

Public Art Advisory Committee Meeting

May 27, 2025

12:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, 305 SW A Street

Contact skerr@bentonvillear.com to request participation via Zoom.

THE CITY OF BENTONVILLE



PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Member	Attendance	Ex Officio	Attendance
1 Elizabeth Miller	In person	Beckie Seba, City Council	Absent
2 Allan Paulose	In person	Kalene Griffith, Visit Bentonville	Absent
3 Chad Nicholson, Chairperson	In person	Alison Nation, Visit Bentonville	Absent
4 Kate Schaffer	In person	Cynthia Post Hunt, Crystal Bridges/The Momentary	In person
5 Anne Jackson, Vice Chairperson	In person	Melisa Durkee, OZ Art	In person
6 Clint Schaff	In person		
7 Tom Hoehn	In person	Staff	
		Shelli Kerr, Comprehensive Planning Manager	In person
		Josh Stacey, Deputy Director of Parks	In person

Guests: Paige Dirksen, Rachel Olzer, Tara Clark, Sam Slatten, several students from Thaden

CALL TO ORDER Chairperson Nicholson called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Approval of Minutes – April 22, 2025

Clint made a motion to approve the minutes for April 22, 2025. Tom seconded. All in favor, motion passed 5-0 (Allan and Anne had not yet arrived).

2. Financial Report

- Inventory management software has been purchased and partially integrated.
- FEMA funding has been secured for the repair of the Butterfly and Dandelion sculptures.
- No vote was required for financial updates.

Kate made a motion to add an agenda item to discuss “All Biker(s) Welcome” under Old Business. Clint seconded. All in favor, motion passed 5-0 (Allan and Anne had not yet arrived).

PROPOSALS

3. Thaden School Urban Studies Library Mural

Presentation by Urban Studies Students. The project aims to improve pedestrian safety and engagement through tactical urbanism—a low-cost, community-driven method to influence public spaces. The location is the Downtown Trail near the Bentonville Public Library and Tiger Retail area. Goals are to enhance pedestrian and biker safety, increase community engagement and provide an educational and inspiring public art piece led by students. The design is a colorful ground mural near the library using shapes and colors from the library's brand. It also includes moveable planters for traffic calming, inspired by Lawrence Plaza's planter model. The project highlights inclusivity, curiosity, and civic engagement. The library has endorsed the design and granted use of their logo. City departments (Planning, Streets, and Fire) were consulted to ensure safety and access for emergency vehicles. Local flower shop (Matkins) will donate flowers for the planters. Paint will be Sherwin-Williams concrete stain, as recommended by a tactical urbanism guide. Multiple coats will be applied for weather resistance. Planter maintenance discussed, with potential involvement from local Master Gardeners. Students propose using the adjacent electrical box to include a sign explaining the project.

Elizabeth made a motion to approve the proposed artwork. Kate seconded. All in favor, motion passed 7-0.

3. Trout Crosswalk Mural

A group of students from Thaden's Urban Studies Class presented their proposal for a mural and pedestrian safety improvements at a problematic area on Second Street in Bentonville, between Onyx

and Yoga Story, across from Flying Fish. Originating from an urban studies class, the project involved fieldwork, where they identified confusion and safety issues for pedestrians in the area. Their solution includes a crosswalk mural featuring trout (inspired by Arkansas' fishing culture and nearby Flying Fish), improved pedestrian markings

They consulted the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)* for compliance, worked with local businesses, and engaged a muralist to help with the design. Officials discussed the practicality of materials, maintenance, and design details. The proposal was well-received and approved, pending further reviews from the city's Traffic Safety and Signage Committee and City Council.

Anne made a motion to approve the proposed artwork, pending approval by the Traffic Safety and Signage Committee. Tom seconded. All in favor, motion passed 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS

4. ADDED – All Biker(s) Welcome

The mural was previously approved. However, upon inspecting the completed artwork in response to a complaint received by the city, the city determined that minor design changes were in breach of the contract with the artist.

Committee members broadly supported the mural as executed, stating the changes were not material and did not alter the original intent. They expressed frustration with the lack of communication from the city, procedural issues, and the potential impact for future artists. Several members called for a fairer, more transparent process going forward and emphasized the importance of not making assumptions about artistic intent.

Tom made a motion to allow public comments. Clint seconded. All in favor, motion passed 7-0.

Paige Dirksen, the artist, and Rachel Olzer a representative of All Bikes Welcome spoke in support of the artwork as-is.

Tom made a motion that the PAAC finds the artwork, All Bikers Welcome, as installed aligns with the intent of the original proposal as approved by the PAAC, to share this motion with City Council, request City Council adhere to complaint procedures already established, and to accept the artwork as delivered. Kate seconded. All in favor, motion passed 7-0.

5. The PAAC Race

Alan provided an update to the Public Art Advisory Committee regarding efforts to collaborate with stakeholders on a public art engagement initiative. The conversation centered on potentially partnering with Downtown Bentonville Inc. (DBI) for an event modeled after DBI's past "Celtic Crawl," this time focusing on public art. The committee agreed to support Alan's collaboration with DBI for the 2025 Art Crawl, viewing it as a trial run to inform a potential larger-scale event in 2026. A formal motion was passed to that effect.

Anne made a motion to support Alan and the Art Crawl with DBI and test this year with support and move forward next year in a larger capacity. Tom seconded. All in favor, motion passed 6-0. (Elizabeth had left the meeting before the vote.)

Due to time limitations, the committee agreed to end the meeting.

- Chad made an announcement that he will be resigning at the following meeting ahead of a change in residency.

Kate made a motion to table the rest of the agenda. Tom seconded. All in favor, motion passed 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Alan made a motion to adjourn. Anne seconded. All in favor, motion passed 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 1:28 pm.