

Portage Cultural Arts Committee Minutes
January 22, 2025, Parks and Recreation Building

Attendees: Amy Dunham, Carolyn Fitzmaurice, Satch Huizenga, Dennis Martin, Kathleen Hoyle, Mary Reed

Absent: Cathy Feeman

Guests: Maribeth Henry, Mark Love, Lauren

Meeting called to order by Amy at 6:03pm. Motion to approve November minutes by Satch, support by Carolyn. Motion approved. Revisions to agenda requested by Amy. Move Item 5c Outreach to be included in Items 2 Discussion on Board Focus for 2025. Consolidate Items 3a Gallery Walk and 3b Plant Sculpture with 5a Public Art. Delete 5a Financial Report 5d Fund Development from this month's agenda. Motion to approve agenda, as revised, by Seth, support by Mary. Motion approved.

New business

1) Vacancies - Amy reminded us that we have one Director opening and three Executive Committee openings.

2) Discussion of Board Focus for 2025 - Dennis suggested that we put a hold on the Gallery Walk and Plant Sculpture Public Art projects for now. Let's review the venues we have available through the Parks Department and shift our focus to reaching out to and working with artists in our area. Our April 2023 Artists Meeting Artists event was successful. Let's do another one in late April. Let's consider how we could hold a series of (quarterly) events like an Actor's Workshop, Songwriter's Workshop or Painting 101 Workshop etc. We could host Artisan Open House with 40-50 booths where participants could promote their work and network with other artists. Our committee could continue to help the city with Outdoor Art programs as consultants and judges, if needed. We should consider holding monthly meetings and getting more of the public to our regular meetings. All in attendance felt this would be a good revision of focus.

Special Meeting will be held Wednesday, February 5 at 4pm at the Parks Building to plan the open house and workshops. This will be promoted as a public meeting.

Outreach Committee - Dennis and Mary have made contact with the City of Portage Youth Advisory Committee, Portage District Library, Discover Kalamazoo/ Kalamazoo County Public Arts Commission and Artisan Representation of Kalamazoo.

3) 2025 Calendar of Events Discussion

a) Holiday Card Entry - Thanks to Amy, Carolyn, Ellie and Cathy for creating and painting our entry which looked great on display at Celery Flats

b) The Snowflake Challenge was a great idea which needed more time and committee members to be successful. It also involved working with a commercial business which needed many levels of approval and action. We thank Carolyn for the idea and a lot of effort. Perhaps this could be revisited in a few months.

c) Artists Social Event - Moved to late April and planned at February 5 Special Meeting.

4) Subcommittee Reports

a) Theatre - There has been some cost estimates on the barn restoration. Satch feels we could do some theatre type activities using other city facilities, including Celery Flats. Poetry or script reading, readers theatre etc are some possibilities.

Comments from Committee members

Meeting adjourned at 7:33pm

Next meeting: March 19, 2025, 6:00pm, Parks and Recreation Office, (320 Library Lane)