Arts Commission – Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 22, 2026
Central Library events Room A/Teams
Meeting called to order at 4:30 PM by Suzanne Ostersmith

Public Comment: Citizens are invited to address the Arts Commission on any topic not on the agenda. 3 Minutes each.

- No public comment

Attendance:

- Commission Members Present: Suzanne Ostersmith, Julie Shepard, Don Hamilton, Eva Silverstone, Aimee Brooks, Robert Thompson, Jackie Caro, Sybil MacDonald, Kayleigh Dittemore
- Commission Members Not Present: Luis Mota, Laura Rau, Trevor Iwata
- Non-Voting Members Present: Colten Garske, Sebastion Pedanielli, Alex Scott, Adam McDaniel, Matt Boston
- *Quorum Present*: Yes
- Staff Members Present: Lisa Edwards

Minutes: Minutes from 8/25/2026 approved unanimously.

Current Agenda: The current agenda was approved.

Briefing Session:

- **Spokane Arts Report – Suzanne Ostersmith for Carly Cortright**
  - Thank you to the Arts Commission for your efforts on the Arts Celebration.
  - The Spokane Arts Board is in final interviews for the Executive Director position and hopes to make an offer in the next two weeks.
  - SAGA Roud Three is open until October 1st

- **Financial Report from the City – Alex Scott, Adam McDaniel and Matt Boston**
  - Matt explained that the SMC guides how the admissions tax dollars can be spent – 50% to operations and 50% to artists
  - $57,000 is available for the arts commission in 2026 and $67,000 for 2027, whatever is not spent rolls over to the next year
  - This money is the delta between the Spokane Arts contract, and the total dollar amount from the admissions tax
  - Spokane Arts contract is $459,000 per year
  - Admissions tax applies to most tickets purchased in the city, there are exemptions for non-profits, schools and the PFD
  - Ask that the commission vote to officially direct the 50% to go back to the city for the Community Arts Manager position for the biennium during the October meeting
  - The city commits to full transparency as to what the budget looks like moving forward
  - Matt will provide the commission with a written report
  - City is excited about the Municipal Arts Plan
  - The commission is encouraged to think big about how to use the money – small expenditures, targeted commissions, etc.
  - The city is constantly looking for ways to better resource the commission – cultural access, 1% for public art program, closing loopholes with the admissions tax
  - Commissioners are encouraged to reach out regarding arts asks for the state legislative agenda
  - The city wants Spokane Arts to succeed they play a vital role in our community

    - Discussion of whether the money can be spent to hire a designer for a branding effort.
    - Suggestion to look at amending the ordinance to better define what the commission would like to see the 50% spent on
    - No RFP needed for contracts under $50,000
    - More education for the commission around cultural access and should it be included in the MAP
    - The City/Lisa will draft the resolution for the commission to approve for the October meeting
- **Chair Report – Suzanne Ostersmith**
    - Suzanne would like to figure out a way to share the information that was just presented with the missing commissioners
    - We will request written information from presenters moving forward
    - Lisa will share the recording of this meeting with the absent commissioners
    - We were not able to table at the Symphony in the Park event due to the date change
    - Thank you to the commission for all the help at the Arts Celebration
    - Sign up for Chase Gallery volunteers passed around
- **Staff Report – Lisa Edwards**
    - Lisa will be communicating using city emails exclusively. If this is a problem, please reach out to her.
    - The contract with Framework has been uploaded into the city system and just needs final signatures. New contract timeframe is October-June.
    - Lisa met with Manny from Inspire WA about advocacy efforts and Cultural Access
    - Update on the public graffiti wall – we are pulling together a work group of all interested parties to get this project started
    - Lisa encouraged commissioners to attend the meet and greet with the new ED of ArtsWA after the meeting ends.
- **Governance Committee Report – Suzanne Ostersmith**
    - No report
- **Chase Gallery Committee Report – Julie Shepard**
    - Julie is working on lining up entertainment for First Fridays in 2027
    - Call for artists for 2027 is open until October 16th
    - Julie will share the updated flyer for October with the commission
- **Public Art Committee Report – Aimee Brooks**
    - There is one asphalt art project happening now
    - The barrier painting project at Howard and Mallon has 11 artists scheduled to work on it and the painting will be happening October 9-11
    - Shelby may be putting out a volunteer call to help with these projects as she takes some time off.
- **Municipal Arts Plan Committee Report – Jackie Caro**
    - No report
- **Arts Celebration Committee Report – Eva Silverstone**
    - It was awesome!
    - 133 people checked in but Eva believes there were over 160 in attendance
    - We set ourselves up well to be able to have further conversations about the commission
- **Communications/Branding Committee Report – Sybil MacDonald**
    - The budget will be a critical piece moving forward
    - Sybil sees this as a Strategic Identity Project – it's not just about a logo but about the bigger picture of who we are and why do we matter
    - Phase 1 will be Discovery, Phase 2 – defining short- and long-term goals, Phase 3 – brand positioning and differentiation, Phase 4 – Visual Brand
    - Working with an experienced agency in town will be very beneficial
    - The three first steps are budget, committee members and developing a timeline
    - It was expressed that there is still a need to clearly define the Commission, City Office and Spokane Arts
    - Robert volunteered to join the committee

Informational, Discussion and/or Action Items:

- None

Meeting Adjourned at 6:08 PM.

The next regularly scheduled Arts Commission Meeting is on Tuesday, October 27, 2026.