



City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

Memorandum



DATE: February 17, 2026

TO: Mayor Michael J. Garcia

FROM: Chelsey Johnson, Arts & Culture Director

SUBJECT: Arts Commission Appointment

Summary:

As of February 2026, the Arts Commission has one vacancy to fill due to a Commissioner stepping down. This memo recommends the new appointment of one vetted candidate to join the Arts Commission.

Background:

Per City ordinance:

There is created the "Santa Fe Arts Commission," hereinafter referred to as the "commission." The commission shall be advisory to the governing body and shall initiate, sponsor or conduct, alone or in cooperation with other public or private agencies, public programs to further the development and public awareness of, and interest in the fine and performing arts and cultural properties. The commission shall organize and adopt administrative rules and procedures necessary to accomplish its purposes. (Code of Ordinances 6-1.1)

... The commission shall consist of nine (9) members. On the first commission, four (4) of the members shall be appointed for one (1) year terms and five (5) shall be appointed for two (2) year terms. Subsequent terms shall be for two (2) years to maintain staggering of terms. Vacancies, other than by expiration of terms, shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as original appointments. The mayor, with the advice and consent of the city council, shall appoint the commission members and the commission chairperson. All terms expire in October. (Code of Ordinances 6-1.1)

Following a public call for applicants, in early 2025, the Arts Commission's governance subcommittee reviewed and scored 49 applications, interviewed and scored ten, and submitted this list for mayoral approval. Mayor Garcia has selected **Oriana Lee** as the next new Commissioner from that list.

Brought forward for appointment to the Arts Commission by Mayor Garcia and confirmation by the Governing Body is the following candidate:

- **Oriana Lee**, first term 3/2026 to 10/2027
Replacing Robyne Robinson, term 10/25-10/27

Action Requested:

The Arts Commission, along with Arts and Culture Department staff, respectfully requests appointment to the Commission of Oriana Lee to serve from March 2026 through October 2027.

CANDIDATE BIO

Oriana Lee is an entrepreneur, interdisciplinary artist, well-being coach, educator, and mother of five currently residing in Santa Fe, New Mexico. As a compelling creative and social justice activist, Lee explores themes of relationality, well-being, empowerment, and human rights while inspiring critical thinking, promoting human connection, and engaging leading-edge thought. Lee's contemporary art practices include recycled/upcycled, visual art, installation art, vocal artistry, written works, performance/theatrical, film, and circus arts. Lee is currently a member of Vital Spaces.

Lee holds a B.A. in English/Professional Writing with Teacher's Certification from Tennessee State University (Nashville, TN), pursued an M.A. in Marriage and Family Therapy at Harding School of Theology (Memphis, TN), has been ordained as a minister, and holds certification as a Life Coach. For over 25 years, Lee has been on the leading edge of the home-education movement and has organized educational support groups and developed curriculum across a diverse range of subject areas and ability levels. Lee has also served on a number of boards.

Lee is the founder of ESHE Wellness & Art, a business that helps people both personally and professionally to discover what they want, what's blocking them, and what works to move them forward so that they will be empowered to achieve successful results. As a wellness coach, Lee also partners with local and national organizations to create "well work environments" through mindfulness practices.

Résumé attached.