



Independence Arts Council Minutes

May 6, 2025 6:00 PM

**111 E Maple Ave
Independence, MO 64050
Conference Room D**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Commission members Stacie Short, Byron Constance, Tom Hall, Katie Gall and Nancy Eppert were present.

Commission member Cindy McClain was absent.

Charlie Dissell, representing the City, and Brent Schondelmeyer, representing the Friends of Englewood, were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of June 6, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Commission Member Eppert moved to approve the minutes, and the motion was seconded by Commission Member Hall. On a voice vote, the March 6, 2025, minutes were approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Legacy Project: TC3, as part of the 2026 Parade of Hearts Program, update.

Dissell provided an update on the Legacy Project: TC3, part of the 2026 Parade of Hearts Program. He noted that Jenn Nusbeck presented the project to the City Council on April 14, with funding for the City's participation approved on April 21. Commission Member Cindy

McClain will represent the City on the project's task force, given her roles on the Arts Commission, the Independence CVB board, and as a local business owner.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Friends of the Englewood Theatre Presentation.

Schondelmeyer presented to the Commission about the ongoing effort to acquire and restore the Englewood Theater and the adjacent Ben Franklin property, both of which have been vacant for some time. The Friends of Englewood, a non-profit in the process of becoming a 501(c)(3), is leading the \$850,000 purchase effort, with support from the Englewood Arts group. The theater and parking lot are priced at \$600,000, and the Ben Franklin building at \$250,000.

Schondelmeyer is working with banks, legal and design professionals, and contractors, and is pursuing historic registry status to qualify for tax credits. A City-funded feasibility study is underway, and the Ben Franklin building may provide rental income to support the project. Schondelmeyer called it one of the City's most significant preservation efforts and noted a six-month contract extension has been authorized.

Commission members expressed strong support. Commission Member Short emphasized the theater's visibility and potential to revitalize surrounding properties, while Commission Member Eppert shared personal ties to Ben Franklin and asked how she could get involved. The 2009 AMS feasibility study and a recent editorial in The Examiner were also mentioned.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

1. Tuesday, July 1, 2025 at 6:00 PM

The Commission scheduled its next meeting for July 1, 2025, and agreed to move future meeting start times to 5:30 p.m.

The Commission also discussed its responsibilities, as outlined in the resolution reestablishing it. Dissell reviewed the four main duties: promoting public engagement with the arts; forming partnerships with regional organizations; advising the City Council on arts and cultural policy; and administering the City's 1% for the Arts Program. He noted that the current 1% policy applies only to municipal building projects and is encouraged, but not required, in blight elimination projects unless waived by the Council. Commission Member Short suggested there may be additional relevant ordinances. Dissell committed to compiling and sharing all related documents for the Commission's review.

ADJOURNMENT

Commission Member Eppert moved for adjournment, and Commission Member Gall seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.