

Minutes of the Jasper Community Arts Commission
City of Jasper, Indiana
May 6, 2025

The regular meeting of the Jasper Community Arts Commission was held at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at Jasper City Hall Council Chambers. Roll call was held with the following **Commission Members Present in Person:** Jasmine Bosler, Corie Eckerle, Bibianna Green, Linda Kahle, Heath Kluemper, and Beth Seidl. **Non-Voting Student Representative:** Absent. **Observed Remotely via Zoom:** None. **Commission Members Absent:** Darla Blazey, Emi Donato, Jay Hamlin, Pat Thyen, and Selena Vonderheide. **Staff Members Present:** Kyle Rupert, Eric Herndon, Emily Peak, Casey Uebelhor, Danny Kopp, and Liz Book. **City Attorney:** Renee Kabrick. **Guests in attendance:** None. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

Beth Seidl moved to approve the minutes of April's meeting. **Jasmine Bosler** seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

City Financial Statement

Corie Eckerle moved to approve the claims as presented. **Beth Seidl** seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

Donation Report

Heath Kluemper made a motion to accept the restriction of the following donations: \$10,000 for school shows for the 2025/2026 school year, \$2,500 for Chalk Walk expenses, \$2,250 for performances, \$1,500 for exhibits, and \$5 for programming. **Corie Eckerle** seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

Visual Arts Report

Emily reported:

- The first part of April saw a big switch in the artwork on display in the galleries. Sheila Fox, Abbigayle Poirier, and Steve Gerberich had exhibits that opened, and there were two opening receptions. Steve Gerberich's installation will be up through August 24. She thanked the staff and volunteers for their help with load-in and setup.
- SOUP-Port Public Art raised \$3,700, and funds will be used to support traveling art exhibits. She thanked the volunteers who helped make the event possible, and she thanked Jennifer Tolbert and Monte Young for their help coordinating the throwing, glazing, and firing of the bowls. The remaining bowls will be available to purchase, and proceeds will be placed in a restricted use fund to support traveling exhibits.
- The pug mill has been delivered and set up. It has already proven to be a great time saver in recycling clay.
- June 14 will be Jasper Arts Juneteenth Celebration. This year's community event will include dance, along with many community favorites from previous years.
- Applications for the Juried Art Show exhibition will be made available at the end of the month.
- The Visual Arts Committee met to select the exhibits for 2026. To streamline the process, the committee was given three slates of exhibits to choose from, in a similar process that Kyle has implemented with the Performing Arts Committee. The committee was allowed to share and express their thoughts on each choice, and Emily is working on contacting and scheduling the selected artists.

Old Business

New Business

- Kyle asked permission to pay deposits for artists performing on December 13, 2025, and on March 14, 2026. Both artists' contracts are almost finished, and a request for deposit payment will be made at next month's meeting. The requested deposit amount is 50% or less of the total contracted amount and falls within Indiana code. **Bibianna Green** made a motion to approve the deposits as outlined in Kyle's request. **Heath Kluemper** seconded. Motion passed 6-0.
- Kyle presented a proposed clear bag policy that he is proposing in response to a request from an artist scheduled to perform next season. Many venues that are presenting these types of artists have clear bag policies in place. The proposed policy is identical to one that has been in place for the last couple of years at the Lincoln Amphitheater. If adopted, the policy would go into effect for the 2025/2026 performance season. The information would be included in the season guide, in a letter that all ticket buyers receive when purchasing tickets and would also be sent in all ticket reminder emails. A question was raised about whether medical equipment bags would be

included in the policy. Kyle shared that the policy would provide a basic understanding and would allow for further clarification for those types of situations, should they need to be addressed. He shared that the clear bag policy is not a bag check policy. However, there is a possibility that one artist next season will require a bag check. Should that request be made, he will work with the City's Legal, Police Department, and Personnel/Safety/Loss Control Department. The adopted policy is "The Jasper Arts Center has a clear bag policy. Any bags allowed through our doors must be clear plastic, vinyl, or PVC tote bags no larger than 12" x 6" x 12". Small clutch bags (up to 4.5" x 6/5") will still be allowed." **Jasmine Bosler** made a motion to approve the proposed clear bag policy. **Beth Seidl** seconded. Motion passed 6-0. A question was raised about whether guns are permitted inside the auditorium. The Jasper Arts Center is owned and operated by the City of Jasper, and Indiana law does permit government-owned and operated venues to bar guns from the premises.

