

MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Carson City Cultural Commission (CC)
Monday, December 13, 2021 • 5:30 PM
Community Center Robert “Bob” Crowell Board Room
851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada

Commission Members

Chair – Barbara D’Anneo	Vice Chair – Karen Abowd
Commissioner – Elinor Bugli	Commissioner – Christopher Leyva
Commissioner – Stan Jones	Commissioner – Amy Clemens
Commissioner – Sierra Scott	

Staff

Nancy Paulson, City Manager
Debra Soule, Arts and Culture Program Manager
Todd Reese, Deputy District Attorney
Danielle Howard, Public Meetings Clerk

NOTE: A recording of these proceedings, the board’s agenda materials, and any written comments or documentation provided to the recording secretary during the meeting are public record. These materials are on file in the Clerk-Recorder’s Office, and available for review during regular business hours.

An audio recording of this meeting is available on www.carson.org/minutes.

1. CALL TO ORDER

(5:31:13) – Chairperson D’Anneo called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL, AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

(5:31:23) – Roll was called, and a quorum was present.

Attendee Name	Status	Arrived
Barbara D’Anneo, Chair	Present	
Karen Abowd	Present	
Elinor Bugli	Present	
Christopher Leyva	Absent	
Stan Jones	Present	
Sierra Scott	Present	
Amy Clemens	Absent	

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS (THREE-MINUTE TIME LIMIT)

(5:31:40) – Chairperson D’Anneo entertained public comments. Capital City Arts Initiative Executive Director Sharon Rosse indicated that she was addressing item 6.a of the agenda and commented that the proposed action “appears to ignore this population of 56,000 and changes the focus to visitors.” She stated that the local arts organizations advertise and market their activities to local and regional residents while serving visitors, and she was unsure of what the change would accomplish, as she noted that the Commissioners already had an “established mechanism” through the CC. She reminded the Commission that it has previously been awarded a mini grant by the Nevada Arts Council and a Big Read Grant by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Ms. Rosse inquired

about whether the proposed arts council could accept grant funds to regrant as well as such details as who would manage and write the mission goals and objectives and manage the programs for the arts council. She believed that the 56,000 Carson City residents “deserve a high quality of life that includes a vibrant arts and culture environment and a public City commission devoted to the arts.” She requested that the Commissioners vote to preserve the CC.

4. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCTOBER 11, 2021 & OCTOBER 21, 2021

(5:35:12) – Chairperson D’Anneo introduced the item and entertained corrections and a motion for the October 11, 2021 joint meeting minutes and the October 21, 2021 regular meeting minutes.

(4:32:09) – MOTION: Vice Chairperson Abowd moved to approve the minutes of October 11, 2021 and October 21, 2021 as presented.

RESULT:	APPROVED (5-0-0)
MOVED:	Abowd
SECONDER:	Jones
AYES:	D’Anneo, Abowd, Bugli, Jones, Scott
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None
ABSENT:	Leyva, Clemens

5. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY ITEMS:

5.a FOR DISCUSSION ONLY: DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION REGARDING AN UPDATE ON THE ARTS AND CULTURE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES SINCE THE LAST CARSON CITY CULTURAL COMMISSION (“COMMISSION”) MEETING HELD IN JULY 2021.

(5:35:47) – Chairperson D’Anneo introduced the item, during which agenda item 6.a was also opened up for discussion. Ms. Soule reported on the following updates regarding the Arts and Culture Program:

