

Minutes of the Jasper Community Arts Commission
City of Jasper, Indiana
April 1, 2025

The regular meeting of the Jasper Community Arts Commission was held at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at Jasper City Hall Council Chambers. Roll call was held with the following **Commission Members Present in Person:** Darla Blazey, Emi Donato, Corie Eckerle, Bibianna Green, Heath Kluemper, Beth Seidl, Pat Thyen, and Selena Vonderheide. **Non-Voting Student Representative:** Connor Fair. **Observed Remotely via Zoom:** Linda Kahle. **Commission Members Absent:** Jasmine Bosler, and Jay Hamlin. **Staff Members Present:** Kyle Rupert, Eric Herndon, Emily Peak, and Liz Book. **City Attorney:** Renee Kabrick. **Guests in attendance:** Mayor Dean Vonderheide. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

Emi Donato moved to approve the minutes of March's meeting. **Pat Thyen** seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

City Financial Statement

Pat Thyen moved to approve the claims as presented. **Corie Eckerle** seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

Donation Report

Heath Kluemper made a motion to accept the restriction of the following donations: \$700 to be used at the discretion of the Director, \$250 for Chalk Walk expenses, and \$498.10 for the Building Fund. **Corie Eckerle** seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

Bibianna Green arrived at 5:39 pm.

Old Business

- Kyle presented the updated 2025-2026 Corporate Sponsorship Guide. The updated sponsorship guide will provide businesses with a lower level of entry to sponsor. He hopes that the number of sponsors and the amount of money brought in will increase. The new guide also focuses on season-long sponsorship as opposed to individual show sponsorships. He also proposed increasing the value of the sponsorship benefit. Exhibits will have two tiers of sponsors and more opportunities to sponsor Chalk Walk. There are no real changes to the general sponsorship benefits from previous years, but sponsors of the performance season will see a change in benefits. Top sponsors will receive tickets to all performances, excluding the backstage shows. The guide will be mailed to local businesses and will also be shared on social media. **Selena Vonderheide** made a motion to accept the Corporate Sponsorship Guide as presented. **Heath Kluemper** seconded. Motion passed 8-0.

New Business

- Kyle presented the proposed performing artists for the 2025-2026 season. All the artists will fit within the 2025 budget and would be in line for previous budgets for 2026. Thanks to sponsorships and donations there are some bigger artists that will be presented. He is working on finalizing the last spots for the season. There is a music festival in Louisville that has made contracting with several artists that would have been a good fit for the Jasper Arts Center not possible due to radius clauses. He is working with a national booking agent to fill the remaining dates. The current offer sheet that Kyle sends to agents states that the offer is contingent upon full board approval. Bigger agents are not willing to abide by the language – an offer is an offer. Kyle shared a list of artists he is targeting with not-to-exceed amounts, and all shows will be sent to the Performing Arts Committee for consideration. **Heath Kluemper** made a motion to approve the artists as presented, with the not-to-exceed amounts listed. **Bibianna Green** seconded. Motion passed 8-0.
- This year's balloon artist for Chalk Walk, John the Balloon Guy, has requested a deposit of \$325 to help pay for some of the upfront costs. The deposit is less than 50% of the total fee. **Pat Thyen** made a motion to approve a deposit for John the Balloon Guy. **Selena Vonderheide** seconded. Motion passed 8-0.
- Kyle presented the proposed ticket prices for the 2025-2026 performance season. The grand package price will be the same for those renewing but will be \$10 more for those purchasing a new grand package. The prices presented are the maximum of what would be charged and are based on the offers and the artists that are being targeted. **Bibianna Green** made a motion to accept the proposed ticket pricing. **Beth Seidl** seconded. Motion passed 8-0.

Director's Report/Performing Arts

Kyle reported:

- *Adam Pascal* and *Anthony Rapp* is the last performance of the season. *Ryanhood* was the last Backstage show of the season and was well received. *Lonestar* gave a great show and had a video wall and light show as part of its performance. The band was great to work with. A new sound reinforcement company was hired for Lonestar's performance, and it went fairly well. Should Concept Sound and Lights not be available, there is another option that would work, should it be needed.
- This season there has been a greater variety in audience ages than in previous seasons.
- Ticket revenue is up, and the number of tickets is up. Also, the number of locations ticket buyers are from has increased.
- Actors Community Theatre will present Neil Simon's *Rumors* this weekend and *Dance by Mallory* continues to have dance classes at the Arts Center.
- Usage numbers and gallery visits are up year-over-year. He shared that the staff is working hard to make Jasper Arts' 50th Anniversary a great year.

