

# Athens Municipal Arts Commission Meeting Minutes

**November 12, 2025 | 5:30–7:00 PM**

**Location:** Arts/West

Present: David D. Devin S., Tina W., Kate F., Kelee R., Mateo G., Andrew C., Katherine Ann J., Jeff R.

## Approval of Minutes

The committee reviewed minutes from the October 8, 2025 meeting. Kate noted a correction regarding the Armory budget: the line should reflect the committee's aspirational goal for decor and art, not a definite commitment. Minutes approved as amended (Kate moved, Jeff seconded).

## Election of Officers

Per Article VI, Section 6.2.4 of the bylaws, the committee elected officers for the coming term:

- **Vice Chair:** Kate Fetterolf
- **Secretary:** Kelee Riesbeck

Jeff moved to elect the slate as presented, Andy seconded. Passed unanimously.

## Administrative Updates

### Service Eligibility Bylaws Amendment

Kelee provided an update on AMAC's ongoing work with Athens City regarding service eligibility requirements. The core question remains: who should advise the mayor on spending city tax revenue? Kate noted the city's committee will revisit this issue in January after three new council members are sworn in.

### Legislative Updates (Andrew Chiki/Jeff Risner)

- The city has finalized 2026 budgets, which include funding for the Athens County Area Midday Foundation (ACAMF) and completion of the sculpture walk plaques.
- Meghan Jennings, City Planner, will replace Andrew as the Mayor's designee on AMAC. Andrew departs after many years in this role. He was thanked generously for all his support and wisdom over the years.

## Public Projects

### Athens City Mural Audit and Enhancement (David Telega/Kelee Riesbeck)

Stage II: "Far and Near East Side Mural Walk" has been drafted with final edits forthcoming. The committee discussed creating an additional brochure but reported no progress since last meeting.

### Art Outside the Box Project (Tina Wilson/Kate Fetterolf)

The mAppAthens team is working on posting project content to their site. Kate and Tina will respond to questions from the mAppAthens coordinator.

### **Athens Poet Laureate (Tina Wilson)**

The committee selected Rebecca Lachman as Athens Poet Laureate. The recommendation will proceed to the Mayor, then to City Council for a resolution (anticipated passage in December). David will assist Tina in drafting notification letters to applicants. The committee voted to approve the recommendation (Kelee moved, Devin seconded). Passed.

### **Art in City Spaces Project (Kate Fetterolf/Mateo Galvano)**

No progress reported. The committee discussed tabling this project while noting continued interest from the Mayor's office. Nancy has expressed interest in spearheading future efforts. David encouraged focusing on projects that inspire committee members. Kate suggested this could work well as a two-person initiative.

## **Arts/West and Athens Parks & Recreation Updates**

### **Katherine Ann Jordan**

- Sculpture opening held at Community Center on October 14; plaque recognizes AMAC's contribution.
- Thanked AMAC members (particularly David) for participating in Halloween Uptown by distributing candy.
- Upcoming events: Lost Flamings performing Boy My Greatness this weekend; The Outsiders next weekend at Arts/West.
- Gallery show Ripple Effect opens December 5 at Arts/West.
- Moon-themed mural installation underway at Community Center to complement existing sun mural.

### **Armory Meeting Space**

Kate is working to secure one of the Armory meeting rooms for AMAC's January meeting. The rental cost is \$160. She will inquire with Paul and Sadie at Blue Dot about the possibility of pro bono space for one annual meeting per commission.

## **Strategic Planning Discussion**

### **Arts Organization Coalition (Kate Fetterolf)**

Kate proposed bringing together various arts organizations across the greater Athens community (city and county) in a loose coalition for networking, planning, and communication. Discussion points:

- Andrew referenced the 2014 Athens Area Citizens for the Arts initiative led by Bob Winters, which secured grant funding and created an artist registry before losing momentum.
- Devin noted similar efforts by other groups over the years.
- Key questions: Who would house the coalition? How would it be funded and maintained?
- David suggested researching what other municipalities have done.
- Jeff referenced a 2013 economic impact report on the value of arts in the region.

- Committee discussed potential partners: Ohio Arts Council (Brianna Dance, Chiquitia Mullens-Lee for teaching artist registry), Ohio Municipal League, Ohio Town and Gown Association, Appalachian Regional Commission, and Arts Midwest.
- Katherine Ann Jordan suggested leveraging OU's events certificate program students for administrative support through contact hours.

### **Draft Manifesto: 36-Month Scope-of-Work (David Telega)**

David shared a draft planning document outlining potential projects over the next three years. Kate's coalition concept aligns with David's conference planning ideas. The committee discussed potential funding partnerships and agreed to continue developing these concepts. David will reach out to other city commissions and boards for input.

## **Additional Business**

### **AMAC Operations**

- Halloween Uptown event was successful.
- AMAC monthly meetings will now be posted on the WUOB Event Calendar.
- Committee members received passwords to the AMAC email account.

### **Guest: Lucy Schwalle**

Athens resident and attorney Lucy Schwalle attended to discuss reestablishing a monthly jam session for traditional old-time music. The previous session has ended, leaving Athens without an open jam for this genre. Katherine Ann Jordan expressed interest in hosting a regular jam session at Arts/West. They will connect via email to coordinate.

### **Senior Thesis Art Installation (Andrew Chiki)**

Courtney Kessel has formally requested to display senior thesis pieces in the sculpture park. The city is working on a memorandum of understanding for installations on additional pads built for this purpose. A DB Cash Cow sculpture from Snowville Creamery will be installed in the spring semester for 4–6 months, subject to formal approval process. Any permanent installations must follow standard procedures and be suitable for outdoor display.

### **Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM**

(Kate moved, Jeff seconded).

**Next Meeting:** December 10, 2025 | 5:30–7:00 PM | Location TBD (possibly Sidebar)