- Ms. Soule had met with City staff from departments, including Public Works and the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Department, that would be involved in preparing a policy and carrying out the Stewart Street roundabout project.
- Specifications had been prepared for an interpretive sign to be installed at the Carson City Community Center to provide information about the *Inside the Mind of DaVinci* sculpture, which has the approval of the Carson City Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Department and the artist, and she described the interpretive sign as a brushed aluminum sign, similar in color to the sculpture, low-set to the ground, sight lines to the artwork, and with an upper edge that will reflect the silhouette of the sculpture. Additionally, text would be included that will describe the artist’s intention, the sculpture’s original location, and the artist’s interpretation in the piece of Leonardo da Vinci’s ingenuity.
- The working group, which was formed to provide recommendations for requesting unallocated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funds for arts and culture, had identified the establishment of a cultural district in the downtown Carson City area as the project that would be the most beneficial under the grant program’s goals. Ms. Soule explained that “a cultural district is an appropriate use of ARPA funding that would foster economic development, revitalization of urban areas, and improve overall business in the overall business climate and the Carson City area and [create] a more desirable community in which to live

and work.” Furthermore, incorporating a cultural district into the City can offer profitable benefits, as cultural districts can become tourist destinations as well as encourage business and job development, attract artists and cultural enterprises and businesses, address specific community needs, foster further local cultural development, and contribute to the community as an appealing place to live, to visit, and to conduct business in.

Ms. Soule and Ms. Paulson also responded to clarifying questions.

(5:41:10) – Commissioner Scott added that the working group had prepared a first draft of the proposal for the ARPA grant, and the draft included some of what Ms. Soule had stated as well as a full budget, two timelines depending on when the funding is allocated, the proposed location, responsibilities, and an implementation table.

(5:42:00) – Commissioner Jones congratulated Ms. Soule on the interpretive sign. In response to Commissioner Jones’ question, Ms. Soule indicated that the commencement of the Stewart Street roundabout project would not take place until after the Public Art Policy has been completed. She clarified that there were many factors related to the roundabout project that require a policy to guide and ensure that a piece with such significance follows best practice and “a process that no one can question and everyone is happy with.” In response to Chairperson D’Anneo’s follow-up question, Ms. Soule stated that she was currently working on aspects that related to ensuring that the roles of various City departments were integrated into the policy as well as “bringing various pieces to fruition and the engineering involved and the installations involved,” which would be compiled into a first final draft.

(5:44:29) – Commissioner Bugli commented that there had been an email requesting letters of support for a cultural district, and though she believed Carson City would be a “really good city to have a cultural district,” she could not support the request for the funds until she had seen the proposal along with the budget, the timeline, and the location, none of which she had seen since receiving the email. Ms. Soule informed Commissioner Bugli that Staff was waiting to find out when the appropriate time would be to present the draft proposal to the Commission.

(5:46:03) – In response to Vice Chairperson Abowd’s inquiry, Ms. Soule stated that the Carson City Arts and Culture Master Plan was currently “on hold” until the current meeting’s discussion clarifying the roles and structures for arts and culture.

(5:46:42) – Ms. Paulson stated that she was going to try to verify with the Internal Auditors for the City that the cultural district proposal would be an allowable expense before Ms. Soule presented to the Carson City Board of Supervisors (BOS) at the beginning of the following year.

(5:47:50) – Chairperson D’Anneo commented about the lack of roles for the CC, other than Redevelopment Authority Citizens Committee (RACC) grants, since the COVID-19 pandemic and Ms. Soule’s employment, and she stated that the idea of a cultural district and its value to the City “sounded really interesting.” She referenced other major cities, including Denver, Colorado; Seattle, Washington; and Portland, Oregon, and indicated that, because of the inability to obtain funding and how there has been “so little in terms of municipal understanding,” the CC is restricted. She pointed out that there are arts councils, such as the Nevada Arts Council, and suggested becoming not-for-profit because she believed “it helps us in terms of all these other arts organizations.” Chairperson D’Anneo added that there is “wonderful talent” in Carson City that are “all in their own little corners... doing their own thing,” and she believed that an arts council would be “an opportunity for everybody to come together, if they

so choose, and to have a very active role in arts and the growth and development of this city as a cultural destination.”

