

**PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**  
December 8, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.  
Santa Fe Room  
1700 Danbury Road, Claremont CA 91711

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Pearsall called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE****ROLL CALL****PRESENT:**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: BAKER, BENNETT,  
PEARSALL, SPECTOR, WHEELER

**ABSENT:**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: ACOCK

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Bevin Handel, Public Information Officer  
Melanie Martinez, Administrative Assistant

**CEREMONIAL MATTERS, PRESENTATIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** - None**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Pearsall invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

Chair Pearsall closed public comment.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

Chair Pearsall invited public comment on Consent Calendar items.

There were no requests to speak.

Chair Pearsall closed public comment.

***Committee Member Baker moved to approve the Consent Calendar items, seconded by Committee Member Bennett and carried on the following vote:***

**AYES:** Committee Member – Bennett, Pearsall, Sandridge, Spector, Wheeler

**NOES:** Committee Member - None

**ABSENT:** Committee Member – Acock

1. Public Art Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2025.  
Approve and file the Public Art Committee regular meeting minutes of September 8, 2025.
2. Public Art Committee 2024-2025 Work Plan Update  
Approve and file the Public Art Committee 2024-2025 Work Plan Update

***The Committee received and filed the report as is, and requested staff to bring back the Work Plan as an item at a future meeting and add additional information regarding funding.***

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEM**

3. Continuation of the El Barrio Park Public Art Project Artist Selection

Bevin Handel, Public Information Officer, gave a brief overview of its November 10, 2025 meeting. PIO Handel stated that the artist team of Cathy Garcia, Athena Hahn, and Alba Cisneros had sent a letter to her withdrawing their proposal for consideration. PIO Handel also addressed the project area and noted that Mr. Aguirre's proposal contained additional locations beyond the original scope of the project, notably the walls of the restroom. Committee Member Wheeler asked questions regarding the use of images of iconic Mexican Revolution fighters Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa for the project.

Chair Pearsall invited public comment.

Tony Baltierra spoke of the racism and segregation he and his family experienced in Claremont as a young child. He wants to see his and others experience reflected in the art work.

Al Villanueva spoke in support of Mr. Aguirre's concept and spoke of the barrio's history.

Jenna Lamb spoke on the college's Barrio Project that chronicles the stories and photos from the East and West Barrios. She indicated the collection is available for Mr. Aguirre. She also likes the idea of a QR code directing viewers to videos of the history of the neighborhood.

Angela Sambrano shared the significance of the imagery of the Mexican Revolution and the reason many moved to California.

Lydia Henry spoke on being involved with the project since 2001. She spoke on the Courier article and radio interviews that disparaged the artist group and caused their withdrawal. She also is in support of increasing the budget if necessary.

Cynthia Aguirre spoke about the proposal by Mr. Aguirre as an opportunity to uplift the community and celebrate its history.

Matt Sadillo thanked Mr. Baliterra for his moving comments. He believes Mr. Aguirre's work will be an opportunity to share similar stories.

James Sambrano addressed the use of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata as fighting tyranny. He would like to see racism, the covenants against the Mexican Americans, and the targeting of the Sacred Heart Church addressed in the imagery.

Alice Lopez wants the park to be a beautiful space that visitors can learn about the neighborhood's history, especially the neighbor's everyday experiences.

Frank Garcia read a letter on behalf of his wife Cathy Garcia and the artist group specifying why they chose to withdraw their proposal after the Courier article by Mr. Villanueva and the radio interview.

Chris Toovey, former Public Art Committee Member, spoke on the art project's history and why the original project was changed from a mural to a broader description.

David Shearer provided history of the neighborhood. He stated that former mayor Judy Wright suggested a memorial at the park. He shared that his personal opinion are not Claremont Heritage's opinion. He is disappointed about the withdrawal of the artist group and indicated that the lead artist Alba Cisneros grew up in the neighborhood.

Chair Pearsall closed public comment.

Committee Member Baker expressed that she is pleased to see the amount of public engagement but was sad to see the selection process get polarized.

Committee Member Bennett expressed that he was upset with the hurtful and divisive article and interview. He wants this project to unify and teach the community.

Committee Member Spector talked on the importance of community and keeping the residents involved in the process moving forward. He stated that he supports the expansion of the project area to the whole park.

Committee Member Wheeler thanked the audience for educating her on the Mexican Revolution fights and liked the scope of the project to include the entire park. She would like to see lighting if possible.

Chair Pearsall called for a motion.

Committee Member Bennett, Pearsall, Spector, and Wheeler would like to vote for Jose Antonio Aguirre.

***Committee Member Wheeler moved to motion to vote for Jose Antonio Aguirre, Second by Committee Member Bennett and carried on the following vote:***

***AYES: Committee Member - Bennett, Pearsall, Sandridge, Spector, Wheeler***

**NOES:**      *Committee Member - Baker*  
**ABSENT:**   *Committee Member – Acock*

## **REPORTS**

### ***Staff***

Bevin Handel, Public Information Officer, gave a brief overview of the previous City Council meeting, and provided a City Manager Report.

### ***Liaison***

Committee Member Bennett reported that the Commission met on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and they heard reports on new developments and potential locations for art pieces.

## **CONTINUED PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Pearsall asked for public comment.

There were no additional requests to speak.

Chair Pearsall closed public comment.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

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Douglas Pearsall  
Chair

ATTEST:

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Melanie Martinez  
Recording Secretary