

Columbia City Arts Commission Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2025

I. Call to order

Commission Chair Jennifer Romano called to order the regular meeting of the Columbia City Arts Commission (CCAC) at 5:02 p.m. on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, in the Common Council Chambers of Columbia City Hall, Columbia City, Indiana.

II. Roll call

The following people were present: Jennifer Romano (Chair), Greg Hockemeyer (member), Mike Thomas (member), Doug Egolf (member), Connie Boggs (member), April Frazier (member), Taylor Ford (member), and Chip Hill (staff).

III. Approval of minutes from the last meeting

Connie Boggs moved to approve the November 4, 2025, meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Mike Thomas, and the motion was approved by voice vote.

IV. Open issues

- *Artists' Studio Tour: Tabled*
- *2026 Calendar Project*
 - April Frazier reported that the calendar is **in production**, with an estimated completion within 1–2 weeks, pending holiday delays.
 - Commissioners expressed enthusiasm for distribution and for partnering with WJHS on coordinated monthly artist features tied to the calendar.
- *Promotions*
 - Bones Theater Promotional Package – Discussion Only
 - April Frazier reported receiving an invoice for **\$1,800**, though the Commission had previously approved **\$1,500**.
 - Bones Theater declined to negotiate down to the previously approved amount.
 - After discussion, the Commission agreed to **table the matter** until the new year, particularly in light of updated information that unused CCAC funds now roll over annually.
 - WJHS Underwriting
 - Romano confirmed WJHS will continue providing publicity in 2026, including **monthly spotlights on historical or Whitley County artists**, aligned with the calendar project.
 - The Commission will supply written content for those features.
- *America 250 Collaboration: Tabled*
 - No new updates on mural projects.
- *Public Art Garden Proposal* – The Commission agreed to focus on Baker Park.
 - Doug Egolf, April Frazier, and Chair Romano reported on their **site visit to Baker Park**. Key observations and ideas included:

- Using the former pavilion concrete slab as a potential **stage**, performance area, or seating area.
 - Opportunities for **benches, landscaping**, and nature-integrated art installations.
 - Identification of a large historic **female ginkgo tree**, with possibilities for interpretive signage or art inspired by Ohki's history.
 - Exploring **changeable outdoor art exhibits**, potentially along walkways or stairwells (including vinyl art panels).
 - A possibility of a "**secret**" **mural** visible only from certain vantage points.
 - The area's natural enclosure makes it suitable for **concerts, chalk art, artist demonstrations**, and a potential consolidated location for the **Studio Art Tour**.
 - Discussion on potential use of the **soon-to-be city-owned former FOP Lodge** and the adjacent **shed**, which could serve as indoor space, an arts pantry location, or year-round program venue.
 - Members noted that electrical and lighting infrastructure appears to be present.
 - The group expressed interest in pursuing **grant funding** (state and Indiana Arts Commission) for phased improvements.
 - The Commission will prepare **sketches and concept materials** for further discussion and eventual presentation to the Mayor and Parks Department.
- *Arts Pantry: Tabled*
 - Held pending the Commission's ongoing evaluation of the Baker Park/FOP Lodge facilities as a potential location.

V. Other Business

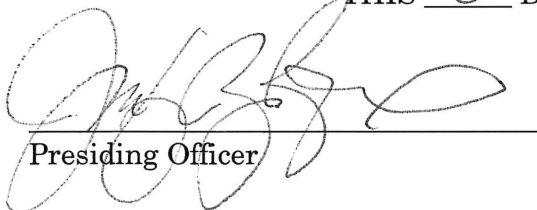
- *Annual Report to the Common Council*
 - The Commission is required to present an annual report early in the year (January–March).
 - April Frazier volunteered to prepare and deliver the report, with assistance from Connie Boggs and Taylor Ford.
 - The report will summarize 2025 activities based on meeting minutes and previous programming.
- *Announcements*
 - Commissioners were reminded that the **Arts Marketplace** at the Whitley County Historical Museum will take place **this Friday from 3–8 p.m.**

VI. Adjournment

Jennifer Romano moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by April Frazier, and passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:23 p.m.

December 2, 2025, MEETING MINUTES APPROVED BY THE MEMBERSHIP

THIS 6th DAY OF January 2026.



Presiding Officer



Secretary