(5:51:44) – Based on Commissioner Scott’s and Chairperson D’Anneo’s comments, Vice Chairperson Abowd posed the following questions regarding if the Commission were to become a nonprofit:

- “How does this affect the arts and culture proposal that we’re talking about for the cultural districts?”
- “How does it affect the Master Plan?”
- “How does it affect the \$4 million in undesignated funds?”
- “Where would we fit into that category?”
- “Are we competing with all of our other entities … for funds?”
- “Are we going to be chasing funds all the time?”

Discussion ensued regarding the possible discontinuation of the Commission and the establishment of a non-profit arts council. Commissioner Scott echoed Vice Chairperson Abowd’s questions as well as the questions introduced by Ms. Rosse during public comment. She noted that working for a nonprofit is “work” and was concerned that “it’s a little bit putting the cart before the horse of dissolving this without really a firm path to this other option.” She noted that local art agencies are a “huge mechanism to get funding into cities” and brought to the Commission’s attention that Reno received \$500,000 in ARPA grant funds for arts and culture organizations for having the only local arts agency in Nevada at the time.

(5:56:18) – Commissioner Scott indicated that, per the ARPA grant proposal, Phase 1 of the cultural district would be establishing branding to be carried out by the Culture and Tourism Authority (CTA), providing functional signage, and creating a public art initiative, which she described as the main component for the funding request. She stated that the projected cost is \$435,000 for the first year, and the ARPA allocation request would be \$250,000. She added that the other funding sources would be some in-kind marketing services from the CTA and possibly State, Federal, or private foundation grants.

(5:57:45) – Vice Chairperson Abowd was concerned about “losing ground” and believed that it was logical to remain on the same trajectory so there is additional funding available to the Commission.

(5:59:12) – Commissioner Bugli reminded Chairperson D’Anneo that the Commission was formed for the separate arts organizations, and she pointed out that the Commission was getting a lot done with the parades, the airport exhibit, the *Inside the Mind of DaVinci* sculpture, and the community murals. She stated that the COVID-19 pandemic had put the Commission into a hiatus, and it did not mean that the Commission was not doing more tasks before that point. Commissioner Bugli believed that the Commission needed to keep those tasks “going,” including the Mayor’s Arts Awards and the educational projects, rather than “reform what we’re doing and create another organization.” Chairperson D’Anneo clarified that she was “not challenging the past” and indicated that “in the past two years, life has changed, and the goals have changed in terms of the things that we are doing.” She also stated that Ms. Soule’s time is spent on the CTA, and she believed that the CTA had somewhat taken over the role of “leading the charge to go out and have another event to put something together.”

(6:03:18) – Commissioner Jones commented that there first needed to be a finalized Master Plan.

(6:04:03) – Vice Chairperson Abowd believed that the cultural district is “the first in that road map, and it opens the door to other things going forward.” In response to Vice Chairperson Abowd’s question, Commissioner Scott

stated that the current parameters of the cultural district would be created during the planning process of the project; the current projected location is in the center of the downtown area of the City, by Carson Street on the east, Fifth Street on the south, Mountain Street on the west, and Washington Street on the north; and the ARPA proposal location is entirely within Redevelopment Area #1 and will support RACC objectives.

(6:05:24) – Commissioner Jones believed that establishing a non-profit arts council would provide more opportunities for funding, as he was not optimistic that the Commission would get a lot of money from the City.

(6:08:18) – Commissioner Scott informed Vice Chairperson Abowd that a nonprofit has a better capacity for funding, though she was also concerned about how a nonprofit would be managed without staff. She added that if the staffing situation for a nonprofit is “not really planned out, then the timeline to get from here to there could take a long time.”

(6:11:03) – Vice Chairperson Abowd wished to avoid “fits and starts” and reiterated her concern about changing to a different format or name due to how it may affect those involved with the Commission and developing the cultural district.

(6:12:13) – Chairperson D’Anneo suggested focusing on completing the Master Plan and the Commission’s support of a cultural district and disregarding the “down-the-road nonprofit,” since the Commission already had matters to complete to begin moving in a direction.

