

**City of Phoenix  
General Obligation Bond Committee  
Arts & Culture Subcommittee  
Summary Minutes  
Friday, August 26, 2022**

City Council Chambers  
200 W. Jefferson St.  
Phoenix, Ariz.

Subcommittee Members Present

Ms. Devney Preuss, Chair  
Ms. Teniqua Broughton, Vice Chair (Virtually)  
Ms. Gretchen Freeman  
Mr. Sam Gomez  
Mr. Alfredo Gutierrez  
Ms. Annette Musa  
Mr. John Owens  
Mr. Ron Price  
Dr. Donna Reiner

Subcommittee Members Absent

None

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Preuss called the General Obligation (GO) Bond Committee Arts and Culture Subcommittee to order at 9:01 a.m. with committee members Gretchen Freeman, Sam Gomez, Alfredo Gutierrez, Annette Musa, John Owens, Ron Price, and Donna Reiner present.

**2. MINUTES OF THE GO BOND ARTS & CULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE**

Chair Preuss clarified that Mr. Mark Mettes, President of the Herberger Theater Center, requested funding for a new Pavilion Stage, not the rehabilitation of the facility.

Committee member Price made a motion to approve the minutes of the Aug.12 GO Bond Arts & Culture Subcommittee meeting. Committee member Reiner seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 8-0.

**3. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Chair Preuss noted that the subcommittee would be probing follow-up items from the first meeting, including new projects provided during the public comment period. Chair Preuss thanked the staff for sending two reports to the subcommittee about the Latino Cultural Center project requested in the last meeting. Chair Preuss also clarified that the subcommittee's task is to determine if a project is worthy of funding, not the location. Chair Preuss informed subcommittee members and the attending public

about an upcoming public hearing regarding the GO Bond program scheduled on Sept. 14th at 6:00 p.m.

#### **4. CAPITAL NEEDS AND PRIORITIZATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS**

Chair Preuss introduced Arts and Culture Director Mitch Menchaca to present the capital needs projects prioritized for the GO Bond funding proposal. Mr. Menchaca introduced Deputy City Manager Inger Erickson who thanked the subcommittee for their time and acknowledged the residents in attendance.

Mr. Menchaca gave an overview of several projects prioritized in the Office of the Arts and Culture's current and future critical needs list:

- Arizona Jewish Historical Society Expansion Project
- Children's Museum of Phoenix Expansion Project
- Herberger Theater Center Pavilion State Project
- Phoenix Center for the Arts Repairs & Repainting Project
- Phoenix Theater Company ADA Project
- Valley Youth Theater Permanent Project
- Latino Cultural Center Project
- Symphony Hall Theatrical Venues Improvements
- Office of the Arts and Culture's Cultural Facilities Critical Maintenance

Mr. Menchaca invited questions from committee members.

Subcommittee members had no questions about the Arizona Historical Society's Expansion Project funding or requested additional information.

Committee member Owens asked staff to explain why partial funding is not beneficial to the Children's Museum of Phoenix Expansion Project knowing that the original cost estimate was for a smaller project.

Mr. Menchaca replied that the original assessment covered only four rooms and that the revised project escape includes additional rooms, which reflects the higher cost.

Committee member Freeman asked how long each organization had to respond to the GO Bond program's request to provide a cost estimate for their specific project needs.

Mr. Menchaca stated that cultural entities within the Office of Arts and Culture Portfolio and the Phoenix Convention Center had three months to provide cost assessments.

Committee member Freeman followed up and asked if the lower estimates were completed by the City and if projects grew based on the Children's Museum's point of view. And if so, why did they not ask at the beginning for eleven rooms instead of four rooms?

Mr. Menchaca responded that the original assessment covering four rooms completed by the City was based on some of the larger spaces and the other seven rooms are on the smaller areas. The four rooms were the priority from the landlord's perspective of the entire building condition.

Subcommittee Member Price asked if the funding the committee is considering is limited to the current proposed GO Bond program funding or whether additional resources can be obtained from other areas.

Mr. Adam Miller, representing the Budget and Research Department replied that there is no room for expansion and that committee members are expected to work within the \$500 million GO Bond program when identifying priority items for funding.

Chairwoman Preuss advised committee members that their obligation is to prioritize those prioritized items and determine the level of funding for the items prioritized in the Office of the Arts and Culture's critical needs assessment.

Subcommittee Member Gutierrez questioned the prioritized items' allocation process since the committee is not empowered to appropriate funding.

Mr. Miller replied that the decision to increase or decrease funding levels for the identified high-priority projects is at the discretion of the Subcommittee Members.

Chair Preuss told committee members there would be plenty of time to discuss items to recommend for funding in the next meeting. Chairwoman Preuss added that committee members would receive a survey to rank the list of projects to be prioritized for funding.

Deputy City Manager Erickson added that the survey tool is confidential and will be available at the request of the Subcommittee Members.

Committee member Owens asked for clarification on the total cost of the Children's Museum tenant improvements project.

