



MAYOR'S COUNCIL ON THE ARTS MEETING AGENDA

January 30, 2026

2:00 P.M.

Depot Arts District
955 E Memorial Boulevard

- I. Meeting called to order
- II. Mayor's Remarks
- III. Introduction of Commissioner Terry Coney & New Members
- IV. Minutes Review & Approval
- V. Sunshine & Public Records Law
- VI. Grant Awards
- VII. MCA By-Laws
- VIII. 2026 Meeting Schedule
- IX. Lakeland Arts Association – Depot Arts District



LkldArts.org

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Mayor's Council on the Arts
August 18, 2025

The Mayor's Council on the Arts met at Summit Consulting. Mayor **Bill Mutz**, Chair **Kerry Falwell**, **Cynthia Haffey** – Platform Art, **Emma Parr** – Intern, Platform Art, **Tyson Voigt** – Southeastern University, **Lesley Chambers** – Florida Southern College, **Georgia Lynn Dean** – At-Large Member, **Parker Landry** – At-Large Member, **Alice C. Santana** – Straz Center (Associate Member), **Brad Lunz** – The Lunz Group, **Ricky Johnson** – The Polk Theatre, **Daryl Ward** – Ashley Gibson Barnett (AGB) Museum/Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance, **Tiffany Van Wieren** – Watson Clinic Foundation Arts in Medicine, **Sherry Ross** – Lakeland Arts Association (Associate Member), **Mary Correa** – Lakeland Arts Association (Associate Member), **Alan Reynolds** – Lakeland Community Theatre, **Kevin LeVine** – Harrison School of the Arts, **Cindy Collins** – RP Funding Center Director, Deputy Director of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts **Pam Page**, Assistant City Manager **Ashley Stathatos**, Assistant City Attorney **Katie Prenoveau**, and Deputy City Clerk **Heather Bradman** and Assistant to the City Clerk, **Trish Edwards** were present.

Mayor Bill Mutz called the meeting to order at approximately 2:05 p.m. after a tour of the Summit Mural Collection with Donna DeStefano of Summit and artists Gillian Fazio, Jon Sierra, Maegan Carroll-Simmons, Joshua “Bump” Galletta, and Tim Haas.

Introductions

Chair Kerry Falwell introduced Assistant City Manager Ashley Stathatos and Assistant City Attorney Katie Prenoveau. Cynthia Haffey introduced her intern, Emma Parr.

Minutes Review & Approval

Chair Kerry Falwell asked for approval of the May 20, 2025, Council minutes.

Motion: Brad Lunz made a motion to approve the minutes. Tiffany Van Wieren seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Partner Updates

Daryl Ward of Executive Director of the Polk Arts Alliance and the Interim Executive Director of AGB Museum of Art, gave an update on the process of hiring a replacement Executive Director.

There are 6 new inductees in the Polk Arts Hall of Fame, including Alan Reynolds of Lakeland Community Theatre, Inc. They will also be soon announcing the finalists in the Arts and Organization Awards.

FY26 Organizational Grants Timeline

Kerry Falwell asked for volunteers for a Grants Subcommittee. Sherry Ross, Daryl Ward, Tyson Voigt, Alice Santana, and Brad Lunz volunteered for the subcommittee. Applicants can submit their applications starting Mid-September. All applications are due by October 17, 2025¹. Decisions will be made in January 2026.

¹ This date was mis-spoken. The due date for grant applications is September 26, 2025.

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OLD BUSINESS

LKLD Arts Internship

Kerry Falwell stated there is a job description in the packet. Kerry met with Tranice McGriff, HR Specialist.

- The intern must report to a City Employee; the best placement for the intern needs to be determined.
- The intern will be compensated by the City.
- The length of time for the intern is unspecified currently. Possibly through the school year or fall and summer.
- The intern will be performing administrative tasks, and this should be at the top of the job description, so it is not mistaken for a communications internship; posting content and keeping social media updated, not creating content.
- There was discussion on if this should open for college students only.
- Looking to interview this fall.

