Approved

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
PUBLIC ART & PLACEMAKING ADVISORY BOARD
TOWER 101, SUITE 1100
101 NE 3RD AVENUE, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301
MAY 18, 2026 – 1:00 P.M.

CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

		January-December 2026	
MEMBERS		**PRESENT**	**ABSENT**
Phoenix Marks, Chair	P	5	0
Martha Steinkamp, Vice Chair	P	3	2
Jacqueline Garcia-Arteaga	P	5	0
Edison Lozada	P	2	3
Erica Mohan	A	3	2
Jodi Tanner	A	4	1

As of this date, there are 6 appointed members to the Board, which means 4 would constitute a quorum.

Staff Present

Joshua Carden, Cultural Affairs Officer, Staff Liaison
Katrina Johnson, Community Services Department Acting Assistant Director
Anna Allman, Cultural Affairs Coordinator
K. Cruitt, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.
H. Roche, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

Roll Call

Chair Marks called the meeting to order at 1:09 p.m.

Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

~~1. Welcome & Introductions~~

~~The Board and Staff members present introduced themselves.~~

~~2.~~ Public Comment

~~None.~~

3. Xavier Cortada Proposal

Miami-based artist Xavier Cortada presented a proposal for a public art installation called Underwater: Fort Lauderdale, which would address the impacts of climate change. The sculpture would be used to engage the community by helping them understand this issue, realize its relationship to them, and emphasize their agency to take action on it.

Adam Roberti, Executive Director of the Cortada Foundation, provided additional information on the Underwater project, which provides a visual rendering of what sea level rise would look like in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, using elevation markers and QR codes. The project is intended to raise awareness of climate change and enhance civic engagement based on science.

Mr. Roberti advised that he presented the project to the Fort Lauderdale City Commission approximately one year ago, and the Commission recommended outreach to the Public Art and Placemaking Advisory Board, the Education Advisory Board, and members of the Public Works Department. City Commissioner Ben Sorensen has advocated for the project in recent months.

Vice Chair Steinkamp addressed some practical considerations related to the project, suggesting that simpler processes be considered in addition to the use of QR codes in order to make the project more widely accessible. Mr. Cortada explained that the QR codes provide a way to personalize interaction with the project, and the process is becoming more simplified for users. The sculptures can also stand alone without the interactive component, and other educational materials will also be available.

Ms. Garcia-Arteaga also expressed concern with the use of QR codes, pointing out that Fort Lauderdale has experienced instances of fraud related to this technology which can compromise users' information. Mr. Roberti noted that the codes will be printed in a manner that minimizes this risk, adding that bilingual captions can be added to the sculptures as well.

Chair Marks asked if the project can provide opportunities for viewers to interact with like-minded individuals and take action toward positive social change. Mr. Cortada noted that materials and activities will be available to the public, adding that the Cortada Foundation can connect individuals with their elected officials for further outreach. Residents can also reach out to City Staff to learn about Fort Lauderdale's climate change mitigation programs, and the project's website can point them toward additional local resources and organizations. Vice Chair Steinkamp suggested outreach to homeowners' and civic associations as well.

Mr. Cortada reviewed the proposed sculpture, which would be an 8 ft. permanent freestanding glazed concrete formation. Suggested locations include the Holiday Park soccer fields or playground, Esplanade Park, and the Riverwalk. Maintenance would include cleaning of the structure's surface.

Mr. Roberti reviewed the project's estimated budget, which came to roughly $75,000, including a 10% or $7,500 cost for project management. Mr. Carden noted that a dedicated project manager is traditionally brought on board by the artist to manage engineers and architects. A dedication ceremony will be planned to activate the sculpture. The project's timeline is estimated at 11-12 weeks, weather permitting. Mr. Cortada strongly emphasized the importance of public participation, concluding that the project invites art into homes throughout the City and activates a sense of purpose and community.

The Board members discussed potential locations for the sculptures, with Ms. Garcia-Arteaga suggesting the use of Esplanade Park, where the work would be exposed to significant foot traffic. The Board also discussed additional aspects of the project, including the potential involvement of students in local schools.

Mr. Carden advised that funding for the Underwater project is available, and recalled that Commissioner Sorensen had asked the Board to engage with the Cortada Foundation representatives. The Board may make a recommendation on the project's location in addition to approval of the project itself.

Motion made by Vice Chair Steinkamp, seconded by Ms. Garcia-Arteaga, to accept the proposal from Xavier Cortada for The Underwater: Fort Lauderdale. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

The members also discussed the potential location of the project in the City, including proposed sites in Esplanade Park, Riverwalk, and Holiday Park. They addressed the location of utilities or retention areas, visibility and engagement, pedestrian traffic, and other considerations.

Motion made by Vice Chair Steinkamp, seconded by Mr. Lozada, that we select Esplanade as the site of the installation for the Underwater: Fort Lauderdale project. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

~~The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.~~

~~Approval of Minutes – 4/20/26 and 4/27/26~~

~~**Motion** made by Ms. Garcia-Arteaga, seconded by Vice Chair Steinkamp, to accept the minutes for the 20th and the 27th of April. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.~~

~~4. Public Art Program Guidelines Update~~

~~Mr. Carden stated that he felt it would be beneficial for him to review the draft Public Art Program Guidelines to ensure their applicability to the City's Public Art Program. He recommended deferring this Agenda Item to the Board's June 2026 meeting. The updated draft will be sent to the members in advance of that meeting.~~

~~**Motion** made by Ms. Garcia-Arteaga, seconded by Vice Chair Steinkamp, to defer Item 4 of the Agenda, Public Art Program Guidelines Update, to the June meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.~~

~~5. New Business / Board Comments~~

~~Ms. Garcia-Arteaga requested an update on the Public Art Ordinance, which the Board had reviewed and edited at their April 27, 2026 meeting. Mr. Carden replied that he provided the City Attorney's Office with a copy of the draft Ordinance including the Board's recommended changes, and that Office is still reviewing the document. The first reading of the proposed Ordinance is tentatively scheduled for first reading before the City Commission at the June 2, 2026 Commission meeting. He reiterated that the Public Art Program Guidelines would be revised to ensure consistency with the Ordinance.~~

~~Chair Marks advised that when the Board members receive the updated version of the guidelines, Vice Chair Steinkamp could address the inclusion of information on the formal public art process. Vice Chair Steinkamp pointed out that the City Attorney's Office does not have experience with that process, and again recommended the inclusion of public art process language in the Ordinance.~~

~~Mr. Carden observed that the Ordinance itself represents establishment of law, while the program guidelines will provide specific administrative policies. He emphasized that details of the public art process will not be included in the Ordinance, but in the guidelines.~~

~~Ms. Garcia-Arteaga pointed out that if both the Public Art Ordinance and program guidelines are posted on the Board's web page, this could provide information for any artist, City official, or member of the public seeking to engage with the Board. The Board members further discussed the need to cross-reference information included in the Ordinance and guidelines to ensure that information on the public art process is adequately reflected.~~

~~6. Communications to the Commission~~

~~None.~~

~~7. Adjournment~~

~~The meeting was adjourned at 2:59 p.m.~~

~~Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.~~

~~[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]~~