

# City of Prescott

## City Council - Study Session



July 14, 2026 | 2:00 PM  
201 N Montezuma Street  
Council Chambers, 1st Floor  
Prescott, AZ 86301

### MINUTES

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rusing called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm.

#### 2. ROLL CALL

Cathey Rusing - Mayor  
Lois Fruhwirth - Mayor Pro Tem  
Mary Frederickson - Councilwoman  
Ted Gambogi - Councilman  
Jim Garing - Councilman  
Patrick Grady - Councilman  
Jay Ruby - Councilman

#### 3. DISCUSSION

##### A. Presentation & Discussion Regarding Possible Amendments to the City's Art Donation Policy.

Mayor Rusing discussed that she feels the art donation policy needs to be revised in order to provide clearer guidance for evaluating and accepting art donations. She noted that the Civic Enhancement Committee and the library have been involved in addressing these requests and invited the Library Services Director to provide additional input.

Library Director Melissa Orr discussed the status of art in the library, which has become difficult to manage and find the correct history. She would like to get the current art situated before they can move forward and consider acceptance of more art and make sure it is appropriate for the library and the city. Maintenance can also be a large expense.

Mayor Rusing commented that most art shows use a juried selection process and said the revised policy would incorporate a similar approach to help ensure donated artwork meets quality standards while continuing to support Prescott's arts community.

Councilman Grady asked for clarification on accepting commissioned art.

Mayor Rusing clarified that would be art that the city commissions.

Councilwoman Frederickson asked Ms. Orr for clarification on art on the books but not physically available and asked for clarification on the policy and if we would need two policies for art we already have and future commissioned art.

Ms. Orr explained that historical records of the library's art collection are incomplete and difficult to interpret, making it unclear what artwork remains in the collection or what happened to other pieces. She said the library's priority is to inventory the artwork currently on hand before determining the disposition of any missing items.

City Attorney Joseph Young clarified the policy in the agenda packet is the current policy adopted by Council in 2024. He stated that a single policy could address both donated and commissioned artwork, provided it clearly distinguishes how each type is managed. He noted that the policy should establish procedures for the acceptance and potential return of donated artwork, while commissioned pieces would be handled differently due to the city's investment in acquiring them.

Mayor Rusing commented that she was surprised other cities do not have an art policy.

Councilman Ruby commented that there is a big difference between commissioned and donated art. He sees this more as a problem with curation of art for the city.

Mayor Pro Tem Fruhwirth commented that she is concerned with using taxpayer money paying for art when there are other more important services to pay for. Art should be lent or donated. She cited some examples and challenges that the Prescott Downtown Partnership is working through. She would like art to be kept fresh and updated or moved around to various locations.

Mayor Rusing suggested that volunteers from Prescott's arts community could assist with evaluating artwork, noting their expertise would be valuable in the review process.

Councilman Gambogi added that he agrees with Mayor Pro Tem Fruhwirth that we should not pay for art and should rotate it.

Councilman Grady commented that there is a broader issue with art in the community. He was hoping for more art in more places.

Councilman Ruby emphasized the need for individuals with expertise in art curation and rotation to help develop a process for managing the City's art collection. He suggested establishing a citizen-led group or committee of local arts community members to oversee curation and provide guidance, noting that the community has qualified volunteers who could support these efforts.

Mayor Rusing commented that this is the beginning of the conversation. The library should not be an art museum.

Mayor Pro Tem Fruhwirth added that the Civic Enhancement Committee should continue to administer the art donation policy, with final acceptance of artwork remaining subject to City Council approval. She stressed the importance of ensuring donated artwork aligns with the City's standards and values and supported keeping the committee involved while recognizing that additional

artistic expertise could be beneficial.

Mr. Young clarified and provided background on the 2024 revisions to the art policy, explaining that they clarified City Council's authority to approve or deny all art donations and determine their placement. He noted the changes also eliminated donor-imposed location requirements and explained that Council previously chose not to limit donations to specific artistic themes, leaving acceptance decisions to Council's discretion.

Mayor Pro Tem Fruhwirth added that there are other city buildings that can display art. There is an art community in Prescott that is more knowledgeable about all things art. She proposed the idea of a subcommittee on art under the Civic Enhancement Committee.

Councilman Ruby added maybe could also expand the Civic Enhancement Committee if they are taking on more duties.

Member of the public John Lutes commented that a subcommittee sounds like a good idea, with maybe members from current galleries and museums. It is important to elevate the artists in the community, which there are many in the community. Prescott has a vibrant, active art community. Use local sculptors and feature local artists to invest in community.

Mayor Rusing requested to have the Civic Enhancement Committee review the policy and provide feedback before coming back to Council.

***This item was for discussion only; no formal action was taken.***

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Rusing adjourned the meeting at 2:41 pm.

***Cathey Rusing***

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CATHEY RUSING, Mayor

ATTEST:

*Sarah M. Thornhill*

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SARAH M. THORNHILL, City Clerk



#### **CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Voting Meeting of the City Council Voting Meeting of the City of Prescott, Arizona held on July 14, 2026. I further certify the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

*Sarah M. Thornhill*

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Sarah M. Thornhill, City Clerk