

BLOOMINGTON ARTS COMMISSION

FULL COMMISSION MEETING

August 13, 2025, 5:15 to 6:15 pm

Hybrid Meeting:

In person: Gerard, Leila, Betsy, Nada, Robert, Christina, Paul, Gretchen

A G E N D A

1. Call to Order/Welcome
2. BAC Minutes/Financials
 - a. Minutes from the July 2025 meeting were distributed and approved.
 - a. Holly reported that the Arts Project grant money was awarded. In total we spent \$62,983 on this cycle, leaving a total of \$104,550 for the remaining cycles which include the artistic advancement grant and then the operations grant cycle which is currently open.
 - b. We have \$5000 to spend on professional development workshops.
 - c. There is public art funding of \$16,500 available.
2. City updates
 - a. Gerard mentioned that the next discussion will be attended by Natalie Almanza, and Jane Kupersmith, Director of Economic Development and City Attorney Audrey Brittingham.
 - b. Natalie Almanza spoke about her removal from the Arts Commission. She was asked to resign due to an anonymous E-report filing stating that she did not live within the city limits, a violation of city ordinance section CH20C. She has served on the BAC for several years and mentioned that she had disclosed her address and the city confirmed her eligibility to continue. She was removed from the BAC via e-mail. She is asking the city to display residency requirements through the process of appointment for prospective applicants.
 - c. Jane Kupersmith, Director of Economic and Sustainable Development at the City thanked Natalie and said that there have been substantial changes since 2024 how boards and commissions are handled.
 - d. Audrey Brittingham mentioned that there is no room for interpretation on this rule. Internally they are working on implementing new onboarding so that this couldn't happen again. We could consider having County representatives, but don't know that it is feasible. Annual required training would address residency eligibility of Commissioners.
 - e. Holly thanked Natalie for all her fantastic accomplishments and contributions.
3. Update: Public Art
 - a. Postpone any updates and an update on leadership of this committee.
4. Update: Grants - Elliot Josephine Leila Reichert, Grants Subcommittee Chair
 - a. Artistic advancement cycle has attracted over 100 applications were reviewed, the most applications ever received.

- b. Total amount requested was \$179,704.92, and we were able to fund \$68,500. That is 38 percent of the amount requested, with 55 percent of the applications receiving funding. Awards were voted on by the grants committee and approved.
 - c. Aubrey Seader, who works for the city submitted an application for a 2025 Arts Project grant on behalf of Off Night Productions and was recommended for funding. The Commission voted to approve this grant. This approval will be sent to the Mayor's Office and then on to the state legislature.
 - d. Operations grants just opened, grants up to \$5000 for 5013c organizations.
 - e. Leila will be stepping down after this next grant cycle.
- 2. From your Chair - Gerard
 - a. There are vacancies on the Commission, and he is looking for recommendations for members.
- 3. [Upcoming events and important dates](#)
 - a. Exhibit Columbus
 - b. Holly mentioned Ready 2.0, statewide funds available for building out new arts facilities. We are part of the Uplands district, and Holly has already put in an application for artists studio space, but there will be another application deadline in the first quarter of 2026 to apply. She plans to resubmit.
- 4. Commissioner Announcements
- 5. Public comment
 - a. Katerina Klaue: Pridefest and Lotus Fest coming up-they are looking for volunteers. Had supportive comments about Natalie Almanza.
 - b. Reagan Sandberg had lengthy comments about whether it was legal to remove Natalie from the Commission.
 - c. Erin Kelly mentioned there is a pathway for non-city residents to serve on Commissions since city employment is one option for County residents.
 - d. Amy Oelsner, director of Girls Rock Bloomington mentioned that Natalie was a great help to her organization.
 - e. Sarah Nichols, gallery manager at the Waldron stated how much Natalie has helped her as part of Gallery Walk.
 - f. Allyn Boley, College Arts and Humanities Institute, worked with Natalie and appreciates her expertise.
- 6. Call to adjourn

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