





CITY OF SANTA FE
ARTS & CULTURE

301 WEST MARCY STREET, SANTA FE, NM 87504 | WWW.SANTAFENM.GOV/ARTS-AND-CULTURE-DEPARTMENT

DATE: November 24, 2025

FROM: Chelsey Johnson, Director of Arts & Culture 

TO: Mayor Alan Webber

CC: Elisa Montoya, Director of Community Development 
ELISA D. MONTOYA (Dec 4, 2025 16:59:22 MST)

ITEM AND ISSUE: Recommendation to extend for one additional year the terms of the City Historian and Poet Laureate

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY:

In December 2023, the Arts & Culture Department oversaw the application and selection process for the next Poet Laureate and City Historian, to serve two-year terms for the calendar years January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2025. The Mayor and Governing Body approved the appointment of Tommy Archuleta as Poet Laureate and Dr. Andrew Lovato as City Historian.

The Arts & Culture Department recommends extending the terms of both Poet Laureate and City Historian for an additional (third) year, through 2026. This will enable Mr. Archuleta and Dr. Lovato to build on their present momentum and continue to implement ongoing programming to completion. As a point of comparison, the New Mexico state equivalents of these positions serve standard three-year terms.

Poet Laureate Tommy Archuleta is a poet, musician, mental health therapist, and substance abuse counselor. His debut full-length poetry collection, [Susto](#), was published in 2023 by the University of Colorado Press to strong acclaim. His poems have also appeared in several literary journals and the high-profile Academy of American Poets Poem-a-Day program and Poetry Daily newsletter. Born and raised in Santa Fe, Archuleta earned his bachelor's degree from the College of Santa Fe, which he attended as a first-generation college student on a full merit scholarship. He has been highly visible as Poet Laureate, engaging in multiple public talks, ceremonial events, community workshops, and media appearances, including a reading at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, this September. In July 2025, Archuleta received a prestigious, nationally competitive Academy of American Poets Fellowship to carry out an ambitious program of poetry workshops, readings, and a chapbook anthology for unhoused Santa Feans. Workshops are now

underway for this project, which extends into 2026. Archuleta would also continue to offer regular free poetry workshops and work with the Arts & Culture Department on expanded National Poetry Month programming in April.

City Historian Dr. Lovato is a Santa Fe native and a descendent of both Pueblo and Hispanic cultures. He has spent his career as a college professor at The College of Santa Fe and Santa Fe Community College and as an author promoting empathy and respect for differing cultural perspectives. Lovato received his Ph.D. in Communication with an emphasis in Intercultural Communication from the University of New Mexico in 2000, and was selected as a Fulbright Scholar in 2008. Lovato's books include *Santa Fe Hispanic Culture: Preserving Identity in a Tourist Town* and *The Year Zozobra Escaped*. Lovato is a contributing author for four other books related to New Mexico history and culture. He has also written numerous articles and has given lectures to diverse groups such as the Santa Fe Fiesta, the Institute of American Indian Arts, and the Newcomers Club of Santa Fe. Additionally, he has taught college courses specifically drawing on content related to the history and culture of Santa Fe. He has given two TED talks: [Keeping Cultural Authenticity: A Santa Fe Story](#) and [Why History Matters](#). As City Historian, he continues to document the work and lives of Santa Fe culture-makers on his weekly KSFR radio show, as well as regularly speaking to conferences and community groups and working with individuals who reach out with inquiries for their own research.

Lovato's two primary projects for 2026 would be a community history project centered on the Midtown campus, creating a living archive of audio, video, photographic, and written histories of the College of Santa Fe and Santa Fe University Art and Design to capture this location's unique and multilayered past at a time of transformation into its next era; and a community radio storytelling project that will include a series of interviews of everyday Santa Feans about their lives, histories, and communities, as well as training for youth and others to interview elders in their families and communities, with public workshops in radio interviewing at locations that could include libraries, the Teen Center and senior centers. In addition, Lovato will consult with the Arts & Culture Department, Arts Commission, and artists on integrating local histories and cultures into new murals and other public arts initiatives.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Arts & Culture Department recommends that Tommy Archuleta's term as Poet Laureate and Dr. Andrew Lovato's term as City Historian be renewed for a third and final year of service, spanning January 1-December 31, 2026.

Thank you for your consideration.



Chelsey Johnson