CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Arts Commission

6:30 PM
October 13, 2025 **MINUTES**

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commissioners:
Rachel Brannon
John Conlon
Chris Craven
Tina Velazquez Hays
Treasure Hinds (excused)
Kimberly Kapustein
Tracie Mahadeo
Tom McDonald (excused)
Caroline Thienes
Albert Wang (excused)
Rachel Wright (excused)
Praya Athi, Youth Rep

Administration/Staff:
Amy Dukes, Cultural Arts Manager

Guests:
Ali Marcus, Art Commons
Corcy Casler, DIA
Ravi Chhabra
Saira Kahn, Literary Nights

CALL TO ORDER

HAYS called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

HAYS moved to approve the minutes of September 8, 2025. CRAVEN seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Corby Casler gave updates on DIA programming downtown, including Issaquah Goes Apples.
Saira Kahn provided information about Literary Nights upcoming event – An Epistolary Evening – on November 3.

CHAIR REPORT

Tina Hays thanked arts commissioners who attended the City Council meeting on October 6 to accept the National Arts and Humanities Month proclamation.

STAFF REPORT

Amy Dukes provided updates about the Bloomberg Connects app for the City's public art collection. A huge thank you goes out to arts commissioner Chris Craven for being a fabulous partner on this work!

AGENDA ITEMS

A **Overview of the 2026 Arts Grant Review Process (I), (D)**
Amy Dukes shared information about the process of reviewing 2026 arts grant applications and provided a tutorial on jurying applications through the Café platform.

B **Arts Grants in the Schools – Potential Program Changes (D)**
Commissioners discussed possible changes to the Arts in the Schools Grants Program which is currently on hold. Application submissions to this program have been low and impact to the overall student population is limited. Additionally, staff and volunteer turnover in the schools is a challenge to administering the grant program. Commissioners evaluated past grant data and discussed the possibility of making a pass-through grant to the Issaquah PTSA Council as an alternate way to support arts in the schools. Discussions will continue at future meetings, with the goal of reaching a decision about the program's direction in Q1 2026.

C **Creative District Update (I)**
Amy Dukes gave a presentation with updates on the Creative District, highlighting recent additions of public art within the district.

D **Site Visit Reports (I)**
Commissioners provided information on visits to arts grant funded programs and events including Salmon Days, Village Theatre, and DIA art events.

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58pm.