

BREMERTON ARTS COMMISSION

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of February 11, 2026

Approved

Hybrid Meeting: In person at Sheridan Park Community Center w/ virtual option.

Commissioner's Present: Lynn Horton, Cynthia Davis-Engelgau, Asia Renee (In Person)
Michael Laughlin, Susan Blackburn, Emerald Lessley (Remote)

Staff Present: AJ Williams (AC Liaison)

Public Present: None

Absent: Betsy Hagedstedt

- I. **Meeting Called to Order** at 5:30 PM by Chair, Lynn Horton.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made to approve the minutes with changes for the January 14, 2026, meeting. (Cynthia Davis-Engelgau / Asia Renee). (1CE/2AR). Emerald Lessley abstained
- III. **Public Comment:** No Public Present
- IV. **Business:**
Art Submissions: No Art Submissions

Social Media Intern: The Commission continued its discussion regarding a social media strategy and potential staffing structure. Legal limitations were noted, including the inability to pay an intern directly through city funds and the requirement that the city maintain full control over website and content management if city resources are used. Alternative funding options were discussed, including mini-grants and potential collaboration with the West Sound Arts Council. Concerns were raised regarding whether mini-grants are appropriate for ongoing work, the distinction between flat stipends and hourly compensation. The importance of administrative access and account ownership for monitoring and oversight was emphasized.

The Social Media Intern discussion remains ongoing and was tabled for further review at the next meeting. The Commission will continue investigating alternative funding models and potential partnerships outside of traditional mini-grants or direct city employment. Further clarification of stipend structure, deliverables, and accountability measures will be explored before a final decision is made.

Master Plan Wishlist: The Arts Commission conducted a review of the Master Plan, including the mission and vision statements, which were generally accepted with minor refinements. The term "Mecca" was replaced with "Hub" in the vision statement to better reflect the Commission's intent. Initial goal development focused on fostering strong community pride, creating welcoming and engaging public spaces with a placemaking emphasis, and introducing elements of fun and playfulness into everyday environments, such as public pianos, while acknowledging practical challenges. The discussion also clarified the distinction between Arts Commission priorities, which center on community and cultural enrichment, and Creative District objectives, which emphasize the creative economy, professional development, and support for business owners.

The Commission will continue refining its goals to ensure alignment with the mission and vision while maintaining a clear distinction from the Creative District's economic focus. This work remains ongoing as part of the broader master plan development process.

Unveiling Party: The Commission reviewed plans for the “Open Air” Art Unveiling Party scheduled for February 23 at 3 PM on Washington Avenue. The event will include a pop up tent, PA system, sparkling cider toast, and remarks from Lynn and the Mayor. Artwork installation is scheduled for February 19 at 8:30 AM. BKAT will provide media coverage during the unveiling, including interviews with commissioners and participating artists. Commissioners were also invited to participate in a future “Inside Bremerton” segment with BKAT on March 12 or March 26. Discussion also included hosting responsibilities for the Creative District television program, “Bremerton Creates.”

Action items were assigned in preparation for the unveiling. Lynn will prepare brief remarks. AJ will coordinate with BKAT regarding interview participation and confirm any interested commissioners or artists prior to February 23. AJ will also secure sparkling cider and plastic champagne glasses for the toast, provide the PA system for music and promote the event on social media in advance of the unveiling.

V: Sub Committees Reports

Master Plan: Already reported on.

Literary Arts: No update at this time.

Gallery of Arts/Maintenance: No new updates.

Support and Grants: No submission currently.

Creative District Update: The Commission continued refining the Master Plan by aligning each Vision bullet with at least one specific goal. The youth engagement goal was updated to “Partner with youth organizations to provide opportunities for youth outreach.” The group confirmed that “Inject fun and playfulness in ordinary settings” supports the vision of making Bremerton a hub for creatives, alongside the goal of hosting events in local venues and open spaces. For creating visitor and community magnets, the Commission agreed on “Strategically organize and arrange for all types of public arts in open spaces,” incorporating the concept of clustered “rooms” of art. The creative economy goal, “Promote and support the creative economy,” will remain as written for now, with strategy development deferred to a future meeting. To reflect cultural diversity, the goal was finalized as “Create opportunities to celebrate the multicultural and diverse character of Bremerton.” The Commission also expanded the arts ubiquity goal to include the development of a community arts center, reinforcing the vision of art and culture being found around every corner. A seventh goal was added: “Cultivate interest and acceptance of the Arts.”

Media coverage was also discussed. BKAT will attend upcoming events to take photos and potentially interview commissioners and artists, providing content for Arts Commission, Creative District, and city platforms. Volunteers are still needed for the “Inside Bremerton” episode scheduled for March 12 or 26. While a commissioner interview was supported by vote and Cynthia was recognized as the concept creator for this year’s art, a final volunteer has not yet been confirmed. For the Creative District television program, “Bremerton Creates,” BKAT’s capacity limits hosting to one individual per episode. Lynn and Cyn agreed to rotate hosting duties and provide feedback to one another following each episode.

VI. Staff Reports/Updates:

Art Wrap Update: No update currently

Art Panels: February 19th: Public Works to hang "Open Air" art panels (starting 8:30 AM).

February 23rd: "Open Air" Unveiling Party on Washington Avenue at 3:00 PM.

March 12th or 26th (Thursdays): Tentative dates for "Inside Bremerton" taping.

VII. Chair Report: No report.

VIII. Commissioner Reports, Comments and Questions: No commissioners Reports.

IX. Announcements: None

X. Adjournment: 7:00 PM by Chair Lynn Horton.