



**CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE**  
**Route 66 Visitor Center Commission Meeting**  
**March 24, 2026 – Minutes**

**City Councilor - Klarissa Peña, present**  
**City Councilor - Brook Bassan, present**  
**Department of Arts & Culture - Shelle Sanchez, Ph.D., present**  
**Department of Arts & Culture - Diego Lucero, present**  
**Visit Albuquerque Position - Tania Armenta, present**  
**West Central Community Development Group - Twyla McComb, present**  
**West Central Community Development Group - Lorenzo (House) Otero, present**  
**West Central Community Development Group - Carlos Garcia, absent**  
**West Central Community Development Group – Denise Chavez, present**  
**Mayoral Appointee - JR Rael, present**  
**Hispano Chamber of Commerce Representative – Erik Contreras, present**  
**Support Staff - Marc Montoya, Bree Ortiz, present**

**1. Call to Order**

- a. JR Rael called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m.

**2. Review & Approve Minutes from November and January Meeting**

- a. Councilor Bassan moved to approve the minutes of the November meeting. Lorenzo seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.
- b. Councilor Bassan moved to approve the minutes of the January meeting. Lorenzo seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

**3. Presentation**

- a. Lissa Knudsen of the NM Cheese Guild gave a presentation to promote local cheese and agritourism. She also spoke of a potential partnership for the Cheese Trail and other opportunities with the Route 66 Visitor Center.

**4. Exhibits**

- a. 2026 Exhibits – Diego announced that the Centennial Roots exhibit will be in the gallery space and displaying the work of three local photographers, scheduled to open on April 4. The exhibit will be followed by Little Hoppers exhibit which will move in at the end of the year and into 2027.
- b. Sign Park - Diego gave an update that the bases have been poured. The four-week curing time is at its end and signs may start going up over the coming weeks. The Sign Park will not open up until the landscaping has been completed. Electrical and lighting of the signs will be a part of phase two.
- c. Master Plan - Diego gave the update that the Unser property has moved under contract with an architect and will help guide the Route 66 Visitor Center Master Plan. The Route 66 Visitor Center Master Plan will move forward when funding becomes available. Shelle added that the Unser property Master Plan will help to inform what is needed for the Route 66 Visitor Center master plan.
- d. Maintenance and Repair Updates - Marc gave an update that the audio control panel was relocated to accommodate part of the new exhibit and a power receptacle was added to

provide the power for the marquee that is going to be installed. The parking lot light poles are all working after some troubleshooting. The floor and muralist projects in the Central Ave. area have been completed. Selfie kiosk was installed. All annual annual fire safety inspections have been passed. Upcoming projects are getting some lighting repaired throughout the building and bollards in the parking lot, the front gate getting repaired, and the broken door handles in the gallery being replaced.

- e. Staffing Updates - Shelle gave an update that the department is attempting to fill the open position that was discussed at the last Commission meeting. The position that was reassigned and placed at the Visitor Center started on Monday giving the facility two full-time employees for opening days and hours. Shelle is hopeful that the third position will be filled by the end of the fiscal year.
- f. WCCDG Projects – Twyla gave the update that more than 60 high school students have volunteered to help clean around the Route 66 Visitor Center and along Central on April 18. Twyla also mentioned that WCCDG is considering not holding West Fest at Route 66 Visitor Center on October 18. Shelle did suggest turning it into a multi-day event. Councilor Pena would like to set up a separate meeting to look into possible options.

## **5. Actions**

- a. Recommendation to support the Little House Diner Relocation to the Route 66 Visitor Center Sign Park – Lorenzo moved to approve the support the relocation of the Little House Diner. Councilor Peña seconded the motion. Motion to support was unanimously approved.
- b. Recommendation to support the 2026 Rental Policies and Rates – Twyla moved to approve the support of the 2026 Rental Policies and Rates. Councilor Bassan seconded the motion with the amended change stating the kitchen is not currently available for rental.

## **6. Announcements**

- a. Next Committee Meeting – April 28, 2026 at 3 p.m. for Exhibits and 4 p.m. for Master Plan.
- b. Next Commission Meeting – May 26, 2026 at 3 p.m.

**Meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.**