



Meeting Minutes

Arts Commission

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Contact: Stephanie
Johnson
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Thursday, December 11, 2025

6:00 PM

Online or via phone

Register to

Attend:https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_H0GeF245RUeLHuoI3BBkVA

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dorgan called the meeting to order at 6pm.

1.A ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Chair Kathryn Dorgan, Commissioner Jim Burlingame, Commissioner Sergio Garcia, Commissioner Coral Garey, Commissioner Katherine Ransom, Commissioner Andrew Repcik and Commissioner Jay Spivak

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Christen Greene

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Dorgan asked if there were changes to the agenda. Hearing none, the agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[25-1021](#) Approval of November 13, 2025 Arts Commission Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [11.13.25 OAC Minutes](#)

Chair Dorgan asked if there were changes to the minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioners shared information about past and upcoming art events.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

[25-1024](#) Meet Olympia Parks, Arts & Recreation Department (OPARD)

Director Sylvana Niehuser

New Parks Arts & Recreation Director Sylvana Niehuser introduced herself to Commissioners.

Information only. No action requested.

[25-1022](#) Update on Downtown Olympia Creative District (DOCD)

Attachments: [DOCD Website](#)

Mariella Luz from the Downtown Olympia Creative District (DOCD) provided an update on various Olympia Artspace Alliance Projects, of which the DOCD is one of them. They explained the origin of Olympia's Creative District and the transition from a City program to the DOCD. One of the first tasks was to expand the boundaries of the district to include the Armory and all of downtown. They shared that their current project is a website that will allow artists to search for things like studio spaces and venues, and for the community to search for artist services (muralists) in order to help create opportunity and resources for the artists who live in Olympia. Commissioners engaged in discussion.

Information only. No action requested.

[25-1023](#) Update on Rebecca Howard Park

Attachments: [Rebecca Howard Park Project Page on Engage Olympia](#)

Sarah Giannobile, Associate Parks Planner, provided an overview of the Rebecca Howard Park Development Plan including concepts for art features and community hub, phasing and timeline. She noted that staff were still deciding on the best approach for art inclusion in Phase 1, and that City Council would be reviewing the plan in early 2026. As part of that process, she shared that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee had drafted a letter of support, and wondered if the Arts Commission would be interested to do the same. Commissioners engaged in discussion about the plan and decided to have staff draft a letter of support for Chair edit and signature.

Information only. No action requested.

[25-1017](#) Approval of 2026 Arts Walk Cover Artists

Arts Program Specialist Jessica Strauss Tomy shared the recommendation of the jury: Fern Tallos for Spring, Devin River for Fall, and Fran Potasnik as alternate.

Commissioner Garcia spoke to the process, noting a unanimous decision around the spring recommendation, and a interest in highlighting fiber arts for fall, as it has not been represented for some time. The jury felt all three would translate well to print medium.

Commissioner Ransom moved to approve the jury's recommendation of Fern Tallos for Spring Arts Walk cover, Devin River for Fall, and Fran Potasnik as alternate, seconded by Commissioner Burlingame. The motion was approved.

[25-0949](#)

Arts Commission Leadership Positions for 2026

Attachments: [Advisory Body Guidebook](#)

Ms. Johnson shared that Commissioner Ransom had expressed interest in the Vice-Chair position, and that Chair Dorgan was interested to stay on another year as Chair. Commissioners were asked if anyone else was interested in a leadership position at this time.

Commissioner Garey, moved that Commissioner Ransom be elected Vice-Chair for 2026, and that Chair Dorgan retain her position, seconded by Commissioner Burlingame. The motion was approved.

7. REPORTS

Ms. Johnson noted that Commissioner City email addresses would expire at the end of 2025, and asked Commissioners to send her preferred emails for future correspondence. She noted an upcoming poetry workshop and City Hall exhibition event, and provided updates on the Artist in Residence project, recruitment for boards and commissions, and the resource page on the City public art website.

8. OTHER TOPICS

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54pm.

Upcoming

Accommodations