Mr. Menchaca invited Kate Wells, the CEO of the Children's Museum, to the podium to explain the improvements in cost estimates.

Ms. Wells provided insights into how Museum's cost estimates were determined in consultation with a construction enterprise.

Subcommittee Member Owens asked Ms. Wells if she could tell the committee the precise cost dollar amount of the improvements project and whether the Museum was willing to share the expense.

Ms. Wells indicated that the Children's Museum was willing to share the renovation cost.

Subcommittee Member Freeman asked Ms. Wells about the timeframe given to the Museum to provide the cost estimates and whether they initially requested less money because the intention was to renovate fewer rooms.

Ms. Wells replied Museum had three days to come up with a project cost summary regarding the four rooms.

Subcommittee Member Freeman further asked Ms. Wells whether the Children's Museum requested renovation funding for only four rooms or followed the staff's direction in proposing the current estimate.

Ms. Wells said that staff proposed the funding amount for the four rooms and that if the Museum staff had time to give their renovation estimate, it would have been for eleven rooms, not four.

Deputy City Manager Erickson commented that the City had not had a bond program in years, and the goal is to have one every five years. Ms. Erickson also clarified that the direction from the City Manager is to look at things that had been deferred versus things that might be new that would then add to staff costs. Ms. Erickson further explained that the three-day period is a result of the prior meeting to get the information back to the committee members.

Subcommittee Member Freeman asked Deputy City Manager Erickson if she considers the Children's Museum first floor improvement project an ongoing process.

Deputy City Manager Erickson deferred to Mr. Menchaca to discuss the process to decide on funding for four rooms only as opposed to the entire building.

Mr. Menchaca explained that his department and the Public Works Department examined the Arts & Culture facilities' conditions and decided to prioritize 16 projects for improvements, among them the four rooms mentioned, based on the current needs.

Chairwoman Preuss reminded committee members of a memorandum from the City Manager's Office dated June 27th, 2022, that explained the criteria for identifying projects to be included in assessing the critical needs projects.

Chair Preuss asked Mr. Menchaca to continue the presentations.

Chair Preuss invited questions from committee members.

Subcommittee members had no questions about the Herberger Theater Center Pavilion State Project or requested additional information.

Mr. Menchaca continued his presentation.

Committee member Owens observed that the initial funding amount presented in the previous meeting was lower than the current amount for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Repairs & Repainting Project and asked for an explanation.

Mr. Menchaca replied that the proposal came from the Phoenix Center for the Arts and invited its CEO, Sandra Bassett, to answer committee members' questions regarding the difference in the amount figures.

Because of time constraints, Ms. Bassett explained, her organization was not consulted regarding the initial proposal. Ms. Bassett further clarified that the updated figures include additional packages the Phoenix Center for the Arts submitted.

Committee member Freeman asked the staff if the Phoenix Center for the Arts improvement project was initially considered part of the Parks and Recreation's cultural projects. And if this building is owned by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), is ADOT responsible for the costs, or is the City of Phoenix accountable for this?

Deputy City Manager Erickson responded that the City is responsible for the costs since the City has a 99-year lease contract with the ADOT. Mr. Menchaca added it was not identified in Parks and Recreation cultural plans.

Chairwoman Preuss asked Ms. Bassett a question on behalf of Vice Chair Teniqua Broughton, who joined virtually. The question was whether Mr. Menchaca's overview presentation includes their prioritized project needs.

Ms. Bassett responded yes.

Subcommittee Member Reiner asked staff if the Phoenix Center for the Arts improvement project cost could be shared by the Parks and Recreation, Neighborhood Services, and the Office of the Arts and Culture.

Deputy City Manager Erickson replied it is within the Subcommittee's purview to communicate that to the Executive Committee.

Mr. Menchaca continued his presentation.

Committee member Gutierrez gave a compelling statement regarding the Phoenix Theater Company's ADA accessibility issues.

Committee member Freeman asked about the status of additional funding resources previously discussed that could help cover the ADA needs of Phoenix Theater Company.

Deputy City Manager Erickson stated that the City had allocated \$10.1 million in ADA accessibility needs in the Neighborhood and City Services Subcommittee.

A representative from the Phoenix Theater Company told the committee members that his organization has also presented to the Neighborhood and City Services Subcommittee.

Chair Preuss asked staff how the ADA improvement needs are determined and whether it is one of her committee's list of projects prioritized for funding.

Mr. Menchaca replied that the Phoenix Theater Company is one of the projects the Office of the Arts and Culture and the City Engineer studied in the facilities' assessment and critical needs report.

Mr. Menchaca concluded his presentations and invited questions from committee members.

Committee member Reiner asked Mr. Menchaca if there is a maintenance allocation for the Office of the Arts and Culture facilities in the general budget.

Mr. Menchaca replied there is, but it is based on contribution per operating agreements.

Subcommittee Member Reiner asked if the committee could receive detailed information regarding the expenditures of the Arts and Culture facilities and operating agreements.

