

**State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio**



**Meeting Minutes
Public Comment Session**

City Hall Complex
San Antonio, Texas 78205

2021 – 2023 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg

Mario Bravo, Dist. 1 | Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, Dist. 2
Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4
Teri Castillo, Dist. 5 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6
Ana Sandoval, Dist. 7 | Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8
John Courage, Dist. 9 | Clayton Perry, Dist. 10

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

5:00 PM

Municipal Plaza Building

The City Council convened a regular meeting in the Norma S. Rodriguez Council Chamber in the Municipal Plaza Building beginning at 5:42 PM. Interim City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting aquorum with the following Council Members present:

PRESENT: 9 - Mayor Nirenberg, McKee-Rodriguez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Sandoval, Pelaez, Perry

ABSENT: 2 – Bravo, Courage

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Public Comment is your opportunity to address your City of San Antonio elected officials directly about issues that are important to you and your community. To sign up to speak, please go to www.sanantonio.gov/agenda and click on the eComment link for instructions. Members of the public are given up to three minutes to speak, and groups are given up to nine minutes.

Kim Bishop requested support for arts funding in the Bond Program and stated that under regulation and over development caused drainage problems.

Ann FitzGibbons asked that the 1.5% allocated for arts funding remain the same and noted that there were no artists on the Bond Committees.

Lionel Sosa stated that public art was the heart of the community and asked City Council to keep public art funding intact.

Kaldric Dow spoke against taking funds from public art and noted that public art inspired children to pursue art and gave the community a sense of pride and growth.

Kathy Sosa stated that public art provided insight into culture and noted that no investment yielded more returns than art.

Theresa Ybanez stated that all Council Districts deserved to have public art and noted that every neighborhood should have an outdoor museum with public art.

Maia Meneses stated that the Riverwalk would not be the same without public art and art was something worth fighting for.

George Cisneros stated that public art was important and requested that arts funding be restored.

Will McLeod stated that voting for the CPS Energy rate increase would compound inflation and asked why public comments were not televised.

Mark Hernandez asked City Council to utilize American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to assist small businesses, especially restaurants/catering.

Susan Powers stated that art brought the community together and improved the quality of life and asked the City Council to continue to support the arts.

Jose Orona stated that small businesses needed additional economic relief and requested support for small businesses.

Joseph Rogers stated that the arts community was dedicated to bettering the community.

Robert Garcia thanked the Small Business Advisory Committee and stated that he supported the use

of ARPA funds to help small businesses.

Chris Sauter stated that art was a major part of cultural capital and was an economic generator. He noted that removing arts funding from bonds would compromise the landscape of San Antonio.

Jason Anderson, Jacob Tucker and Kyle Kennedy spoke as a group (Party for Socialism and Liberation) and highlighted the 31+% positivity rate and noted that vulnerable residents should be protected. Anderson stated that applications for assistance were not reviewed in a timely manner and communication with citizens was non-existent.

Rachell Tucker read statements by two individuals in need of assistance and asked the City Council for assistance.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg adjourned the meeting at 6:11 PM.

Approved

**Ron Nirenberg
Mayor**

Attest: **Debbie Racca-Sittre
Interim City Clerk**

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Name: George Cisneros

Comment - 01/11/2022 08:52 AM: (No Vote)

I am in support of increasing the percentage for Public Art from 1% to 1.5% in all areas of the proposed 2022 Bond. The longterm benefit to the community of Public Art is a matter of public care. Areas that encourage the congregation of people are safer spaces. If Public Art can be used to define community common spaces, this is an effect which lives for years.

Public Comment Session

Wed, Jan 12 5:00 PM

Public Comment Session - Agenda Comments

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George Cisneros

January 11th 2022, 8:52 am

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No agenda item selected

John A Bachman

January 12th 2022, 10:54 am

I wish to bring to your attention a situation concerning loose animals in San Antonio and the 311 and ACS response. It is the policy of ACS when citizens report loose and stray dogs to not respond but to just log the location for a possible future sweep of the area. The policy in regard to confined stray dogs is to respond within 12 hours. However, 311 operators are currently telling persons that it will be up to 24 hours or to just release animals. A few days ago the Director issued a statement that ACS would not respond to the request for trapped animals but would schedule days when they would. So individuals would have to schedule when they would trap such animals. This is a totally useless policy as loose and stray dogs cannot be trapped at will. In addition telling citizens to release animals is in violation of the state code on cruelty to animals which states it is a violation for any person with custody of an animal to abandon them. There is a huge stray dog problem and it is not being effectively dealt with.

