

Meeting Minutes

Arts Commission

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

4:00 PM

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

PRESENT

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

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

Guest: R. Gale, Arts Advisory Council Vice Chair

EP – Electronic Participation

Regrets: M. Brame, K. Roessingh

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Chair Alto welcomed members and invited Member Smart to provide a Territorial Acknowledgement. As we celebrate the importance of the arts in our community and its importance to our wellbeing, we acknowledge that colonialism did a lot of damage to the continuation of arts and culture for our indigenous neighbours. We sit with that and daily lift up our indigenous neighbours on their journey of relearning and rebuilding.

2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED by Member Smart, SECONDED by Member Bateman,
That the agenda for the September 17, 2025 Arts Commission meeting be
approved. CARRIED**

3. Adoption of Minutes

**MOVED by Member Lemon, SECONDED by Member Bateman,
That the minutes of the Arts Commission meeting of June 25, 2025 be
adopted as circulated. CARRIED**

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Alto applauded the work of staff in their support of the Performing Arts Facilities Select

Committee which is separate from, but linked to, the work of the Arts Commission. Thank you also to staff and the Arts Advisory Council chair for their work in recruiting and screening applicants to find potential new members of the Council – those recommendations will be brought forward later in the meeting.

5. Presentations/Delegations

6. Commission Business

6.1 Arts Advisory Council (AAC) Chair's Report (verbal)

R. Gale, Vice Chair, directed members to the ABCs – the AAC has been attending a lot of events, keeping up-to-date with the activities of local arts organizations. Operating Grant deadline has passed and are being processed. Of the 24 returning organizations, it is worth noting that seven of them were issued a Notice of Significant Concern (NOSC) in the last Operating Grant intake. A NOSC is given based on assessment criteria, and they provide at least one year's notice for organizations to address specific issues before any decrease in funding may occur. If an organization continues to underperform, they may have their funding cut or be transitioned to project grants. If an organization receives a reduction, it is likely they will advocate for themselves. The AAC hopes to have your support when we have to make difficult decisions.

6.1.2 Arts Advisory Council Minutes: September 9, 2025 Meeting – received for information

6.1.3 AAC Activities by Council Summary: September 9, 2025 - received for information

6.2 Manager's Report (verbal)

C. Gilpin provided a brief update on activities of the Arts Support Service:

- From the Outreach report: incredible progress has been made by A. Gibbs on the Arts Champions Summit, being held Nov 4th at the Baumann Centre, 10 am to 3 pm. Attendance by Commission members is optional but welcome.
- The Annual Operating Grant intake closed September 11th, and there were 26 applications, including two new applicants. One existing client did not apply (Aventa) because they have paused operations. Eight Multi-Year clients submitted interim reports for review by staff.
- Performing Arts Facilities Select Committee: in July they received a report on the costs and benefits of five options to create a new Performing Arts Facilities Service. The recommended option would increase support for the three existing regional theatres (Royal, McPherson, Charlie White) as well as providing support for planning a potential fourth theatre in the Westshore. The option also includes funding for Theatre Rental grants that would assist local arts groups. This is coming to the Select Committee on October 1st for further consideration.

C. Gilpin shared that, as a follow up to the letter to the BC Arts Council regarding their Regional Areas Policy, two additional meetings had taken place: one between CRD staff and BC Arts Council staff, and a second between two members of the BCAC itself and a member of the Arts Advisory Council along with staff. Both meetings were genial. At this time there is no anticipated change to their policy, but the advocacy did result in more active and direct communication.

**MOVED by Member Brent, SECONDED by Member Bateman,
That the Chair of the Arts Commission send a letter to the new Minister of
Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, reiterating the impacts of the regional areas
policy, and including any additional information that staff may provide from
the follow-up meetings. CARRIED**

Member Epp arrived at 4:17 pm

6.2.1 Outreach Report (attached)

6.3 2026 Budget for Arts and Culture Support Service

C. Gilpin presented the budget recommendation. The total budgeted costs for 2026 are approximately \$3.4 million – an increase of 2.2% over 2025. CRD financial planning guidelines aim for a 1.8% increase, but 2.2% is close to this and allows for the launch of the expanded version of the Grow Forward grant program which was a direction of the Arts Commission. The budget includes a draw down from the Operating Reserve as well.