Resolution Updates

Assistant City Attorney Katie Prenoveau stated that she and Heather Bradman have been in discussions regarding updating the Resolution 5607 for the Mayors Council on the Arts (MCA). There are updates needed. The rough timeline of drafting the resolution is as follows:

- Katie Prenoveau will complete a draft of the resolution
- Heather Bradman will email a working draft of the resolution to members prior to the next MCA meeting in November. Members are reminded to send suggestions individually to Heather to comply with the Sunshine Laws.
- Once complete, it will have to go to the City Commission for approval (2 City Commission Meetings; first to introduce the resolution, and a second meeting to vote on the resolution).²
- The Bylaws Committee will have to meet again after the resolution is approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Tiffany Van Wieren announced Arts and Health Week is in November. This celebration marks the inaugural Arts and Health Week, led by the Watson Clinic Foundation's Arts in Medicine Program. Over 21 organizations from across the City join to spotlight the benefits of the arts for individual and community health.

Daryl Ward announced that Lesley Chambers is now the Development Director at AGB.

The meeting adjourned at 2:33 PM.

² This was incorrectly stated; ordinances typically require two readings, whereas resolutions generally require only one.

DRAFT**Mayor's Council on the Arts
Intern Discussion
September 5, 2025**

Chair Kerry Falwell, Deputy Director of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Pam Page, RP Funding Center Director Cindy Collins, Assistant City Manager Ashley Stathatos, Deputy City Clerk Heather Bradman and Assistant to the City Clerk Trish Edwards were present.

The meeting began at 11:04 am. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the need and options for an intern for the Mayor's Council on the Arts.

Ashley Stathatos stated that there are intern positions within the City that have not been filled. The Council will need to get permission from the City Manager to obtain an intern. A City intern is required to report to a City staff member, in this situation, possibly with Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts or RP Funding Center. Kerry Falwell has been in contact with Tranice McGriff from Human Resources to discuss the process.

In reviewing the job description for an intern, the attendees discussed:

- Does the Council have enough work to keep an intern busy for a full 20 hours a week? The consensus of those in attendance was probably not.
- Many things in the job description should be done through the City Clerk's Office:
 - Attend and provide support at all MCA meetings
 - Prepare meeting agendas, minutes and presentations
- Grants
 - Grants need to be distributed in accordance with the Sunshine Law; the Grant Committee needs to meet with noticed meetings and recorded minutes, so nothing is misconstrued.
 - The Council has created grant guidelines. Katie Prenoveau is amending the current MCA resolution. There should be a section regarding this in the resolution.

Kerry Falwell stated she has been managing all the items on the intern job description on her own, including maintaining the LkldArts website, Facebook and Instagram accounts. She would like an intern to administer the grant program and marketing. The Council has approximately \$85,000 in a fund but Kerry Falwell does not want to use that for marketing. The funds need to be distributed in the same way as a grant.

Those in attendance decided to explore other options to assist with this work, not through an intern, but through City staff. The Council discussed:

- Others on the Mayor's Council on the Arts that may be interested and able to help.
- Ashley Stathatos said there are staff personnel in the City Manager's office that could take on some of the burden.

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- Consider using a marketing person from the RP Funding Center to work on the LkldArts website.
- Marketing, digital communication and content could possibly be done by the Communications Department.
- The LkldArts website could become a page on the City of Lakeland website. This could increase traffic and visibility to LkldArts but could diminish the LkldArts brand.
- Should the Arts be included in Economic Development since it does help to further the economy within the City?

Polk Arts and Cultural Alliance (PACA) is a group that advocates for and promotes Polk County Artists. There are fees for joining, however, Kerry Falwell said she would speak to Daryl Ward, the Executive Director for PACA, and member of the MCA.

