



**Minutes
Cultural Commission - Regular Session
Thursday, December 11, 2025 - 7:30 AM**

The Cultural Commission convened in regular session in the Conference Room of the Creativity Center at 7:46 AM by Commission Chair Faisal Rashid.

1. Call to Order

PRESENT: Commissioner Faisal Rashid
Commissioner Angelique Racki
Commissioner Peter Pontius
Commissioner Dallas Long
Commissioner Ricardo Alvarado
Commissioner Treyce' Gaston-Spears
Commissioner Rakshith Reddy Venumuddala

ABSENT: Commissioner Shweta Shukla
Commissioner Katherine Browne
Commissioner Crystal Bricker
Commissioner Amber Collins

Staff Present: Anthony Nelson, Director, Arts & Entertainment Department; Kathy Sawyer, Development Manager, Arts & Entertainment Department.

2. Roll Call

3. Public Comment

No emailed Public Comment was received.

4. Consent Agenda

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

Commissioner Pontius made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Racki, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Chair Rashid directed Development Manager Sawyer to call roll:

Ayes: Commissioner Alvara, Commissioner Gaston-Spears, Commissioner Long, Commissioner Pontius, Commissioner Racki, Commissioner Venumuddala, Chair Rashid

Motion to approve the September 11, 2025 Minutes.

- A. **Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of the September 11, 2025, Regular Cultural Commission Meetings.** (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

- B. **Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of the October 9, 2025, Regular Cultural Commission Meetings, as requested by the Arts & Entertainment Department.** (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)
- C. **Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of the November 13, 2025, Regular Cultural Commission Meetings, as requested by the Arts & Entertainment Department.** (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

5. Regular Agenda

- A. **Discussion on 2025 Bloomington Center for Performing Arts Upcoming Shows and Updates.** (Recommended Motion: None; Presentation Only.)

Director Nelson reported Holiday Spectacular and the Dolly Parton Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol have been performed at the BCPA this month so far. All went well. The Community Concert Band will be tonight and Jane Lynch will be at the BCPA on Friday along with Kate Flannery and Tim Davis. After that, activity will be slow until January. Last year was a record-setting year in ticket sales and this year might beat that record by about 500 tickets. In March, Jake Owens, Trisha Yearwood, and Here Come the Mummies will be at the BCPA.

Director Nelson also reported that we will have a new approach going forward at the BCPA. We don't want to lose money. Ballet doesn't do well at the BCPA, but Jazz can work in some cases. We're also going to bring in bigger names.

- B. **Discussion on 2025 Grossinger Motors Arena Upcoming Shows and Updates.** (Recommended Motion: None; Presentation Only.)

Director Nelson reported that at the Arena, Yellowcard and A Day to Remember performed on November 1, and Scotty McCreery and Dustin Lynch were there on November 7.

There were 3 hockey games in November and in December, there will be 10. There are now 2 Bloomington Bison members playing in the AHL in Hartford.

IHSA Dance will be at the Arena at the end of January, and IHSA cheer and wrestling the first and last weekends in February, respectively.

August 9, the Goo Goo Dolls will be at the Arena.

- C. **Discussion on 2025 / 2026 Cultural Commission Events:** (Recommended Motion: None; Presentation Only.)

Thinking about events for 2026, Commissioner Venumuddala commented that there were 600-700 people at the History Museum for Holi Moli last year. We may also be able to add to community events celebrating Diwali.

Director Nelson asked Commissioners to bring names of 3-5 local restaurants to next month's meeting for the Summer Artist Series. This will be the basis for our efforts to bring local musicians and artists to local restaurants this year. This will provide new venues for musicians and artists and increase numbers of customers going to local restaurants on days when business is typically lighter. Bands will be paid out of the restaurants' sales, with perhaps 20% of sales going to pay the artists. After the bands play, attendees will vote on how the band was. Top vote getters will be showcased in First Fridays or as openers at the BCPA.

Commissioner Venumuddala commented that White Oak Social may be a good venue for this effort. 8-10 restaurants, 1 per week. Go to the restaurant or business and check it out for space available—solo acoustic to small bands.

Timeline:

January: Commissioners vote for restaurants to 12-15

March: Commission will reach out to artists

April: Vote

May: Launch the program

Development Manager Sawyer will create a Google doc where Commissioners can add artists & businesses along with contact information for the artists and businesses.

Commissioner Racki then reported on some ideas about networking, socializing and sharing/education opportunities with other Commissions throughout the year. Three gatherings per year, which could be labeled as Commissioner Happy Hours or After Hours. Chair Rashid also mentioned that we could develop mixers for new residents, perhaps in cooperation with the Convention and Visitors Bureau, to welcome them to the city and feature businesses that are in the city.

6. New Business

7. Adjournment

Commissioner Pontius motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Alvara seconded

Commissioner Pontius made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Alvara, to adjourn the meeting.

Chair Rashid directed the Staff Liaison to call roll:

Ayes: Commissioner Alvara, Commissioner Gaston-Spears, Commissioner Long, Commissioner Pontius, Commissioner Racki, Commissioner Venumuddala, Chair Rashid

Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 am.

City of Bloomington



Faisal Rashid, Commission Chair

Attest



Anthony Nelson, Staff Liaison