Mr. Menchaca will send that information to the committee electronically through email.

Subcommittee Member Owns thanked the City staff for their excellent presentation and for answering committee questions regarding the proposed projects.

Committee member Freeman noted that the total improvement cost amount in Mr. Menchaca's PowerPoint slides was incorrect.

Mr. Menchaca realized the error and said he would make the necessary correction.

Subcommittee Member Musa asked the staff if the committee would receive additional information regarding the Phoenix Theater Company ADA funding and the Phoenix Center for the Arts funding.

Deputy City Manager Erickson replied if Phoenix Center for the Arts goes to the Parks and Recreation subcommittee meetings, they can present their funding requests there. Regarding the ADA funding for Phoenix Theater Company, it is the Neighborhood and City Services subcommittee's purview to decide which ADA projects would be funded.

## **5. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Chairwoman Preuss asked Patricia Boland, representing the Law Department, to explain the public registered to speak about the rules of public comment in the meeting.

Ms. Boland went over the City code of conduct guidelines regarding public comments.

James Garcia – expressed support for the Herberger Theater Pavilion Stage Project.

Tricia Smith – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Repairs Project.

Helen Rimmer– expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Repairs Project.

Anthony Fusco – expressed support for the Arizona Jewish Historical Society Project.

Charlotte Adelman – expressed support for the Arizona Jewish Historical Project.

Hannah Mack – expressed support for the Arizona Jewish Historical Society Project.

Lawrence Bell – expressed support for the Arizona Jewish Historical Society Project and stated they had already raised \$7.1 million in cash. The City's funding may help them convince other donors to fund this project.

Jennifer Longdon – expressed support for the Phoenix Theater Company ADA Project

Jenny Holsman Tetreault – expressed support for the Herberger Theater Pavilion Stage Project.

Cynthia Richards – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Cyndy Gaughan – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Mark Mettes – expressed support for the Herberger Theater Pavilion Stage Project.

Tanya Rosenfeld – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Keith Dallenback – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Sandra Bassett, CEO of the Phoenix Center for the Arts, spoke on behalf of others and implored the Subcommittee members to include her organization among the projects being considered for the GO Bond funding.

Kate Wells – expressed support for the Children's Museum of Phoenix Project. Ms. Wells also provided a packet for this project to committee members.

Erica Maxwell – expressed support for the Children’s Museum of Phoenix Project.

Ricardo Bernal – expressed support for the Children’s Museum of Phoenix Project.

Bob Cooper – expressed support for the Valley Youth Theater Permanent Project.

Sheryl Bronkesh –expressed support for the Arizona Jewish Historical Society Project. .

Lauren Henschen – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Cecily Wiener – expressed support for the Herberger Theater Pavilion Stage Project.

Michael Bernard – expressed support for the Phoenix Theater Company ADA Project.

Tom Evans – expressed support for the Herberger Theater Pavilion Stage Project.

Sofia Fenccken– expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Sarah Sullivan – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Thameenah Muhammad – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Joseph Benesh – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Martyn Bridgeman – expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts Project.

Vanessa Ramirez – expressed support for the Herberger Theater Pavilion Stage Project.

Freeman Davis did not speak but expressed support for the Herberger Project.

Jon Prystasz did not speak but expressed support for Phoenix Center for the Arts.

Don Ridley did not speak but expressed support for the Phoenix Center for the Arts.

Penny Posedly did not speak but expressed support for the Children’s Museum project.

Angel Jannasch – Pennell did not speak but expressed support for the Children’s Museum project.

Chairwoman Preuss concluded the public comment period and invited comments from the committee members.

Subcommittee Member Gomez requested information on how much the upcoming Super Bowl festival organization would invest in the City's historic infrastructure.

Committee member Musa asked for an explanation of the circumstances that led the Phoenix Center for the Arts building to disrepair. Member Musa also requested information regarding the City's financial agreement with the Phoenix Center for the Arts to be sent to the committee before the next meeting.

Subcommittee Member Gutierrez suggested that the Latino Arts and Cultural Center be moved to the building currently housing the Phoenix Center for the Arts.

Committee member Freeman advised the Subcommittee that it would be challenging to implement member Gutierrez's suggestion given the funding limitation.

## **6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- A detailed list of the prioritized project expenditures to the Subcommittee via email.
- Detailed information regarding the expenditures of the Arts and Culture facilities and operating agreements to the Subcommittee via email.
- The City's agreement with the Phoenix Center for the Arts will be emailed to the Subcommittee.
- Information regarding the Super Bowl legacy grant program will be emailed to the Subcommittee.
- Information regarding public-private partnership with Margaret Hence Park.
- Detailed assessment of the Phoenix Theater Company buildings.
- Detailed assessment of the Phoenix Center for the Arts, including the North Building, the agreement with the tenant, and the City's responsibility.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairwoman Preuss adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Yusuf Dirow, Management Intern