hero Jaffe
- Anthony Wright
- Hannah Nielsen
- Travis English
- Ryan Canter
- Lana Taylor
- Sabrina Martinez

**Board Members in Attendance Online:**

- Nick Pedersen
- Pablo Cruz-Ayala
- Caitlin Tursic
- Gabriella Huggins

**Board Members Excused**:
N/A

**Board Members Not In Attendance, Unexcused**:

- Denise Begue
- Ignacio Rosenberg

**Council/City Staff/Public in Attendance:**

- Felicia Baca, Arts Council Executive Director
- Lindsey Day, Art Council Office Facilitator
- Sylvia Richards, Public Policy Analyst (online)



MISSION: *To promote, present and support artists and arts organizations in order to facilitate the development of the arts and expand awareness, access, and engagement.*

# MINUTES

## Call to Order and Welcome Guests

- Mr. Coles called the meeting to order and noted Ms. Cannon Alder was at a Creative West board meeting.

ii. **Mission Moment (Future events & SLC worthy recognition)**

- The board discussed The Living Traditions Festival. Mr. English noted he felt it was great, and Ms. Taylor noted her positive experience with volunteering. She noted inconsistencies in messaging about attendees bringing their own chairs and the water policy. Ms. Tursic noted that it was great to be able to use credit cards to purchase beverages. Mr. Sandoval suggested that the information booth be provided with a labeled map of the booths, as a few attendees asked for the locations of specific booths. Ms. Baca encouraged the board to submit all feedback, as it will be considered in planning future festivals.
- The board discussed the latest arts & culture events they have attended around the city and look forward to attending in the future. Some events mentioned included discussing impressions of the inaugural Salt Lake Art Show and discussing the upcoming events listed on the board agenda. Ms. Taylor noted a broken link on the acoustic stroll website.

## II. Approve Board Meeting Minutes

- Ms. Taylor motioned to approve the February and April board meeting minutes. Mr. Wright seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## III. Management

General Program Management

- Ms. Baca provided some updates on Wake the Great Salt Lake. She noted that the team is working on a small catalog for the initiative and is awaiting approvals from Olafur's studio. It was great that the Bloomberg Foundation shared images from the event and featured it on Bloomberg.org. Overall, the team is happy with the level of press and feedback around the event.
- Ms. Baca noted that the talk with Olafur had some empty seats because the ticketing system couldn't release tickets to those on the waiting list when others indicated they no longer intended to attend. The team will look into what technology options there are to improve, but noted that Olafur's team cited it as one of his best talks/panels.
- Current attendance figures are quoted at 20K, while cell phone data indicate closer to 25K. This is great as Olafur's team was hoping to get 300 people a day initially. Even with the large crowds, the Public Lands team didn't charge the Council for grounds remediation.
- Ms. Baca noted that the deadline for applications for SLC's Poet Laureate has passed and that we got 15 applicants, which a committee led by Todd will review. The current goal is to announce in July.
- Ms. Baca noted that sales for Twilight are tracking more slowly, but marketing is ramping up. It was noted that Pioneer Park is back on the table for future series. It was noted that S&S Presents, the partner for the series, works to align artists with the different festivals it manages based on a variety of factors, including budget, noting that Ogden Twilight has a more significant, privately funded budget.

- Ms. Baca noted that the Busker Festival is this weekend and to let her know if you will be attending.
- Ms. Baca noted that renovations to the Art Barn are scheduled for late December with a focus on improving the floors and accessibility. Budget currently doesn't allow for improvements to the basement, so that will need to be addressed in the future.

## IV. Budget/Financial

Review of Financials

- Ms. Tursic provided an overview of the April financials. Activity of note included contracted services costs related to Olafur's installation and about a million in true, unrestricted assets. It was noted that most costs related to Living Traditions will come in towards the end of the month, and that a budget amendment at the next meeting will address the latest budget reality.

FY27 Budget Reduction Discussion

- Ms. Baca noted that the budget presentation to the City Council went really well and that the Council now has the opportunity to adjust or adopt the Mayor's budget as they see fit. Based on conversations to date, the council anticipates it will adopt the Mayor's proposed $125K cut.
- Ms. Baca reviewed the presentation given to the Council, which highlighted the Council's recent achievements, funding structure, and considerations for approaching the proposed budget cut. The currently favored approach would be to tap into the healthy fund balance to cover some of the proposed cuts while also considering which programs make the most sense to discontinue, given the prioritized budget.
- Ms. Baca noted that the Foundation contract with the City has three line items: grants, programming, and the Art Barn. Within these categories, the Council has flexibility on how to manage the budget. It was noted that murals are not in this budget, as those are funded on the City's side not the foundation budget.
- The current approach would discontinue support for Busker Fest and the related Jordan River stroll. This festival is a contracted program with forecasted escalating costs. There is an opportunity for some of this need to be filled by The Blocks, and some money can be used to support buskers on key weekends.
- Ms. Baca also noted a natural roll-off of support for Mondays in the Park as the Chase Museum, which anchors the event, is closing/being repurposed for a Park Ranger station.
- Ms. Nielsen asked if the Council foresees ongoing cuts, which Ms. Baca noted it was unclear, as this was the first cut for the council, so definitely a consideration for future planning.
- Ms. Baca provided additional context on budget line items, which could be adjusted to identify the full budget cut amount if there were a desire not to tap into the fund balance. Each department was asked to identify efficiencies. Some of these included materials for community outreach, signage, Finch Lane mailed postcards, Living Traditions headliner costs, and Artist in the Classroom Grants.
- Ms. Taylor expressed support for removing the Artist in the Classroom grants and reallocating those funds to the other grants. Ms. Nielsen noted that the current structure of the Artist in the Classroom grant could be optimized to increase applicants, especially since it serves an important population.

- Ms. Baca noted that the Council raised some initial questions about Twilight and whether it is an area to explore efficiencies / if it is a duplication of services. It was noted to the Council that the value for money provided by the festival is very significant compared with non-public offerings.
- The Board conducted a straw poll, which showed support for pursuing a hybrid approach that taps into the fund balance to offset some of the budget cuts while looking to discontinue support for programs like Busker Fest that make the most financial and logistical sense to wind down.

**V. Public Comment**

- None

**VI. Other Business**

- None.

Ms. Hero Jaffe motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Martinez seconded. The meeting was adjourned.