Regarding the grant process, Heather Bradman has sent a grant notice to the members of the MCA. As grant applications are received, they will be sent to the City Clerk's office. The City Clerk's office will schedule and notice a meeting for the Grant Committee to review and vote on the distribution of grants. One of the Clerks will attend the meeting to take minutes, so it is in compliance with the Sunshine Law.

There was discussion about the process of other cities. Some cities have a full-time employee or Arts Department. Ashley Stathatos said she would speak with Melissa Stoller, the City's Grant Writer, about submitting a grant for a full-time City employee.

Ashley Stathatos stated she will speak with Kevin Cook, Communications Director, and with Brian Rewis, Community and Economic Development Director, to see if their departments are able to assist with marketing and other tasks.

Kerry Falwell is going to share access information to the website, and other applications with Heather Bradman.

The meeting concluded at 12:22pm.

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Mayor's Council on the Arts Grants Subcommittee Meeting December 9, 2025

Mayor's Council on the Arts' Grant Subcommittee members Brad Lunz, Tyson Voigt, and Georgia Lynn Dean, along with Deputy City Clerk Heather Bradman and Assistant to the City Clerk Trish Edwards, met in the Lake Crago Recreation Complex classroom to review the 2025-2026 Lakeland Mayor's Council on the Arts grant applications.

The meeting was called to order at 9:47 a.m.

Staff reviewed the revised grants process. Committee members were thanked for their participation and feedback. Trish Edwards reviewed the aggregated individual scorecards for the grant applicants.

The committee discussed:

- If there is a consensus among members, could the committee adjust average scores beyond the scorecards. It was noted that this is at the discretion of the committee.
- Challenges comparing organizations of differing capacity, particularly full-time staffed organizations versus all-volunteer or newer entities.
- Concerns were raised about the disproportionate impact of percentage cuts on smaller organizations.
- Future discussions on the application and rubric, specifically clarity on core programming and character limits (500 characters was noted as restrictive).
- Historically organizations were funded based on their role within the arts ecosystem.
- It was helpful to come together and discuss scores rather than working in a silo.
- Not all applicants can receive perfect scores and outcomes ultimately came down to rubric interpretation.
- Suggested providing feedback to applicants—either written or through a future meeting—to explain scoring outcomes. This suggestion was supported by the committee.

Trish Edwards reviewed the grant allocation spreadsheet organization by organization.

Funding Overview:

- Available funding: \$375,000
- Total requested: \$452,119.18

The committee discussed methods for reducing allocations equitably, including:

- Across-the-board percentage reductions
- Tiered funding based on organizational budget size
- Avoiding disproportionate penalties to higher-scoring organizations

Several funding scenarios were discussed, including:

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- Establishing funding “tiers” or multiple funding pots.
- Skimming modest amounts from larger organizations to fully fund smaller ones
- Exploring caps on operating budgets (noted as potentially alienating).
- Funding 81% of requested amounts, totaling approximately \$366,218.53, and reserving the remaining funds for further discussion.
- While the approach may not be perfectly “fair,” it would be equitable and aligned with the Council’s values.

Action: Member Brad Lunz moved to fund grant awards at 81% of requested amounts and bring the remaining balance forward to the full Council in January for further discussion. Member Tyson Voigt seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Based on the action taken by the Grants Subcommittee, the awards are as follows:

- The Ashley Gibson Barnett Museum of Art (The AGB): **\$58,725.00**
- Bonnet Springs Park: **\$60,075.00**
- Florida Children's Museum: **\$60,075.00**
- Florida Dance Arts, Inc.: **\$10,850.40**
- Harrison School for the Arts Parents' Association: **\$3,600.00**
- The Lakeland Art Guild, DBA The Lakeland Arts Association: **\$8,968.48**
- Lakeland Community Theatre: **\$52,600.07**
- Lakeland Symphony Orchestra: **\$38,250.00**
- Platform Art, Inc.: **\$9,118.58**
- Polk Theatre, Inc.: **\$60,750.00**
- Watson Clinic Foundation’s Arts in Medicine: **\$3,204.00**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:30 a.m.