



Draft Meeting Minutes: Public Art Advisory Committee

Date: March 10, 2026
Minutes prepared by: Sarah Kidwell
Location: Kaposia Library – Large Conference Room, South St. Paul

Attendance

- Mike Todaro
- Cheryl Caponi
- Bob Erickson
- JuliAnne Jonker
- Cindy Gehrig
- Meridith McKinley, Via Partnership (via Teams)
- Erika Fiola, Via Partnership (via Teams)
- Lil Leatham, Dakota County Planning
- Beth Landahl, Dakota County Parks
- Teresa Mitchell, Dakota County Public Services & Revenue Division
- Sarah Kidwell, Dakota County Public Services & Revenue Division

Agenda

- Approval of Agenda / Chair / Approval or Modification
- Approval of Minutes / Chair / Approval or Modification
- Per Diem Requests will be emailed / All / Member Signature
- Presentations
 - Blueprint Public Art Plan Update: Via Partnership
- Project Updates
 - Wentworth Library Remodel: Cheryl Caponi, Liaison
 - Burnhaven Library Remodel: Cheryl Caponi, Liaison
 - 2026 Music in the Park: Beth Landahl, Parks
 - Unity Trail: Mike Todaro & JuliAnne Jonker, Liaisons
 - 2026 Art Contest: Al Tsai, Liaison
- Unfinished Business

- Greenway Trails & Tunnels
- New Business
- Announcements

Next Meeting

Date: April 14, 2026

Time: 5:30 pm

Location: Kaposia Library, South St. Paul

Agenda items: Blueprint Public Art Plan Update, Planning for Art Contest Selection & Reception

Meeting Notes

Approval of Agenda: Chair

Bob Erickson moved to approve the agenda, and it was seconded by JuliAnne Jonker. The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes: Chair

Bob Erickson moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, and it was seconded by JuliAnne Jonker. The motion passed.

Per Diem Requests: All

Per diem requests were distributed for signatures.

Presentations

- **Blueprint Public Art Plan Update: Via Partnership**

Meridith McKinley shared a presentation to review the vision, mission, and guiding that were discussed at the last meeting and the updates that were made, as well as potential public art opportunities that exist in Dakota County. Advisory committee members and others present discussed who the intended audience is for this plan and how do we best align those pieces.

After meeting with most departments across the County, Via Partnership has identified opportunities for public art that will be included in an appendix of the plan. Via Partnership does want to identify 6-10 opportunities that will be described in more detail as projects that could be ready to go. These opportunities could test different types and styles of art in plan execution.

Meridith will present ideas around implementation and stewardship at the next meeting in April.

Project Updates

- **Wentworth Library Remodel: Cheryl Caponi, Liaison**

Opens May 6th.

- **Burnhaven Library Remodel: Cheryl Caponi, Liaison**

Nothing to report. The library is currently moving to temporary location.

- **2026 Music in the Park: Beth Landahl**

Parks will be hosting 5 Tuesday Music in the Park dates from May to September, and the Summer Solstice in June. They received 65 applications from performers, and would like to invite a representative from the Advisory Committee to participate in the selection committee.

Parks invites the Advisory Committee to have an information table again and an interactive activity.

- **Unity Trail: Mike Todaro and JuliAnne Jonker, Liaisons**

Nothing to report.

- **2026 Art Contest: Al Tsai, Liaison**

The Art Contest submission portal is open and accepting submissions! The Artist Reception is on April 20th.

Unfinished Business

- **Greenway Trails & Tunnels**

Mike Todaro presented the following statement that was provided by Al Tsai:

Base on:

1. 2022-2023 success of Garlough Tunnel
 - a. Staff lauded PAAC expertise and leadership
 - b. A pilot public art RFP, procurement, and installation process - a template for future Park's projects
 - c. PAAC contributed \$25,000 of PAAC funds
 - d. Stayed within budget and schedule
 - e. Aligns with County Mission and Greenway Trail Master Plan - "provide **efficient, effective, responsive government** that achieves the Board of Commissioners' vision for Dakota County: a premier place in which to live and work"
 - f. Enrichment of community and beautification of existing "drab tunnel."
2. Robert Street Tunnel
 - a. Has precedence and is of similar scope to Garlough Tunnel
 - b. Aligns with County Mission and Greenway Trail Master Plan
 - c. Aligns with River to River Greenway Master Plan

- d. Alignment with Park Mission
 - i. Near Thompson County Park / Dakota Lodge
- e. Alignment with Library Mission
 - i. Near Wentworth Library
- f. Aligns with Garlough Environmental Magnet School

Mike Todaro presented a motion, on behalf of Al Tsai, to earmark \$25,000 of PAAC funds towards commissioning public art for the River to River Greenway at the Robert Street tunnel. The motion was tabled.

New Business

Announcements

Congratulations to the Caponi Art Park for being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.