



**Arts & Culture Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2025
6:30 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Carey Nadeau called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Tom Sonnek, Chair – Excused Absent
Carey Nadeau, Vice-Chair - Present
Amanda Black, Commissioner - Present
Sharon Clark-Williams, Commissioner – Excused Absent
Laura Strang, Commissioner - Present
Raquel Soto, Student Commissioner - Present
Aliza Verma, Commissioner - Present
Yued, Orozco-Garcia Student Commissioner - Present

STAFF/LIAISONS

Troy Woods, City Council Liaison - Present
Jordyn Lehman, Staff Liaison - Present

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Vice-Chair Nadeau called for a motion to adopt the March 5, 2025 meeting agenda.
M/Verma, S/Black
Motion carried 5-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of February 5, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Vice-Chair Nadeau asked for a motion to approve the February 5, 2025 meeting minutes

M/Soto, S/Black
Motion carried 5-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Nora of North St. Paul expressed that everyone should check the weather three times before making plans.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Autumn Arts Goal-Setting Discussion

Commissioner Black outlined the intent of the discussion which is to define the purpose, theme, and intent of the Autumn Arts Festival (AAF) so that the Commission and staff have better direction planning the event. Commissioner Black noted that there are two competing ideas as to what kind of event the AAF is. One being a community fair event and the other being an event with a tight focus on the arts. Commissioner Strang expressed that if the Autumn Arts Festival becomes more of a fair she questioned the necessity of the Commission's involvement. Vice-Chair Nadeau expressed that if AAF to appealed to a wider audience then those who may not have been interested in a strictly art related event may come otherwise and find themselves enjoying the art aspects of the event. Commissioner Black expressed a concern that the if there are too many activities unrelated to arts then less people will visit the artists who pay and rely on sales at the event. Vice-Chair Nadeau noted that the Commission sees two sides of the event. On one hand the Commission does not want to dilute the importance of arts for the AAF and they want to support their vendors. On the other hand the Commission would also like to bring in families and make a comfortable experience for all. The Commission came to the overall consensus that they would like the AAF to have a primary focus on art and for the majority of the activities in the event to relate to art in some way.

Staff Liaison Jordyn Lehman presented a potential vendor for the AAF. This artist does a "portrait booth" and does quick sketches of individuals to capture their portrait.

B. Placeholder Event Discussion

Commissioner Verma joined the sub-committee for the Placeholder Event and asked if the idea of an Asian Night originated from the Commission or the community. Vice-Chair Nadeau answered that the Commission created the idea but noted that it might be a good idea to do a survey in the City Newsletter to see what the community might prefer to see in this event.

Commissioner Black suggested an idea for the event being a "Taste of North St. Paul" to highlight a diverse range of restaurants from North St. Paul. The city could bring these restaurants out for the evening and compensate them to create a tasting menu. Commissioner Black brought potentially renting the North High School gym for this event.

C. Sub-Committee Updates

1- Snowy Trading Cards

Commissioners discussed that they would like to hand out around 200-300 Snowy cards at the June 13th Big Truck Night in concealed envelopes.

2- Mural Project

Vice-Chair Nadeau stated that Chair Sonnek and Commissioner Clark-Williams met with the Historical Society. Nadeau noted that almost everyone is on board with the idea of a mural but there are some questions that they would like to be addressed. Nadeau also noted that due to the size of the mural budget there is a possibility that the Commission could do a second mural in the City.

3- Utility Boxes

Commissioner Strang stated that Commissioner Clark-Williams has drafted a letter for an open call for artists for the utility box at the Veterans Memorial. Strang noted that the letter will ask artists to submit interest and ideas for the project within a two week deadline. Strang stated that they would like to select



an artist no later than May 1st and would like to have the box completed by the 10th anniversary event in August. Strang also mentioned that Commissioner Clark-Williams plans on attending the next Park board meeting to get their approval on the project. Next, Commissioner Strang gave an update on the Heart Hands utility box and that they plan on making the design colorful and should be finished shortly.

4- Art Cart

Commissioner Soto noted that planning for Art Cart will commence soon.

5- Paint Night

Staff Liaison Jordyn Lehman updated the Commission on several artists who were ready to be booked for upcoming Art Nights. Classes planned include terracotta pot painting, watercolor bookmarks, chunky knit blanket making, and more. Staff Liaison Lehman also inquired if the Commission would like for the registration fee to remain \$10 and the Commission noted that they would like to see if they could dynamically price the classes.

6- Public Arts Project

Commissioner Soto and Strang stated they had met and came up with preliminary ideas for the project. One idea was to have take-home snowies that would be made of concrete or a wood cutout that could be personalized. Commissioner Strang also noted that sidewalk art, a snowy sidewalk stamp, interactive art sculpture display was also a part of the discussion.

VIII. REPORTS FROM STAFF

Staff had no updates.

IX. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Strang shared that her parents bought a house in Minnesota and that she is very excited to have family in the state.

Commissioner Soto expressed that she is taking her first architecture test on Saturday.

Commissioner Verma noted that she is planting a pollinator garden and is very excited as the seeds are starting to sprout.

Commissioner Nadeau stated that Julie Xiong is now a student at the University of Minnesota and is involved in the Hmong dance troop to continue to keep Hmong dancing and culture alive. There is a GoFund me available to help support the troop and to continue their work. Commissioner Nadeau also shared that a nephew of former Commissioner Emily Hague-Nguyen has suffered a tragic hockey accident and was stuck in Canada but now was finally able to return home.

Commissioner Black had no updates

X. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISON

Council Liaison Troy Woods noted that at the prior City Council Meeting they discussed the park plan and that there is recommendations regarding three parks in the City.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Nadeau asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 PM.
M/Soto, S/Strang



Motion carried 5-0.

The next regularly scheduled Arts and Culture Commission Meeting is Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 6:30 PM.