



CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION
SPECIAL CALLED WORK SESSION
UNOFFICIAL MINUTES
FEBRUARY 25, 2025
ALPHARETTA CITY HALL
CONFERENCE ROOM 121 | 2 PARK PLAZA | 6:30 PM

The public is advised that the following minutes are not a verbatim transcription of business presented at the Council Meeting of the date shown; but are a synopsis of pertinent information. The public is further advised that the video recording for said meeting is a matter of public record and is available to be viewed at the City Clerk's office during normal business hours or viewed online at <https://www.youtube.com/user/alpharettagov>.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- ❖ Chairwoman Cookson called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

- **Cultural Arts Commission Members - Present**
 - Melody Cookson (Chair)
 - Michael Barsky (Vice Chair)
 - Shital Foster
 - Dianna Smeal
 - Sabine Genet
- **Staff**
 - Morgan Rodgers – Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Kurt Kirby – Senior Operations Manager, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Kim Manning – Cultural Services Division Manager, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Sarah Bausano – Administrative Office Coordinator, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
 - Lara Haddadin – Customer Services Representative, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services

III. WORK SESSION ITEMS

a. **Cultural Arts Master Plan**

- Kim Manning, Cultural Services Division Manager for the Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services Department introduced the item.
- Kim asked the Commission their first impressions of the Master Plan and the Commissioners presented their feedback. The Work Session consisted of discussion of the Master Plan and the updates that are needed to be able to present it to Mayor and Council.
- The discussion revolves around refining a cultural arts master plan for Alpharetta, with a focus on its structure, goals, and approval process.
 1. **First Impressions:**
 - **Commissioner Barsky:** The plan is overwhelming and needs prioritization.
 - **Commissioner Foster:** Focus on the timeline.

- **Commissioner Smeal:** The plan has improved but needs clarity on how it impacts Alpharetta residents.
 - **Commissioner Genet:** Wants the plan to be more exciting and balanced.
 - **Commissioner Gonzalez:** Impressed by progress and advocates for collaboration among small arts organizations.
 - **Chairwoman Cookson:** Suggests uniting arts organizations.
2. **Action and Focus:**
- **Commissioner Gonzalez:** Proposes a gala to showcase the city's arts.
 - **Commissioner Foster:** Wants to ensure the plan is comprehensive enough for council approval.
 - **Director Rodgers:** Explains the approval process and emphasizes the need for an executive summary and guidance for staff.
3. **Details and Adjustments:**
- **Commissioner Genet:** Suggests changing wording around the city's character and adjusting the executive summary.
 - **Chairwoman Cookson:** Wants to move sections in the executive summary for better emphasis.
 - **Commissioner Smeal:** Questions the term "convener," leading to a discussion about alternative terms like "organizer" and "facilitator."
4. **Final Suggestions:**
- **Director Rodgers:** Recommends removing numbered points in the executive summary and using bullets to make it clearer and more visually balanced.
 - **Commissioner Foster:** Recommended getting the Executive Summary perfect and then get it approved.
- **Executive Summary Feedback:**
- **Commissioner Barsky:** The summary is in passive voice and needs to be written more actively to sound more commanding.
 - **Goals Changes:**
 - **SPARK:** Remove "arts and culture" and use "community" instead of "residents and workers."
 - **DISCOVER:** Change "broaden horizons" to "providing cultural experiences."
 - **CONNECT:** Remove "arts and culture."
 - **CREATE:** Remove "arts and culture."
 - **Strategies:**
 - Title as "Priority Strategies" and remove numbering. Clean up the wording.
 - Put **economic development** as the #1 priority.
 - Foster partnerships, integrate operational processes, amplify marketing, and encourage collaboration for Alpharetta's history.
 - Ensure language is in active voice and aligns with City Council priorities.
 - **Map:** Remove the geographical map, which seems limited. Instead, use more images showing art-related locations in Alpharetta. No need for a map of just three places.

- **Action Plan Feedback:**
 - **Immediate Actions:** Focus on convening discussions about the city's support for Arts Alpharetta, with some opposition from Commissioner Smeal.
 - **Short Term:** Move item 2 to the top of the list.
 - **Medium Term:** No changes.
 - **Long Term:** Remove the first section and place evaluation of arts' impact on the community last.
 - **Commissioner Genet:** Suggested curating instead of just convening and involving more curators in the plan.
 - **Commissioner Gonzalez:** Advocated for using parks as venues for art and making art more visible in the community.
 - **Director Rodgers:** Suggested adding a QR code to the map, though not all members are convinced about its importance.
 - **Next Steps:**
 - Kim will incorporate edits and recommendations from consultants.
 - Allison will present to the CAC.
 - The plan should be reviewed by staff before presenting to art leader groups.
- The overall goal is to refine the plan for clarity, active language, and better community involvement while incorporating visual elements that represent Alpharetta's art scene.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ With there being no further business to consider or discuss, Chairwoman Cookson adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Bausano

Sarah Bausano
Administrative Office Coordinator
Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services