- Kyle shared the Artwork Reconsideration process, which was developed based on feedback about an exhibit that was held earlier in the year. The proposed policy was presented and discussed at the last Visual Arts Committee meeting, and the draft presented to the committee was endorsed. The policy will be posted on Jasper Arts' website, and those who wish to have a piece of artwork reviewed for possible removal will be asked to complete the form. **Bibianna Green** made a motion to accept the proposed Artwork Reconsideration Policy as presented, pending legal review. **Jasmine Bosler** seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

Director's Report/Performing Arts

Kyle reported:

- At last month's meeting, he was asked about the non-reverting/restricted use funds. He shared the requested information with the board. There is a large balance in one of the funds, but most of the funds are committed to expenses that will be paid later in the year/season.
- Kyle shared updates on the 2024/2025 performance season. Ticket revenue was up 20% from last year and was the highest ever recorded. The number of tickets sold was up 8% from last year, and the number of tickets sold was the highest it has been in the last ten years. More individual tickets were sold than subscription tickets. Shows with high individual ticket sales bring in more revenue, higher attendance, and higher concession sales. Tickets were sold to patrons in sixteen different States.
- Building usage for April was up 10% over last year. In the first three months of 2025, exhibit attendance is up 45% from last year.
- Kyle shared an update on the 2025/2026 performance season. Another artist has confirmed, and he is still waiting for one or two others to confirm.
- Kyle shared the impacts of budgetary cuts at the State and Federal levels. The National Endowment for the Arts has rescinded its \$10,000 grant offer. These funds were earmarked to help cover the cost of two exhibits. Due to good planning, this will not impact what was going to be presented. The Indiana Arts Commission budget has been cut by 33%. The City is cautious about funding for 2026 until it has a better grasp on the tax revenue implications of the State's property tax reform.
- The State passed a public obscene performance ban, which potentially exposes the City to litigation. The passed bill allows anyone to sue for relief, goes beyond performances, and would include art exhibits.

Building and Structure Report

Danny reported:

- Jasper Arts' Technical Assistant, Juan Mendoza, has finished his basic training for the US Army Reserves. He will finish his job-specific training at the end of June and will be rejoining the Jasper Arts staff in July.
- The lifts at the Jasper Arts Center and Thyen-Clark Cultural Center have passed their annual inspection.
- Both buildings have passed the annual fire marshal inspections necessary to obtain A/E permits from the State. The inspections found a faulty smoke detector at the Arts Center, which has been replaced.
- VUJ will host graduation this weekend, and next week, Actors Community Theatre will host auditions for Mary Poppins.
- The 2025/2026 season announcement event for past season ticket holders will be held on May 30.
- Kyle and Danny will go through crowd management training with the Police and the PSLC Departments.
- The roof at the Jasper Arts Center will be replaced this summer.

Event Report

Eric reported:

- He shared the rental updates for the month.

- Chalk Walk will be held a week from Saturday from 9 am to 2 pm. The t-shirts have been delivered, and Eric thanked Kimball International for providing funds to purchase the shirts. The cinch bags were donated by Branded by Woods and will be filled next Wednesday. Walmart has provided a \$1,000 grant to help cover the cost of purchasing chalk for the event. A Chalk Walk volunteer meeting will be held next week. 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 event will also include caricature artist Rolando DeCastro, eleven Arts Market Vendors, and two performances by Squonk. There is a plan in place in case it rains.
- Beehive will be held in the Atrium on October 25th from 9 am to 3 pm. There will be a preview evening on October 24th as a fundraiser as part of the celebration of Jasper Arts' 50th Anniversary. The fundraiser will be more relaxed than the original event that was discussed in the spring. The Atrium can accommodate 18-20 vendors. He hopes to have more fine art vendors and fewer crafty vendors.

Education Report

Casey reported:

- Registration for Camp Create is open. There are two week-long camps planned, one in June and one in July.
- She is working on planning summer workshops, and she is meeting with a new instructor.
- The Pa'akai We Bring was presented for students in grades 3-5, and she received great feedback from the teachers.
- This spring two workshops were held for those under 5 years old, Sticky Fingers and I'm an Artist. She has had inquiries about offering the workshops at different times of day.
- Figure Night will continue in the fall.
- Kennedy Center Partners in Education Creative Classroom Residency with JMS teacher Susan Ahlbrand and artist Elizabeth Wertman is complete. The students read three novels about the Holocaust, and then they designed a transitional mural based on their reading. The students used Procreate on the iPads that were purchased with funds from the United Cabinet Foundation Endowment of the Dubois County Community Foundation. 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. Casey shared that there is some uncertainty at the Kennedy Center with the changes that have been made at the Federal level. From her contacts and understanding, some things are proceeding as normal, and others are changing.

Public Business

Adjournment

Corie Eckerle moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:31 pm. **Bibianna Green** seconded. Motion passed 6-0.


