

City of Joliet

150 West Jefferson Street
Joliet, IL 60432



Meeting Minutes - Pending Approval

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

5:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

Arts Commission

Commission Members

Deborah Filotto

Donna Franks-Tapley

Tom Grotovsky

Ron Romero

Julia Russotti

John Simpson, Jr.

Peg Stoiber

Deborah Summers

Debra Volling

ROLL CALL

Present John Simpson Jr, Tom Grotovsky, Deborah Filotto, Donna Franks-Tapley and Ron Romero

Absent Peg (Marguerite) Stoiber, Debra Volling and Julia Russotti

APPROVAL OF MINUTES**6.17.26 Meeting Minutes**[**TMP-10075**](#)

Attachments: [2650 M Arts Commission 26-06-17 Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Ron Romero, seconded by Deborah Filotto, to approve : 6.17.26 Meeting Minutes . The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Simpson Jr, Grotovsky, Filotto, Franks-Tapley and Romero

Absent: Stoiber, Volling and Russotti

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

AGENDA ITEMS**Resolution to Approve the Poet Laureate Contract for 2026 through 2027.**[**TMP-10072**](#)

Luke Gundersen Special Events Coordinator, spoke about the proposal with Uxmar Torres for a continuation for another year of his contract. Luke talked about how we are compensating him currently for events which is per event currently instead of just an annual pay.

The commissioners asked questions about his pay and how moving forward for future poet laureate's we would compensate them, would it be the same. They had questions about how he would be compensated.

The commissioners wanted to see the contract that they would be agreeing to, but no contract had been created yet. There was discussion about not approving it because there was no money to pay him so he would be not paid for the year.

Luke explained where the no pay came from, in the proposal Uxmar submitted to the city himself.

The commissioners said they would vote on another item that is not a contract but that is not what is on the agenda. They would need to see the contract before voting on a contract that they have not seen.

The commissioners voted to table to item until a contract was made available to them, potentially at a special meeting.

A motion was made by Ron Romero, seconded by Donna Franks-Tapley, to table Resolution to Approve the Poet Laureate Contract for 2026 through 2027. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Simpson Jr, Grotovsky, Filotto, Franks-Tapley and Romero

Absent: Stoiber, Volling and Russotti

STAFF COMMENTS

Luke Talked about two projects he needs subcommittees, he needs 2 members per committee . The first one is for the art design for the stadium club, near slammers stadium (Deb and Tom). The second one is a plan for the murals throughout the city a priority list for this year (Donna and John).

Grants Presentation by Becky DeGroat

[TMP-10051](#)

Becky Degrote Grant Coordinator gave a presentation on Grants, what they are, how they work, how the city applies for them. She explained what art related grants we have applied for, what ones we have received and not received. She explained how those grants have been used. Ms. Degrote explained how best to apply for future grants.

There was further discussion about applying for grants that would benefit the arts commission.

MEMBER COMMENTS

John Simpson had a question about being put on the city budget, wanted to know that process. Luke explained that would be under Ann's department. She is motivated and would be working on that.

John and Ron also asked about having a city council liaison. someone from city council on the arts commission. Katy Fyksen Legal Assistant explained that the Interim corporation council was working on that.

The commissioners asked about having a special meeting and what could be on that agenda .

Donna asked Luke about members and adding members to the commission .

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Romero, seconded by Filotto, to adjourn.. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Simpson Jr, Grotovsky, Filotto, Franks-Tapley and Romero

Absent: Stoiber, Volling and Russotti