



*City of Bristol
Arts & Culture Commission*

INFORMATION TO ACCESS MEETING

<https://bristolct-gov.zoom.us/j/86280576918?pwd=iQ7DubdYbSAm0Dse5qszhgaOeTG2Z1.1>

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The regular meeting was held on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at 6:00 PM in Meeting Room 1-3 in City Hall, 111 North Main Street, Bristol, CT 06010.

1. Call to Order

Chair Walter Lewandoski called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Attendance

Chair Walter Lewandoski
Vice Chair Andrea Adams
Commissioner Juliet Norton
Commissioner Maria Salice
Commissioner Nigel Wynter
Commissioner E. Brad Yancy
Arts and Culture Supervisor Arianna
Therriault

Absent:

Commissioner Julie Carensa-Crist
City Council Liaison Cheryl Thibault

2. Approval of Minutes

a. Approval of Minutes: October 1, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Wynter to approve the October 1, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes

Seconded by Commissioner Yancy, all in favor; motion carried.

3. Public Participation

Maxine Bowden of 42 Merriman Street, Bristol, stated that she is returning to host the Soul Session on January 17, 2026. She requested a donation from the commission to help cover some of the financials for the show. Chair Lewandoski stated that this will be discussed at the next City Arts and Culture Commission meeting in December.

JoAnn Moran, applicant for the Louise Laurentano DeMars Love of Art Grant, is a muralist in Bristol with over 20 years of experience creating community-based murals around Connecticut.

Using her converted “artmobile” (a former bread truck), she plans to bring the mural-making experience directly to community locations such as schools and senior centers—since local transportation options are limited. This project would serve as both a community introduction and an opportunity for her to connect with local organizations. Moran is also interested in mentoring other artists in collaborative mural creation. She has previously worked in over 100 schools throughout Connecticut but none yet in Bristol. Additionally, she expressed openness to larger projects, such as an underpass mural on Terryville Avenue.

4. Supervisor's Report

a. Supervisor's Report

Arts and Culture Supervisor Arianna Therriault presented the Supervisor's Report. The theater reported a strong recent performance, celebrating its **first sold-out show** (with 10 complimentary tickets held aside). Audience feedback has been largely positive, with helpful suggestions for improvement. Surveys now include questions based on the seven dimensions of wellness, allowing the team to measure social and cultural impact from attendees' experiences.

Upcoming and recent shows are showing solid ticket sales and growth trends. For example, *The Nashville King* sold 279 and 229 tickets for its two shows, while other events like *Fleetwood Macked* (93 tickets), *Harvest and Rust* (36), *K-pop Dance Crew* (19), *Eaglemania* (50), and others are performing well. Overall, sales are trending upward compared to fall.

b. Project Spreadsheet

Arts and Culture Supervisor Arianna Therriault presented the Project Spreadsheet. The Heart Lock Sculpture, "Locks at Stocks", project has been successfully completed, with positive participation and results. With that project finished, the team now has the capacity to consider and plan for a new upcoming project.

c. Year to Date Financials

Arts and Culture Supervisor Arianna Therriault presented the Year-to-Date Financials. The commission reviewed the financials showing a remaining balance of about \$950.00. Funds are expected to last until June. Members discussed possibly forming a subcommittee focused on fundraising.

At the theater, current financial projections indicate significant improvement over the previous year. The theater expects to spend around \$216,000 and potentially end the year with a \$30,000 profit, compared to a \$108,000 deficit last year. These projections are based on the first three months of revenue. From July to October, revenue increased sharply from \$14,797 last year to \$93,659 this year, showing strong growth and optimism for continued financial stability.

5. Chairman's Report

Chair Walter Lewandoski presented the Chairman's Report. Chair Lewandoski shared positive feedback about the recent MJX Experience show, noting strong audience reactions and creative use of the theater's projection screen. Balcony seating was discussed, with confirmation that those tickets are priced about \$15–\$20 higher. Overall, attendees praised the show and the improvements at the theater.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Heart Lock Sculpture "Locks at Stocks" was held, with about 15 attendees. The first lock was placed, including one brought from Paris by donor Bob Boudreaux, who was impressed with the project and is offering a \$1,000 donation for another art initiative. The commission discussed potential uses for this donation—particularly purchasing large molded plastic heart sculptures (about \$595 each, plus shipping) for new community art installations.

