



Meeting Minutes Arts Commission

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

4:00 PM

Room 129
625 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

PRESENT

Commissioners: M. Alto (Chair), J. Bateman (EP), R. Fawcett, S. Gray, G. Lemon (EP), C. Plant (EP), K. Roessingh, C. Smart (EP)

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

EP – Electronic Participation

Arts Advisory Council: J. Noomen, Vice-Chair (EP); R. Ditor, Funding Chair

Regrets: M. Brame, P. Brent (R. Fawcett attending as alternate), S. Epp (resigned; S. Gray attending as alternate)

The meeting was called to order at 4 pm.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Chair Alto welcomed all participants and offered a territorial acknowledgement, expressing our gratitude and our understanding that it is a privilege to do our work on the traditional and current territories of the Lkwungen people (the Songhees and Xwsepsum) who have stewarded these lands since time immemorial.

2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED by Commissioner Plant, SECONDED by Commissioner Gray,
To add an item under new business: recognition of Commissioner Epp.
CARRIED**

**MOVED by Commissioner Roessingh, SECONDED by Commissioner Gray,
That the agenda for the January 28, 2026 Arts Commission meeting be
approved as amended. CARRIED**

3. Adoption of Minutes

**MOVED by Commissioner Roessingh, SECONDED by Commissioner Gray,
That the minutes of the Arts Commission meeting of September 17, 2025 be
adopted as circulated. CARRIED**

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Alto thanked the staff for the amazing job at facilitating the Arts Champions Summit on November 4th – it was well attended, and the feedback was very positive. The opportunity to learn was tremendous and the opportunity for members of the arts community to interact with one another was very valuable. As well, although we will discuss this under new business, thanks to Sharie Epp, Councillor from Metchosisin, who has done so much for her community over many years.

5. Presentations/Delegations - none

6. Commission Business

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

J. Noomen (Vice-Chair), standing in for R. Gale (Chair) shared a few items:

- We have three new Commissioners that started in January: Dylan Clark (returning), Jody Bauche, and Terence Wong. We are back to a full complement of 12 with a variety of backgrounds.
- Council has been working through enormous amounts of paperwork to adjudicate Operating Grants. There was outstanding dedication from Council members and staff as they scrutinized and scored the applications and held an in-person adjudication.
- The Arts Champions Summit received great feedback and had the opportunity for the arts community to speak directly to arts funders at all levels.

6.1.2 Arts Advisory Council Minutes: January 13, 2026 Meeting – received for information

6.1.3 Arts Advisory Council Activities by Council Summary - received for information

In response to a question, J. Noomen explained that the ABCs are a list compiled at each AAC meeting, of cultural activities that members have attended between meetings. It represents the involvement of the AAC in the arts community, is a starting point for conversations, and raises awareness of how many events take place within our jurisdictions.

6.2 Manager's Report (verbal)

6.2.1 Outreach Report (attached)

C. Gilpin introduced the staff, including V. Somosan, acting CFO, and reported on a few items:

- January Project Grants intake closed on January 16th with 36 applications received.
- Equity, IDEA, and April Project Grants intakes were launched on January 20th.
- The next Arts Champions Summit will be in 2027 and will inform the next strategic plan.
- The Performing Arts Facilities Select Committee brought a recommendation to the CRD Board last fall to create a new service to scale up support for three regional theatres and support development of a fourth theatre on the West Shore. This was endorsed by the Board

unanimously on Oct 8th. We received statutory approval from the province, the next stage is Alternative Approval Process in the spring. This new service would have a transition year in 2026 and then take effect as part of budget 2027.

6.2.2 CRD Arts Commission 2026 Meeting Schedule

C. Gilpin noted that the AC meetings are normally the fourth Wednesday of the month in the Boardroom. If there is a meeting in July, it will be entirely online because of Boardroom renovations. In September, the meeting date was moved to the third Wednesday to allow budget recommendations to be made in time for the Committee of the Whole on the fourth Wednesday.

C. Smart suggested we get RSVPs for September early to ensure quorum as the Union of BC Municipalities also meets on the 16th.

6.3 2026 Operating Grant Recommendations

C. Gilpin reported that there were 26 applications to the Annual stream, with 2 new applicants: Yellowhouse Arts Centre on Galiano Island is being recommended, and Other Guise Theatre is not (they are, however, pursuing funding through April Project Grants). There were 7 Notices of Significant Concern going into the adjudication; four were cleared and three are continuing.

R. Ditor, AAC Funding Chair, wanted to reiterated J. Noomen's comments about the process; it is an honour to serve with this Council. Staff is incredibly supportive and wise. The decisions were difficult to make but it is a very healthy jury with healthy discussion.

R. Fawcett entered the meeting at 4:22 pm.

In response to questions, it was noted that:

- the Notice of Significant Concern (NOSC) policy gives an opportunity for any organization to address concerns without any change to their funding. In their subsequent application they are allowed a supplementary letter to address concerns. If concerns are not met, it is possible in for their funding to be reduced or removed entirely, but not until that second year.
- any organization who receives a NOSC will have a follow-up conversation with staff to receive synthesized information from the adjudication.

C. Smart noted that stable funding is a reduction in purchasing power year over year.

R. Ditor added that the Council wanted to give a financial lift to the top 12 ranking organizations, but that would have meant an extra \$92k that was not in the budget. J. Noomen noted that the Council thought through different options and concluded that it was more impactful to give a larger lift to fewer organizations than giving smaller amounts to more groups.

**MOVED by Commissioner Roessingh, SECONDED by Commissioner Gray,
That the 2026 Operating Grant recommendations be approved as presented.**

CARRIED

6.4 Arts & Culture Support Service Strategic Plan Check-in

C. Gilpin noted that this is an annual report to update the Commission on the work done to implement the strategic plan – we are starting year three. The only slight delay is the review of name and brand but that will come to one of the next few meetings. Everything else is on schedule and all will be accomplished within the term.

7. New Business – recognition of Commissioner Epp.

**MOVED by Commissioner Plant, SECONDED by Commissioner Lemon,
That the Arts Commission spend up to \$200 to courier a thank you card and
flowers to Sharie Epp on behalf of the AC, AAC, and staff. CARRIED**

8. Correspondence – letter from CRD Board chair to Minister Kang re: reconsideration of BC Arts Council’s Regional Areas Policy.**9. Adjournment**

**MOVED by Commissioner Roessingh, SECONDED by Commissioner Gray,
That the January 28, 2026 Arts Commission meeting be adjourned at 4:42 pm.
CARRIED**

Chair

Recorder