

Meeting Minutes

Arts Commission

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

4:00 PM

Room 488
625 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

PRESENT

Members: M. Alto (Chair), J. Bateman (EP), P. Brent, M. Brame (EP), G. Lemon (EP), C. Plant (EP),
C. Smart

Staff: C. Gilpin, A. Gibbs, E. Sterling (Recorder)

AAC Guests: S. Reid (Chair), R. Gale (Vice Chair) (EP), J. Verano (Funding Chair)

EP – Electronic Participation

Regrets: S. Epp, K. Roessingh

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Chair Alto took a moment to express our gratitude and acknowledge the opportunities that are afforded us because of the stewardship, for so many generations, of the Lək'wəḡən People, the Songhees Nation and the Xwsepsum (Kosapsum – traditional name of the Esquimalt) Nation, whose territories the City of Victoria occupies in its entirety and the location of the meeting today.

2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED by Member Brent, SECONDED by Member Smart,
That the agenda for the May 21, 2025 Arts Commission meeting be approved.**
CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes

**MOVED by Member Paul Brent, SECONDED by Member Smart,
That the minutes of the Arts Commission meeting of March 26, 2025 be
adopted as circulated.**
CARRIED

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Alto welcomed members at the start of the meeting and did not have any additional remarks.

5. Presentations/Delegations**5.1 Presentation: Greater Victoria Performing Arts Festival Association**

President Bill Devey (accompanied by Festival Manager Alyssa Hanke) made a request for funding, either through an adjustment of grant requirements, or a grandfathering of their organization.

6. Commission Business**6.1 Arts Advisory Council (AAC) Chair's Report (verbal)**

AAC Chair Reid spoke of the wonderful arts activities available this spring. The AAC met last week to review the results of the grant adjudications for the new Grow Forward program, along with the Equity and IDEA granting programs. The AAC has endorsed the staff report on the Operating Grant review on today's agenda. Sad news, funding chair Sue Donaldson passed away last month – there will be a Celebration of Life this Friday at 1 pm at the Esquimalt Gorge Pavilion. Joanna Verano has stepped in as temporary Funding Chair.

6.1.2 Arts Advisory Council Minutes: May 13, 2025 Meeting – received for information**6.1.3 Arts Advisory Council Activities by Council Summary - received for information**

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Lemon
That the Arts Commission make a donation of \$200 to the First Peoples'
Cultural Foundation, in honour of Sue Donaldson. CARRIED.**

This donation will be taken from the Operating Reserve.

6.2 Manager's Report (verbal)

C. Gilpin reported that the information sessions that we organize for each grant intake have been well attended. The April Project Grant intake received 32 applications, which is above average. Good news from View Royal: their council deliberated and reaffirmed their current level of support. The City of Langford has sent out their timeline for the delivery of a new arts masterplan, and it now expected in the first quarter of 2026. The Arts Champion Summit will be November 4th 10 am – 3 pm at the Baumann Centre. A full report on the itinerary will come to the June meeting. Reminder that the September Arts Commission meeting was moved one week earlier to September 17th.

Member Smart wondered, since the Arts Commission meeting is a public meeting, if it would be helpful to encourage Langford to send a council member to attend meetings as a guest.

Member Brame suggested that, when we send out the Impact Report to all jurisdictions, we include a line in the cover letter to encourage folks to attend Arts Commission meetings as guests. Staff indicated that this would be done.

6.2.1 Outreach Report (attached)

6.3 2025 Equity & Grow Forward Grant Recommendations

C. Gilpin noted that staff had anticipated receiving 12-15 applications to the new Grow Forward granting program; after receiving 19, it is apparent that this program is meeting a community need.

**MOVED by Member Brent, SECONDED by Member Brame,
The Arts Advisory Council recommends to the Arts Commission:
That the 2025 Equity & Grow Forward Grant recommendations be approved as presented. CARRIED.**

6.4 2025 IDEA Grant Recommendations

Member Smart expressed appreciation for the balance struck with a large number of applications and the desire to fund more projects while also maintaining a useable grant amount.

**MOVED by Member Smart, SECONDED by Member Brent,
The Arts Advisory Council recommends to the Arts Commission:
That the 2025 IDEA Grant recommendations be approved as presented. CARRIED**

6.5 Operating Grant Program Review

In response to a question about “underserved areas,” C. Gilpin explained that the Arts Advisory Council was already considering that informally, and the suggested change is to formalize that consideration in the assessment criteria.

**MOVED by Member Paul, SECONDED by Member Carrie
The Arts Advisory Council recommends to the Arts Commission:
That the changes to the Operating Grant program be approved as presented.
CARRIED**

6.6 2024 Impact Report

Members shared their appreciation for the high quality of the report. Member Plant expressed a desire to request time at the Board to present the Impact Report and wondered if a motion was needed. Chair Alto and staff confirmed that a motion was not needed; the request could go through internal channels. Member Smart wondered if staff could also distribute the Impact Report to economic organizations such as South Island Prosperity Partnership, the chambers of commerce and business associations. Staff agreed to do this.

**MOVED by Member Brent, SECONDED by Member Smart,
The Arts Commission recommends to the CRD Board that staff distribute the *CRD Arts and Culture: 2024 Impact Report* virtually through the CRD website and as physical copies to all councils and electoral area directors to raise awareness about the positive impact of the Arts and Culture Support Service throughout the capital region.
CARRIED**

7. New Business

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Brame,
To add a new item to the agenda under item 7, which would be number 7.1,
Consideration of the GVPAF request. CARRIED**

Member Smart left the room due to a conflict of interest.

7.1 Consideration of GVPAF Request

The Greater Victoria Performing Arts Festival Association does not meet current criteria to be eligible for Operating Grant funding support.

From member comments, Chair Alto did not hear an appetite for a reconsideration or appeal, but did hear an appetite to ask staff and the Arts Advisory Council to provide some recommendations on evolving Operating Grant criteria to consider organizations involved in activities such as those outlined by GVPAF.

C. Gilpin explained the usual process for policy development is that staff write a discussion paper and bring it to the AAC to get feedback on it. Staff then incorporates the feedback into a staff report which then comes back to the AAC and can advance to the Arts Commission.

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Lemon,
That the Arts Commission ask staff to provide a discussion paper to the Arts Advisory Council for their consideration, resulting in a report back to the Arts Commission with any potential recommendations regarding arts training organizations. CARRIED**

Staff agreed that the phrase “arts training organizations” would include activities such as competitions and festivals connected to student development.

Staff agreed to notify GVPAF about the decisions made today.

Member Smart returned to the meeting.

- 8. Correspondence** – Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society sent a letter to express gratitude that a small amount of support from the CRD allowed them to leverage a much larger amount of support.

9. Adjournment

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Smart,
That the May 21, 2025 Arts Commission meeting be adjourned at 5:12 pm.
CARRIED**

Chair

Recorder