Building and Structure Report

Kyle reported for Danny:

- The roof at the Jasper Arts Center will be replaced this summer.
- Jasper Arts has applied to renew the Amusement and Entertainment permits for the Jasper Arts Center and the Thyen-Clark Cultural Center. Part of the permit process is to have various building systems tested, and Danny is working on coordinating those inspections.
- Beck Studios has been contacted to evaluate the light and sound systems at the Jasper Arts Center to determine how to update the systems to meet the needs of artists in the 21st century. The goal is to have the correct equipment to avoid having to bring in sound reinforcement for multiple shows each year. The system will not be replaced next year but will provide budgetary estimates for the future.
- New vinyl decals have been installed on the exterior doors of the Cultural Center that feature the new branding and are much easier to read than the previous version.

Visual Arts Report

Emily reported:

- Monday was a busy day. A 90-foot semi of items for *Steve Gerberich's* work was delivered, *Speck Mellenkamp's* artwork was picked up, and both *Youth Art Month* exhibits were taken down. She thanked those who assisted and thanked the Street Department for providing a forklift to help unload the semi.
- Artist *Sheila Fox* is originally from Chicago and now lives in Louisville. Her work features mixed-media portraits. *Abbigayle Poirer's* work features large panels. *Fernando Lozano's* installation is still on display in the Black Box Theater. All three artists will be present at the First Thursday reception and will give gallery talks. Steve Gerberich's exhibit installation is quite involved, and the exhibit will not open until next week. There will be a special opening reception on April 9 from 5-7 pm.
- The Call for Artists submission deadline has passed. This month, the Visual Arts Committee will begin working on selecting the exhibits for next year.
- Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced wheel throwing clay classes are currently in session. New clay classes for children ages three to eight are being offered. Each class is two weeks long and is designed for children and their grownups to create together. The first couple of classes filled very quickly.
- Soup-port the Arts fundraiser will be held on April 27 from 12-2 pm. She is looking for volunteers to work the event. Oink, Carodella's, Café Pina, Sander Catering, Schnitzelbank Catering, and Emerald Greens will provide soup.
- The blinds for the gallery windows have been installed. She thanked Wendy Calman, who provided the funds for the project.
- The clay pug mill will be delivered this week.

Event Report

Eric reported:

- He shared the rental updates for the month. He continues to promote the spaces online and has created several ads that will run on social media.

- Chalk Walk will be held on May 17 from 9 am to 2 pm. Eric shared information on event sponsors: Papa John's is providing a free pizza coupon, and pizza for the staff and volunteers; Kimball International has donated \$2,000 to cover the cost of the t-shirts; Branded by Woods will donate the drawstring bags worth about \$1,500; Old National Bank donated \$250 to help cover general costs. Registrations are up from last year, and the free t-shirt deadline is April 20. For the event, nine Arts Market vendors and five food vendors have been secured. *Squonk* will be set up in the parking lot. Information about Squonk and a link to Squonk's website have been added to Jasper Arts website. A separate plan has been established in case of rain. John the Balloon Guy is the new balloon artist for this year. Two artists will be at the event and should help cut down on wait times. The artwork for the t-shirts has been designed and approved. Currently, there are twenty-one volunteers who have committed to help with Chalk Walk.
- Beehive will be held in the Atrium on October 25th from 9 am to 3 pm. There will be a preview evening on October 24 as a fundraiser as part of the celebration of Jasper Arts' 50th Anniversary. The event has been posted on social media and past artists have been contacted about the event. So far, four artists have applied. The artist selection will be juried, and not all that apply will be accepted. Those that are not accepted will be refunded. The cost to apply is \$75. The Atrium can accommodate 18-20 vendors. He hopes to have more fine art vendors and less crafty vendors.

Education Report

Kyle reported for Casey:

- Camp Create Spring Break went well and was sold out. There will be two week-long Camp Create Summer Camps offered, one in June and one in July.
- Kennedy Center Partners in Education artist in residency with JMS teacher Susan Ahlbrand and artist Elizabeth Wertman is complete. The finished transitional mural based on the Holocaust is hanging in the gallery hall of the Cultural Center. Patrons can look through color gel sheets to see the different layers of the mural. Eventually the mural will hang in the middle school.
- A \$10,000 grant was received from the Dubois County Community Foundation to help cover a portion of the costs for the 2025-2026 school shows.

Public Business

Adjournment

Corie Eckerle moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:24 pm. **Bibianna Green** seconded. Motion passed 8-0.

Darva Blazey

Selena Vonderheide