MOTION: Made by Vice Chair Adams to purchase at least one or two molded heart sculptures, depending on cost, using the donation from the Broad View Fund through the Main Street Community Foundation, with any additional funds to support shipping or artist decoration. Seconded by Commissioner Yancy, all in favor, motion carried.

A special meeting will be held on November 19, 2025, at noon via Zoom to discuss details before the next City Arts and Culture Commission Meeting on December 3, 2025.

6. Old Business

a. Traffic Box Updates

Chair Lewandoski presented the Traffic Box updates. He stated that Christine Liveech, of the Forestville Village Association, continues to work on the Forestville traffic box wrap design, though progress is slow due to challenges locating historical photos of the Forestville Center. She has been consulting with a local print professional (LT Wraps) for technical guidance on preparing the artwork. Members suggested resources for historical photos, including community contributors like Kevin Lewis, Tim Maynard, and the historical society. Because of weather limitations (the vinyl wrap requires warm temperatures), installation will be postponed until spring.

Discussion also covered pricing: SignPro estimated approximately \$800 per wrap or \$2,000 total for four installations. Members noted that costs could vary and that the wrap for the Green Hills box (collaborating with former art teacher Joe Johnson) would also be delayed until warmer weather.

Chair Lewandoski is going to create a spreadsheet tracking all traffic box projects, including locations, artists, and costs. Additionally, the group discussed possibly reordering the previous “Duck” design wrap if the artwork file still exists, as reprints could be cheaper. It was noted that Bristol Sign Art created earlier postcard wraps and SignPro handled the Forestville wrap; both companies could have design files on record. Artist James Gaffney was identified as the creator of the Duck design.

b. Heart Sculpture Plaque

Chair Lewandoski presented the Heart Sculpture. The commission discussed adding a plaque for the Heart Lock Sculpture to identify and explain the artwork, similar to plaques installed for other city art pieces such as the Main Street mural, Bear Sculpture, and MLK mural. Members referenced existing plaques in Forestville Center that are mounted on metal rods and agreed this format would work well.

The plaques are typically purchased by the commission, and past records from 2022 show that each cost approximately \$380, with five ordered at that time. Staff will follow up to confirm current pricing and process.

c. Pocket Park at Center Square Update

Supervisor Arianna Therriault presented the Pocket Park at Center Square update. There are no updates yet on the pending grant application, which is expected to be submitted within the next few weeks. The deadline was extended to December, but submission will likely occur sooner. The plan is to proceed with the pocket park and artist engagement regardless of the grant outcome. However, the commission agreed it's best to wait for the grant decision before finalizing artist involvement or next steps. In the meantime, members will continue to research design ideas for the Pocket Park and maintain communication with previously contacted artists to gather more information and inspiration for the project.

d. By Commissioners

Chair Lewandoski took a moment to share personal reflections and a perspective on the commission's work, emphasizing active involvement and dedication. He highlighted his personal commitment, noting hands-on participation in the Heart Sculpture project, including physically helping with tasks like back-filling forms despite age and health challenges. Chair Lewandoski highlighted that this commission is distinct from others,

valuing all voices, ideas, and active participation, not just attendance at meetings. They praised the commission for being action-oriented and results-driven, while encouraging continued engagement and initiative from all members.

7. New Business

a. By Commissioners

Vice Chair Andrea Adams shared an idea inspired by Tiffany, a former City Arts and Culture commissioner's, visit to the Green Sage Guilford Live Arts Festival. Vice Chair Adams proposed a downtown arts festival once the pocket park and new sculptures are installed. Local businesses could sponsor artists or musicians, street artists could display and sell their work. This could coincide with art unveilings and could be planned two-years in advance, potentially involving local organizations and corporations to boost participation.

Commissioner Maria Salice shared the idea of hosting an ACE, (Arts, Culture, and Entertainment) event. ACEs was a past community awards program recognizing local performing artists, visual artists, and arts supporters. The idea is to revive it, potentially partnering with Greg Hahn's Arts and Culture Commission and using the theater as a venue.

This event could honor past recipients with plaques, showcase visual artists and short performances, a wine-and-cheese reception, and low-cost tickets with potential sponsors. The Commission role would require minimal support. For example, help run the event, sell tickets, and promote them. The goal would be to celebrate Bristol arts, engage the community, and potentially raise modest funds.

8. Reports and Committee Reports

a. City Council Liaison Report

None.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Made by Vice Chair Adams to adjourn at 7:46 p.m.
Seconded by Commissioner Yancy, all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amaris Estrada
Recording Secretary
City Arts and Culture Commission