CFO N. Chan reminded the Commission that end of the year budget surpluses go into the Operating Reserve and then can be drawn out.

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Brent,
The Arts Commission recommends the Committee of the Whole Recommend to
the Capital Regional District Board: That the 2026 Arts & Culture Support Service
Budget be approved as presented. CARRIED**

Member Plant introduced the first of two motions arising.

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Lemon,
The Arts Commission request staff bring an information report on the approved
CRD Service and Financial Planning Guidelines annually to a Commission
meeting in May or June and provide an opportunity for comment on the
Commission's Budget for the following year. CARRIED**

AAC Vice Chair R. Gale arrived at 4:33 pm.

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Lemon,
The Arts Commission request staff provide the Commission a report with
options on transitioning the funding of all CRD Arts & Culture Support Service
programming from Operating Reserves to Core Budget. And that this report be
based on making potential changes for Budget 2027 and forward. CARRIED**

CFO N. Chan said that there is enough flexibility in the motion to bring a fulsome report back. He noted that, historically, the Arts Service produces a surplus which goes into the reserve, and then

we draw from that reserve in the following year. In the report back we can include some history.

6.4 Arts Training Organizations and Eligibility

C. Gilpin gave some background to this report: in June, the Arts Advisory Council reviewed a discussion paper that included the history of eligibility of Arts Training Organizations to CRD arts granting programs at the direction of the Arts Commission. The AAC provided feedback to staff about how to approach this policy. The main granting programs of Projects, Operating, and Equity function through comparative evaluation focused on the primary mandate of public programming in the arts, and the AAC preferred this approach to continue. Arts Training Organizations are already eligible to apply to Grow Forward grants and IDEA grants. The proposed change would be to allow previously ineligible activities (student shows, contests, and competitions) to become eligible under IDEA grants.

**MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Epp,
That the eligible activities for the IDEA Grant Program are expanded to include
arts education activities including contests, competitions, and student shows.**

CARRIED

N. Chan left the meeting at 4:45 pm

6.5 2026 Grant Program and Adjudication Schedule

**MOVED by Member Bateman, SECONDED by Member Plant,
The 2026 grant program intake and adjudication schedule is approved as presented.**

CARRIED

7. New Business – none.

- 8. Correspondence:** Township Community Arts Council (July 9, 2025) – thank you for Project Grant
Wonderheads Theatre Society (August 8, 2025) – thank you for Operating Grant

9. Motion to Close the Meeting

MOVED by Member Plant, SECONDED by Member Brent,

- 1. That the meeting be closed in accordance with the Community Charter, Part 4, Division 3, 90(1)(a) personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the regional district or another position appointed by the regional district; and**
- 2. That Richard Gale, Acting Chair, Arts Advisory Council, be allowed into the closed portion of the meeting.**

CARRIED

The Commission moved to the closed session at 4:58 pm.

The Commission rose from the closed session at 5:08 pm with the following report:

**That Jody Bauche, Dylan Clark, and Terence Wong each be appointed to
the Arts Advisory Council for a term of one year ending on December 31, 2026.**

That Jedidjah Noomen, Angelica Reid, and Paballo Tsolo each be reappointed to the Arts Advisory Council for a term of three years ending on December 31, 2028, and that Richard Gale and Sarah Reid each be reappointed to the Arts Advisory Council for a term of two years ending on December 31, 2027.

10. Adjournment

**MOVED by Member Bateman, SECONDED by Member Plant,
That the September 17, 2025 Arts Commission meeting be adjourned at
5:08 pm.**

CARRIED

Chair

Recorder