David Bernstein

January 10th 2022, 1:52 pm

As an artist and fellow San Antonian, I'm writing in support of public art and arguing that we should not cut the 1.5% budget of public projects to go to public art. A city without public art is a very boring city. From prehistory til now, all people have understood that making things beautiful is a sacred act. It's even a religious commandment for some. So we should of course understand that to make our city meaningful we must make our public spaces beautiful too. We do this in many ways like gardening, architecture, and public artworks. Artworks are unique and have a certain character that can make a space also unique. It becomes a place where people can meet, they can say to each other, "hey let's meet under the glowing fish". People take pictures of public art that inspire them and they share it with their friends, they remember it as something that marked a place as special. Just look at our airport for example. Public art moves the soul, it's joyful, contemplative, critical, and sometimes humorous. Art stays a part of a city and marks a moment in time, it becomes a living museum, a collection that generations can enjoy. We need public art. You might argue that it's not economic to support the art. First of all, when you support art you're supporting the local economy because the artists often work with local fabricators and they themselves are a small business in the city. Secondly, It's a small amount of money that can leave a lasting effect. To cut public support from art is often not about money, but about ideological differences. It's cut to make a point about what we care about as a society. But this argument neglects that most people enjoy art, and even if you don't like certain art, or don't understand it, it's not really the point, because other people do, and they should also be considered. We need to support our local culture and artworks are a magnificent way to do that. Let's make our city beautiful. Thank you

Luis H Valderas

January 9th 2022, 9:21 am

City Council, I am alarmed by the discussions regarding the reduction & elimination of the proposed 1.5% for Public Art held by the Parks and Drainage Bond Committees regarding their respective proposed projects lists for the 2022-2027 Bond. I understand the need to improve our infrastructure through the City of San Antonio's Capital Improvements Program. However, disregarding what public art

contributes to the mind, body and soul of the people, neighborhoods, districts and the City of San Antonio puts us ALL as a community in peril of losing a place that is nested in the beauty of all the cultures that have come to make it uniquely Tejas. Public Art generates vital ingredients required for the vitality, health and spirit of San Antonio. It creates community connection by involving residents, stakeholders and artists in every step of the public art process. In my experience with artist Kim Bishop as practicing public artists in San Antonio during a period of pandemic disaster our project contributed to the income of seven artists, seven poets, two manufacturers, one engineering firm, a soil testing firm, a construction company, an architecture firm and a material supply company, all from San Antonio. This public art piece will create a destination place benefiting the community for decades. We can create the San Antonio that we as residents, employers, and visitors want to see in the future. A San Antonio with opportunities for creative industries; that remembers, honors and celebrates our culture and provides a quality of life for all. Public art doesn't just make our city beautiful, it feeds the mind, body and soul of the people of this great city. I urge you to vote in favor of the inclusion of 1.5% for Public Art in the following propositions, as originally proposed by the City of San Antonio staff: Drainage & Flood Control; Streets, Bridges & Sidewalks ; Facilities; and Parks, recreation & Open Spaces. Sincerely, Luis Valderas Artist| Educator | Agent of Change

Samuel Kiser

January 7th 2022, 10:27 am

RE: CPS Rate increase 3.85 and 1.26 percent actions 1. I question having to pay the 1.26% levy, given that I was one who, within the 96 hour timeframe of 9-12 February 2021, suffered an estimated 75+% outage of electric service at my home. Before approving this levy, a deep dive audit and accountability of who actually used this power needs to be performed, as i know some neighbors, business, and industry were responsible for much of this consumption, and should pay for their usage. (If CPS can tell me that i was in the top 10 of energy savers during peak demand days this past summer, they have the data to identify the big electric users of 9-12 February 2021.) Further, CPS needs to demand from the PUC and ERCOT, as well as the Texas Legislature, effective legislation and regulation of unrestrained electric suppliers and rates, consistent with free market versus licensed critical infrastructure needs. Whatever laws/rules/regulation in place in February 2021 are unacceptable. And it appears that little has been done to rectify the issue, or prevent a future repeat of this catastrophe. ALSO-this levy needs to be a separate line item on the ratepayers' bills and should, with the assessment, disappear once the deficit is repaid. 2. A further audit of CPS Energy needs to occur before levying a 3.85% continuing infrastructure improvement tax on captive ratepayers. CPS used to be a COSA asset; not sure where this stands today, but accounting for lavish expenditures, and, new, effective and enforceable policy to prohibit such expenses in the future, and promote efficiency in operations and maintenance of the utility's assets, needs to be undertaken and enacted, before such a rate increase is approved.