

2-9-26 Arts Commission Minutes

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Arts Commission**

6:30 PM

February 9, 2026

**MINUTES**

**COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Commissioners:*

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

*Administration/Staff:*

Amy Dukes, Cultural Arts Manager

*Guests:*

- Corby Casler, DIA
- Ravi Chhabra
- Ali Marcus, Art Commons/Happy Time Studio
- Cheryl Smith, Mosaic Artist

**CALL TO ORDER**

HAYS called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

HAYS introduced the minutes, which were included in the agenda materials. The minutes were approved as presented by unanimous consent.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**CHAIR REPORT**

Tina Hays shared that she would not be reapplying to the arts commission and would step down when her term expires at the end of April 2026. She expressed gratitude for all of the meaningful work of the arts commission.

**STAFF REPORT**

Amy Dukes shared that the 2026 arts grants were approved by council on February 2, 2026. Contracting with funded organizations and artists is now underway. She also reminded arts commissioners with expiring terms that the deadline to reapply is February 15. Candidate interviews will be conducted on March 12. She also shared

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that the Issaquah Creative District has been awarded a \$50,000 2026-27 grant from ArtsWA for lighting improvements and artistic lighting enhancements along the Rainier Trail.

**AGENDA ITEMS****A (Updates from Art Commons and Happy Time Studio (I))**

Ali Marcus of Art Commons and Happy Time Studio provided information about new programs for 2026. Art Commons was recently awarded a grant from 4Culture for a pilot project to utilize teaching artists for visual arts education in three Title I schools in ISD. Ali will share more information as the project gets underway. She also provided information about the upcoming 8-week workshop series – Art Up Issaquah – being presented by the Issaquah Creative District and Happy Time Studio to provide professional development to the local creative sector. More information is available on the websites of Happy Time and the City of Issaquah. Deadline for applications to participate is March 11. Workshops will take place April – June 2026. Ali also encouraged arts commissioners to participate in the upcoming Creative Summit hosted by Art Commons at Lake Sammamish State Park on March 14.

**B Public Art Updates (I)**

Bloomberg Connects App: Chris Craven shared the new Bloomberg Connects public art app that has been soft launched this month. The app is free and easy to use. The app currently showcases the City's outdoor public art collection. In 2026, the utility box wrap locations and information will be added to the app.

July Fourth Community Mosaic: Artist Cheryl Smith shared information and preliminary design concepts with the arts commission for the community mosaic project being developed as part of the City's 250<sup>th</sup> Fourth of July celebrations.

Miyawaki Forest Artwork: Amy Dukes informed the commission that artist Carrie Larson had been selected by the Issaquah Alps Trails Club to create a welcome feature artwork for the Miyawaki Forest. She shared Carrie's portfolio with the commission. The artist will utilize fallen cedar from the 2024 bomb cyclone to create the artwork this spring and summer. Additionally, The Couple, post repair, is scheduled to be relocated to the site this month.

**C 2026 Workplan Development (D)**

Arts Commissioners discussed workplan items for 2026 including arts granting, public art, events, creative district programming, and administrative items. The workplan will be finalized and approved at the March 9 meeting.

**OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioners shared information about arts and cultural events they had recently attended in Issaquah.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08pm.