



MINUTES
CULTURAL COMMISSION - REGULAR SESSION
THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025, 7:30 AM

The Cultural Commission convened in regular session at 7:37 AM, March 13, 2025. Chair Faisal Rashid called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Katherine Browne	Commissioner	Present
Shweta Shukla	Commissioner	Present
Dallas Long	Commissioner	Present
Peter Pontius	Commissioner	Present
Faisal Rashid	Commission Chair	Present
Angelique Racki	Commissioner	Present
Amber Collins	Commissioner	Absent
Crystal Bricker	Commissioner	Absent

Arts and Entertainment Staff: Director, Anthony Nelson; Development Manager, Kathy Sawyer
Special Guest: Mclean County Arts Center, Executive Director, Doug Johnson.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Consent Agenda

Items listed on the Consent Agenda are approved with one motion; Items pulled from the Consent Agenda for discussion are listed and voted on separately.

Item 4.A. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of the November 14, 2024, Special Cultural Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Pontius made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Long, to Chair Rashid directed the clerk to call roll:

AYES: Rashid; Racki; Shukla; Long; Pontius; Browne; Bricker; Collins

Motion carried.

Regular Agenda

The following item was presented:

Item 5.A. Discussion on 2025 Bloomington Center for Performing Arts upcoming shows and updates.

Nelson highlighted the following past shows: Label*less (March 8) Nick Lachey's show had a progressive message. Nelson went on WGLT for an interview on Label*less,

however the show wasn't well attended. Upcoming show is Dirty Dancing Live! (March 7). The Beat Goes On (Cher tribute) (March 6): Great show. Spamilton (March 1). Heartache Tonight (Eagles tribute) and the El Paso Gridley is selling really well. Dancing with the Celts is coming up March 20. The rental Turn to Stone (March 20 ELO tribute) is not selling well. Brian Regan (March 22) is close to a sell-out. Liverpool Legends is also coming up March 27.

The following item was presented:

Item 5.B. Discussion on 2025 Grossinger Motors Arena upcoming shows and updates.

Nelson highlighted the IHSA events' attendance were up from last year. This year, there were about 25,000 attendees. Next year, we are adding IESA Cheer to our calendar either the Wednesday or Thursday before IHSA Cheer once we figure out lighting for both events. March 13, Brantley Gilbert is at the Arena. There's a full house setup but it's not selling well. Dwight Yoakam will be here March 29.

There are 7 more Bison hockey games scheduled this season. The team is currently in last place for the playoffs. Hockey attendance is picking up. Last week we had 4,700 in attendance for the Bisons' Education Day and 3,000-plus on each weekend day. Tomorrow (3/14) is Pi Day. For March 17 the Bisons have a sharp-looking jersey.

Other events coming up at the Arena are Heartland, Unit 5 and BHS graduations, and Sesame Street Live (May 15). For TaylorFest (May 17), we are hoping to sell 3,000 tickets.

The following item was presented:

Item 5.C. Discussion on 2025 Cultural Commission events.

Commissioner Racki offered April 5 is Slow Art Day. Commissioner Browne also offered April 5 is TedX Normal and taking place at Heartland Community College from 9am-noon. The Website is TedXNormal.net and the event will also include a presentation on Biophilia from Commissioner, Amber Collins. July 19 is Art and Health Day. The idea is to align this timing with Make Music Normal in Uptown Normal July 18 and 19 since that will save effort. We are still reaching out to ConnectTransit to see how busses can shuttle community members from Uptown Normal to Downtown Bloomington.

Juneteenth will be celebrated Saturday, June 21, 2025. Tony Jones will attend next month's meeting to discuss plans for the event. Arts and Healthy Day will be July 18 or 19. Cultural Fest is August 9. Sugar Creek Arts Festival is October 11-12. Artgasm is October 11.

New Business

As part of Slow Art Day on April 5, BCAI is having its third Brunch Music session. This session's topic will be coffee, and its social, economic, and artistic elements. Haven Ryburn (now Recreation Coffee) will lead cupping, and there will be discussion about the economics and Social Justice aspects of coffee, along with the Cultural spreads, and artistic expression.

The fourth Brunch Music session will feature Dr. A.D. Carson, Associate Professor of Hip Hop (originally from Decatur) at the University of Virginia. BCI is also available for event space rental. We could explore bringing Orchestra Noir to Bloomington. Think Black Violin, but for an orchestra.

A request from Commissioner Browne: Can Director, Anthony Nelson share the Arts and Entertainment Department's booking process? Nelson and his assistant Mike Wilcott will walk the Commissioners through the process. In essence, it's a bit like working from a Bingo card. What are the different types of shows, what will play in Bloomington, and how can we get the greatest variety?

Other topics: Arts in this current political climate and a Speaker Series (we would need sponsors). There have been 15 businesses identified to approach for offers of naming rights at the Arena. A good source for community events is the Convention and Visitors' Bureau calendar: www.visitbn.org but it's only as good as we help to make it, so send notices of upcoming events to them. Development Manager, Kathy Sawyer will research Artists' Grants for Art & Health Day. McLean Country Arts Center, Executive Director Doug Johnson identified seven walls that are available for murals. There are special UV paints that hold up well in sun and weather; Jeff Little is a good contact for these. See the Center for Human Services building at Center and Market Street for a mural that faces west that Jeff painted with UV paints in 2015 and its colors are still vibrant.

Adjournment

Commission Chair Rashid made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Pontius, to Chair Rashid directed the clerk to call roll:

AYES: Rashid; Racki; Shukla; Long; Pontius; Browne

Motion carried.

The Meeting Adjourned at 8:21 A.M.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON



Faisal Rashid, Chair



Anthony Nelson, Staff Liaison