

MINUTES OF
THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
ARTS COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
HELD IN THE HANSON ROOM (3RD FLOOR)
OF THE VILLAGE HALL
MAY 6, 2026 AT 6:30 P.M.

Members Present: Mary Seitz-Pagano, Arts Chair
Kristen Walter
Erika Cutlip
Sara Altieri
Leena Joshi
Carla McAleer
Brian Wolf
Kate Schwarz

Members Absent: Mary Seitz-Pagano, Arts Chair
Gretchen Grassl

Also Present: Michael Lysicatos, Planning and Community Development

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM.

Commissioner McAleer made a motion for Commissioner Joshi to serve as acting chair for the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Wolf. All were in favor and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COMMISSIONER MCALEER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CUTLIP, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 4, 2026 ARTS COMMISSION MEETING. ALL WERE IN FAVOR, COMMISSIONER WOLF ABSTAINED. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Staff Liasson Lysicatos informed the Arts Commission that Commissioner Grassl had resigned effectively immediately and that staff would coordinate with the Village Manager's office and the mayor on appointing a new Commissioner.

CULTURAL ARTS AWARD

Acting Chair Joshi opened the discussion on the Cultural Arts Award. Staff provided an updated on the Cultural Arts Award solicitation which was posted on the Village website and social media outlets. Staff also provided that religious institutions were not restricted from applying, in response to an inquiry from the Commission at a previous meeting.

DOWNTOWN PUBLIC ART PLAN

There were no substantive updates on the Downtown Public Art Plan at this meeting. Once the Mural Ordinance is complete the Downtown Public Art Plan will come into focus. Staff recently met with the Downtown Arlington Heights Business Alliance (DAHBA) who had a number of ideas about potential public art elements in the Downtown. The Commission discussed the possibility of working with DAHBA to refine concepts that would benefit the business group to create a synergy with the Commission's efforts. This could include fund raising, programming, or events that all speak to the goal of the Art Plan advancing the economic well being of the downtown. The Commissioners expressed their

interest in participating in this coordination with DAHBA and other organizations such as the Arlington Heights Historical Society.

MURAL ORDINANCE

The Staff Liaison updated the Commission on the progress on this effort. Updates to the most recent draft, based on the Commissioner comments, included appropriate zoning district for murals, adherence to code, purpose and applicability of the mural program, definition of a Public Art Mural, and types of art allowed and differentiation from commercial signage. Submission requirements included submittal requirements and a waiver for the visual rights acts, requirement for a public notice, design commission review, and Village Board approval. Additional submission guidelines were also added to the existing recommendations in previous drafts. The updated draft Mural Ordinance will be shared with the Arts Commission by email for individual comment before Village Counsel review.

SIDEWALK CHALK ART

Commissioner Cutlip opened the discussion by summarizing a meeting with Chip Brooks about the goals of the event and buy-in from the DAHBA organization. The main area of coordination focused on promotion of the event through businesses. The meeting also touched on the location of the event be ideally located in the street as opposed to the sidewalk area (due to the brick sidewalks). Supplies would include chalk, tape, a check-in table and possibly a DJ or music for the event. The Commission discussed a possible late September date while the street closure was still in place but before Harvest Fest. The size of the chalk art squares could be 4'x4', 6'x6' or 10'x10' which 6'x6' being the most common size. The areas could be split into two sections; a professional artist area and a family-friendly area. There was also a discussion of hiring a local chalk artist to layout the areas. The possibility for having the event during twilight or evening hours that could possibly use glow-in-the-dark chalk.

Staff added that the latest DAHBA they attended included a discussion of the Chalk Art event which was very well received. The group saw it as an opportunity to bring more people to the businesses and recommended a theme, including the US 250th celebration. One of the members may even have a chalk artist they could recommend. The group recommended potentially using chalk art on the periphery of the Alfresco zone to bring people in at the beginning of the season.

The name for the event was discussed by the Commissioners with options including Color the Concrete in Arlington Heights, Chalk the Walk in Arlington Heights, and The Arlington Chalk Fest. The group voted on The Arlington Chalk Fest as their preferred option although the name would stay open for later discussion.

The Commission inquired about a budget for the event and requested staff provide details on what funds are available for such an event. The Commission discussed potential dates that would not conflict with other scheduled events. September 12th was discussed as a potential date that seemed to not conflict with events and right after Labor Day. Staff offered to coordinate with the Village's Communication and Outreach Manager and provide information to the Commissioners leading this effort. The Commission's preferred location, based on their discussion with Chip, was the Alfresco Zone area. Locations outside of the downtown could open opportunities for food truck vendors. The date may dictate the location and the Commission inquired about potential approvals or permissions that may needed for any of the locations. Additionally, the Commission discussed potentially partnering with organizations, such as Arlington Cardinals or Arlington Cowboys, for sponsorships or participation. The same opportunity could be extended to the High Schools as well with a limit of how many people could work on one square.

ARTWORK AT METROPOLIS

Due to logistical challenges at the building this effort is on hold for the moment.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Cutlip discussed the idea of luminaries or a luminary walk for "Light in the Heights". The concept has been implemented in places such as Aurora to draw people outside in the winter time. The bags that hold the luminary could be designed by the Arts Commission, decorated by children and potentially placed in the downtown. The concept of "First Night" was also discussed as a potential for this type of event to be paired with in the winter (first night of the year, each month, or a holiday such as Christmas) in the downtown or other parts of the Village. The Commission asked that this topic be added as old business on the next agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Henry Beardsley introduced himself to the Arts Commission and informed them that he recently started a non-profit Arts Foundation and is working with high school students and the Metropolis. He has spoken with the Mayor and expressed his interest in being a part of the Arts Commission. He inquired if the group considered bringing in a sponsor for the murals and the arts department of District 214 to get involved.

ADJOURNMENT

COMMISSIONER WOLF MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:21PM. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.