

AGENDA
CULTURAL RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, October 15, 2025 – 10:00 am
2nd Floor, East Training Room Santa Fe Depot (101 E. Wyatt Earp)
Enter through Train Station under Green Awning

Call to Order: Chair Brenda Carmona

Visitors:

Consent Calendar:

1. Approve CRAB Minutes from September 17, 2025.

Unfinished Business:

1. Cultural Currents Project- Report by Holly Mercer
2. Language Access Community Needs Survey – Report by Roxana Arjon

New Business:

1. New Americans Dinner – Report by Darlin Rayo
2. Engage Dodge – Report by Darlin Rayo
3. Naturalization Scholarships – Report by Roxana Arjon
4. Fire Alarm Program – Report by Roxana Arjon

Board Program/Dates (keep in mind):

- o October 15, 5:30 – 7:30 pm – Chamber of Commerce Local Candidate Forum
- o November 4, 7:00 am – 7:00 pm – 2025 General Election
- o November 18, 6:00 pm – New Americans Dinner

Board Member and Staff Comments:

Next Meeting Dates:

- o November 19

ADJOURNMENT

MEETING MINUTES

CULTURAL RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, September 17, 2025 – 10:00 am
2nd Floor, East Training Room Santa Fe Depot (101 E. Wyatt Earp)

Call to Order

Chair Brenda Carmona called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Present: Brenda Carmona, Yari Sanchez, Holly Mercer, Debbie Snapp, Perla Lopez, Susan Finley, and Kristin Hines,

Absent: Esmeralda Soto, Karla Lees, Jose Ramos and Joel Tuche

Visitors: Mollea Lightner, and Michael Marino

Staff: Roxana Arjon, Darlin Rayo

Consent Calendar

1. Motion to approve the August 20th minutes with an amendment to add Joel Tuche from the guest list was made by Holly Mercer and seconded by Kristen Hines. The motion passed 7-0.

Unfinished Business

1. Cultural Currents Project- Report by Holly Mercer

The Holly Mercer shared that the first podcast has been published, and the next episode will be released during the upcoming Final Friday. She also mentioned the possibility of hosting a community listening party. A planning meeting is scheduled for tomorrow to discuss next steps.

2. Language Access Community Needs Survey – Report by Roxana Arjon

Roxana reported that the survey was distributed during the International Festival. More updates and results will be shared at the next meeting as the goal is to gather broader community feedback.

3. International Festival Debrief – Report by Darlin Rayo

Darlin Rayo provided a recap of the International Festival. Crossroads Kitchen went very well and wrapped up within one hour, with positive feedback noting that the Hoover location offered more space. The soccer games were well-received and added a fun element to the event. The Board discussed the date for next year's festival for September 13, 2026.

New Business

1. Housing Update – By Mollea Lightner

Mollea Lightner presented an update on housing developments in Dodge City. Several projects are underway, including Voltz building north of town and Rick Marbouf's development on the south side, which is halfway completed. A new moderate-income housing development near Park Street

will add 24 units, with commission approval for the City to apply for state support. Another developer has expressed interest as well. She noted that the Community Housing Assessment Team conducts assessments every 2–3 years, with the most recent completed in 2024. Stakeholders will be involved in determining updated needs. Opinions remain divided on whether Dodge City is at risk of overbuilding. Additional projects include a CHAD/DC3 duplex planned within the next two years and USD 443's construction of five homes across from the public library over the next five years. Homes near the high school are being developed by an Oklahoma development company, with the first 40 units income-qualified and the rest set as market-rate rentals. Other projects include income-based housing on Briar Street and developments serving agricultural employees. Affordable housing tax credits have been reduced, creating challenges. Ford County and Dodge City Development Corporation continue to provide support, including an emergency home repair program that offers up to \$5,000 for qualifying households. In response to a question about how CRAB can help, Mollea suggested advocating to legislators. More information on programs is available at dodgecitydev.org.

2. Childcare Committee Update – Report by Mollea Lightner

Mollea Lightner also provided an update on childcare efforts. The Childcare Committee, which she staffs, has secured \$5 million in funding for a new childcare facility. This includes \$1.5 million from the Kansas Children's Trust Fund. The project is in partnership with a local builder who purchased the former Cinema Circle property, donating part of the site for the Phase I childcare center. Once completed, the facility will serve 68 children at a time and is expected to open by January 2027. The committee also hosts seminars to help train and certify new childcare providers.

Board Member and Staff Comments

- Darlin Rayo mentioned a free nutrition class offered in Spanish instructed through the K-State Extension office, as well as an invitation to an Elevate Kansas Community Forum, she will provide information via email.
- Holly Mercer and Micheal Marino provided information on the 90th Anniversary of Dodge City Community College. They shared that more information can be found at www.dc3.edu/90th-anniversary

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Yari Sanchez, seconded by Susan Finley.
Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.