

**CULTURAL ARTS COMMITTEE
CITY OF PALM DESERT
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: March 12, 2025

PREPARED BY: Erica Powell, Management Analyst

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR DIRECTION ON INCREASED CONTRACT AMOUNT
FOR DUELING PALMS SCULPTURE

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend that the City Council authorize an increase in the amount of \$106,267.25 to the contract with artist Kyle Absolom for *Dueling Palms* sculpture.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

In August 2021, following public input and Cultural Arts Committee (CAC) discussions, the City Council identified *Dueling Palms* by artist Kyle Absolom as the preferred sculpture for installation in the San Pablo roundabout at the entrance to College of the Desert. This sculpture was submitted in response to a Call for Entries for the San Pablo Phase 1 roundabout posted in 2020 with a submittal deadline of March 31, 2021. The artist fee at that time was \$125,000.

On July 11, 2024, the City Council approved an artist fee for the design, fabrication, and delivery of *Dueling Palms* in the amount of \$169,500, based on the increased cost of materials since the 2021 proposal was submitted. However, on January 26, 2025, the artist informed staff that the significant rise in material costs was impacting the project, and alternative approaches to the design would be required to move forward. Rather than compromise the integrity of the original design, which has already been vetted by the public, the CAC, and the City Council, the artist is requesting a budget adjustment in the amount of \$106,127.25.

The artist understands that this is the final chance to increase the cost of the contract. All future requests will be denied.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

If approved, the total artist fee for the design, fabrication, and delivery of the sculpture would increase to \$275,767.25. This is an increase of \$150,767.25 from the 2021 proposal. Additionally, \$130,500 was allocated for installation, including site preparation, foundations, lighting, and electrical, bringing the total project budget from \$300,000 in 2021 to \$406,267.25.

Funds are available in the Public Art budget, and no General Fund monies will be expended.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter from Kyle Absolom
2. Updated rendering of *Dueling Palms*

Cultural Arts Committee

City of Palm Desert

(Request for Direction on Increased Contract Amount for Dueling Palms Sculpture)

3. Original sculpture proposal rendering of *Dueling Palms*
4. Location of roundabout at entrance to College of the Desert and San Pablo Avenue