(6:14:37) – Mr. Reese noted that certain organizations discussed at the meeting may have distinct functions, and he indicated that the Commission is designed to be a body that advises and makes recommendations to the BOS based on a list referenced by Mr. Reese that does not include organizing arts events. He added that Ms. Soule and the CTA have a specific focus with the 1 percent lodging tax and tourism. He stated that the situation may be that all the discussed bodies are necessary, and the issue is figuring out the bodies’ roles, who can get access to the best resources, and where can grant funds come from to go to some organizations that cannot go to others.

(6:16:50) – Ms. Paulson mentioned having proposed a partnership with Western Nevada College (WNC) in order to apply for a grant for arts and culture and believed there could be some sort of “art entity” that can be partnered with.

(6:19:23) – Chairperson D’Anneo believed that it was too soon to discuss discontinuing the Commission and establishing an arts council, as she was concerned about the monies and the ARPA funds.

(6:20:07) – Vice Chairperson Abowd proposed that the Commission continue methodically as planned, starting with agendizing the Master Plan for the approval of the BOS, and pointed out that Staff had a proposal to go before the BOS to set up the cultural district. She stated that “once you have a momentum going,” discussion can begin regarding a “friends group” that can hold money to contribute to the arts, similarly to how the Foundation for Carson City Parks and Recreation functions for the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Department.

(6:21:27) – Chairperson D’Anneo noted that the consensus among the Commission was “to move one step at a time.” Item 6.a was tabled.

6. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

6.a FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (“BOARD”) THAT (a) THE CARSON CITY CULTURAL COMMISSION (“COMMISSION”) BE DISCONTINUED, AND (b) THE BOARD SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NON-PROFIT ARTS COUNCIL.

This item was discussed during agenda item 5.a. No formal action was taken on this item, as it was tabled.

7. FOR DISCUSSION:

a. CITY MANAGER’S ARTS & CULTURE REPORT

(6:25:37) – Chairperson D’Anneo introduced the item. Ms. Paulson did not have any additional items to report.

b. COMMISIONER REPORTS/COMMENTS

(6:25:46) – Chairperson D’Anneo introduced the item and entertained Commissioner reports and comments. Commissioner Bugli indicated that there were many holiday concerts and events, and she indicated for those interested to “check the websites.” She mentioned a Carson City Symphony Association holiday event that was “well-attended” on December 12, 2021 with singers, dancers, a youth chorus, an adult chorus, and a full orchestra.

(6:26:24) – Regarding The Greenhouse Project and the Flower Basket Program, Vice Chairperson Abowd announced that there were approximately 30 baskets remaining to be sponsored and requested that those who have not yet sent their sponsorship do so. She indicated that www.carsoncitygreenhouse.org is where a sponsorship form can be downloaded from, and the money from the sponsorships goes toward the watering and the care of the flower baskets throughout the summer months.

c. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

(6:27:00) – Chairperson D’Anneo entertained requests for future agenda items. Ms. Paulson indicated that approval of the ARPA proposal for a cultural district would be agendized as a future item.

(6:27:56) – Ms. Soule stated that she would keep the Commissioners updated on the activities involved in all the Arts and Culture Program projects and the progress on the projects discussed during this meeting.

(6:28:08) – Commissioner Scott wished to add a discussion item for research into what other kinds of funding are available as a City entity. Ms. Paulson indicated that she could bring proposals to the next meeting.

d. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

(6:28:43) – Chairperson D’Anneo introduced the item. Ms. Paulson suggested the end of January 2022 or the beginning of February 2022 for the next CC meeting, with which the Commissioners agreed.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

(6:27:21) – Commissioner Jones commended everyone involved in decorating downtown Carson City for the holidays and commented that “downtown looks wonderful this Christmas.”

(6:31:15) – Chairperson D’Anneo entertained public comments; however, none were forthcoming.

9. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: TO ADJORN.

(6:31:34) – Chairperson D’Anneo adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

The Minutes of the December 13, 2021 Carson City Cultural Commission meeting are so approved this 15th day of March 2022.