



**Arts & Culture Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2025
6:30 PM**

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sonnek called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Tom Sonnek, Chair – Present
Carey Nadeau, Vice-Chair - Present
Ashley Perfect, Commissioner – Present
Sharon Clark-Williams, Commissioner – Present
Laura Strang, Commissioner – Absent Unexcused
Raquel Soto, Commissioner – Absent Excused
Aliza Verma, Commissioner – Absent Unexcused
Yued Orozco-Garcia, Student Commissioner – Present
Troy Woods, Council Liaison - Present

STAFF/LIAISONS

Jordyn Lehman, Staff Liaison - Present

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Chair Sonnek called for a motion to adopt the January 7, 2026 meeting agenda.

M/Nadeau, S/Clark-Williams
Motion carried 4-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of December 3, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Chair Sonnek asked for a motion to approve December 3, 2025 meeting minutes with an additional clarification on who gave an update for the Penny Press and to clarify that during Vice-Chair Nadeau's commissioner update that she was sharing pride for all NSP businesses, not just the Pizza Factory.

M/Perfect, S/Nadeau

Motion carried 4-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Several Commissioners declined to take the position of chair and nominated Tom Sonnek to continue as Chair of the Arts & Culture Commission.

Commissioner Clark-Williams asked for a motion to nominate Tom Sonnek as the Chair of the Arts & Culture Commission.

M/Nadeau, S/Perfect

Chair Sonnek asked for a motion to nominate Carey Nadeau as the Vice-Chair of the Arts & Culture Commission.

M/Clark-Williams, S/Perfect

B. Sub-Committee Updates

1- Murals

Vice-Chair Nadeau shared she is currently waiting to hear back from the DNR regarding potential art installation along the Gateway Trail.

2- Utility Boxes

Commissioner Clark-Williams shared that she plans on moving forward with two utility boxes for 2026 in addition to the Heart Hands Box at Casey Lake Park.

3- Art Cart

Vice-Chair Nadeau shared discussions between her and Commissioner Soto that they are considering having artist led Art Cart projects at the upcoming music in the park's events. Staff liaison Lehman posed several questions to the Commission regarding the idea and noted that there would still need to be a commissioner present at the Art Cart if a contracted artist is leading an activity. Vice-chair Nadeau recalled in the past that volunteers could run the Art Cart and requested further clarification on the matter.

4- Art Night

Vice-Chair Nadeau noted that Art Nights for the year have been scheduled. Nadeau requested the help of all Commissioners to help staff the Art Nights for 2026.

5- Public Art Project

Staff liaison Lehman shared updates regarding her research for the penny press. Points shared include that a card reader cannot be included with the press, residents will have to provide their own coin, warranty period, and more. The commission determined that they would like to proceed with pressing nickels or dimes instead of pennies. Staff liaison Lehman also noted that final approval of the press should go before City Council due to the unique nature of the project as well as being a good opportunity to platform the Commission's current work.

VIII. REPORTS FROM STAFF

Both the 2025 Event Calendar, Budget Update, the updated Project Process Documents and a corresponding calendar were listed on staff reports.

Council liaison Woods started the discussion regarding recent email exchanges and feedback from the commission regarding the Project Process document and the expected project timelines from staff. Woods explained that from a City Council perspective, the Commission should have preliminary planning completed in the year prior to a project's execution. Woods explains this becomes important for the budgeting process which begins in April and would aid in submitting a more accurate budget proposal. Staff liaison Lehman also noted that this would be highly beneficial to staff to minimize workloads, would give staff the ability to better manage the requests of the commission with their other responsibilities, to reduce pressure to rush projects through to make Council packet deadlines, and for staff to be able to give the Commission reliable output.

Vice-Chair Nadeau noted that in her mind that there was a general idea of what the Commission's output would be year to year perhaps that was not communicated or expressed enough. Chair Sonnek noted that the ACC budget has changed very little over the years other than the dollar amount. Some confusion was expressed as Chair Sonnek feels as though prior budget proposals met the requirements council liaison Woods is requesting. Overall, the commission expressed concerns that they will be unable to pivot on projects if something falls through or needs to be changed.

IX. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Vice-Chair Nadeau had no updates related to City business.

Commissioner Clark-Williams had no updates related to City business.

Commissioner Perfect introduced herself to the Commission and noted her enthusiasm to work with the Commission.

Chair Sonnek had no updates related to City business.

Student Commissioner Orozco-Garcia had no updates related to City business

X. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISON

Council Liaison Troy Woods shared updates from the most recent City Council meeting, updates to the NSP Car Show, and water chlorination.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sonnek asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 PM.

M/Clark-Williams, S/Perfect

Motion carried 4-0.

The next regularly scheduled Arts and Culture Commission Meeting is Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 6:30 PM