



## Culture, Arts and Heritage Commission Meeting Agenda

July 9, 2026  
4:30 PM

### City Hall

Aspen Room, 1st Floor  
415 W. 6th St  
Vancouver, WA 98660

Virtual Meeting Credentials:

### Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Join:**

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/2890188431108?p=hdV5S7MQtQ24J20Nln>

Meeting ID:289 018 843 110 8  
Passcode:dY2n4nc6

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call - 4:30pm**
  - a. Welcome Jeanne Bennett; Seat effective July 13, 2026 - December 31, 2029
- 2. Approval of Minutes - 4:35pm**
  - a. Approval of June CAHC Meeting Minutes
- 3. Workshop - 4:40pm**
  - a. Commission Legal Counsel Update
  - b. Year One Grant Cycle Provision Recommendations to City Council
  - c. Fund Distribution Timeline
  - d. Grant Review Committee Process

## Culture, Arts and Heritage Commission

### MEMBERS

Ruby Lewis, *President*  
Brad Richardson, *Vice President*

Rebekah Percival  
Ricky Gaspar  
Rosalinda Mendoza  
Michelle Tan  
Shon-Lueiss Harris  
Russell Ford, CACC  
Vacant

### Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

415 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Vancouver, WA 98660  
TTY: 711  
[www.cityofvancouver.us](http://www.cityofvancouver.us)

e. Fiscal Sponsorships

f. Program Updates

Rooted School Vancouver (Betancourt)

Info session stats/review and online tools and learning opportunities (Ketcham)

Open House Invite (Ketcham)

**4. Community Forum 5:55pm**

To provide public testimony, please see instructions below.

**5. Commission and Staff Reports - 6:00pm**

a. Cultural Services Manager

b. Commission President

c. Clark County Art Commission

**6. Open Discussion & New Business - 6:15pm**

**7. Next Meeting - 6:25pm**

**8. Between Now & Then - 6:28pm**

**Adjournment - 6:30pm**

**Community Forum Instructions**

Time is reserved at each Commission meeting for Community Communications. During this time, the public may speak on any issue. Each speaker will have three minutes to address the Commission. Community members who wish to submit detailed testimony that may exceed three minutes of speaking time are encouraged to email their comments so they can be included with the meeting materials.

Community Communications participants are encouraged to pre-register by email at [parksrecculture@cityofvancouver.us](mailto:parksrecculture@cityofvancouver.us) or by phone at 360-487-8311, but may comment during this period without pre-registration; options for Community Communications are:

1. In Writing: Public comments can be submitted in writing via email to [parksrecculture@cityofvancouver.us](mailto:parksrecculture@cityofvancouver.us) by 5:00 pm the day before the meeting.
2. Remotely: attend the Microsoft Teams meeting online; be prepared to speak online during the Commission meeting at the time of Community Communications.
3. In Person: Fill out a Public Comment form in person prior to the start of the Community Communications portion of the meeting.

City Hall is served by C-TRAN. Route information and schedules are available online at [www.c-tran.com](http://www.c-tran.com). You also may reach C-TRAN at (360) 695-0123 for more information on times, fares, and routes.

Anyone needing language interpretation services or accommodations with a disability at a Vancouver City Council meeting may contact the City Manager's staff at (360) 487-8600 (RELAY: 711). Assistive listening devices and live Closed Captioning are available for the deaf, hard of hearing and general public use. Please notify a staff person if you wish to use one of the devices. Every attempt at reasonable accommodation will be made. To request this

agenda in another format, please also contact the phone numbers listed above.

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 11, 2026

4:30pm

City Hall, Aspen Room

415 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street

Vancouver, WA 98660

### Commissioners Present:

Lewis, Harris, Gaspar, Mendoza, Ford, Percival, Richardson, Tan

### Commissioners Absent:

None

### Item 1: Call to Order

President Lewis called the June 11, 2026, meeting of the Culture, Arts & Heritage Commission to order at 4:30p.m. The Commission met in the main hall at the City Hall Aspen Room and via Microsoft Teams.

### Item 2: Approval of Minutes

**Motion** by Richardson, seconded by Harris, and approved unanimously to adopt the minutes from May 14, 2026.

### Staff Updates

Perlick introduced the staff from the Inspire Vancouver team: Diana Betancourt (Program Supervisor), Abby Ketcham (Communications Specialist), and Kirsten Hull (Grants Coordinator). Betancourt will reach out to commissioners individually to connect about the program.

### Item 3: Workshop

#### a. Inspire Vancouver: Grant Process Workgroup Update & Approval

The Grant Process Work Group met on May 15 to determine a process for application review and scoring. To determine a process, the work group looked at:

## Members

**Ruby Lewis**  
President

**Brad Richardson**  
Vice President

Michelle Tan  
Rebekah Percival  
Ricky Gaspar  
Rosalinda Mendoza  
Russell Ford, CCAC  
Shon-Lueiss Harris

**Parks, Recreation and  
Cultural Services  
Department**

P.O. Box 1995  
Vancouver, WA 98668  
360-487-8311  
TTY: 711  
cityofvancouver.us

- The scoring and award process for other Cultural Access Programs in the state.
- The scoring and award process for other City of Vancouver Grants and equity evaluation of the previous Culture, Arts & Heritage grant process.
- Values and concerns expressed by the Culture, Arts & Heritage Commission so far.

The work group has drafted a process that prioritizes equity and addresses the commission's desire to limit opportunities for perceived conflict of interest between commission members and potential grantees.

To meet these priorities, the scoring process includes several new features:

- bias training for all review committee members
- shared facilitation duties among committee members
- a score calibration meeting midway through the scoring process
- anonymous grant awards by the Culture, Arts & Heritage Commission.

An anonymous award process creates an ethical separation between the funder and the grantees so that the funder can prioritize its vision and intention for the program throughout the award process. Anonymous awards also reduce opportunities for perceived conflict of interest between a commissioner's role as a funder and other roles they may serve in the community as advocates and advisors. (A separate policy will address financial conflicts of interest). The Culture, Arts & Heritage Commission maintains direct influence over grant awards by:

- Deciding the grant pool amounts allocated to each grant category for each cycle
- Appointing the review committee members
- Establishing the score card used by the review committee
- Awarding Inspire Vancouver grants based on application score and programming need
- Advising staff on areas for continuous improvement

Next steps - July: set funding amounts for three grant categories and approve pilot cycle schedule.

The commission reviewed the revised score card and grant guideline drafts. Guideline components include three primary sections:

- About the funding
  - Program goals
  - Use of funds
  - Funding restrictions
  - Definitions
- Process
  - Application
  - Review
  - Contracting
  - Reporting
- Special Circumstances
  - Eligibility clarifications
  - Fiscal sponsor process
  - Contract amendments

An open discussion was held regarding transparency and equity considerations in the proposed anonymous approach, including tracking a fair distribution of the grants for accountability purposes. It was agreed that there should be a factor to indicate if an applicant has already applied for or has been awarded multiple grants.

It was agreed that there would be an annual revision process after the first batch of grants.

#### **b. Public School Cultural Access Program Update**

Perlick updated the commission on the progress of the Inspire Vancouver School Grant program.

PSCAP Overview:

- Policy: a total of 10% of revenue will be distributed evenly to the Vancouver and Evergreen school districts.
- Funds reimburse costs of field trip transportation, admission, and substitute teachers
- Policy recommendation:
  - Elementary level has menu of curriculum-specific trips per grade level
  - Secondary level has an application process for trips, competitions, and festivals
  - Local field trip options are prioritized, but not mandatory

Feedback from Commission:

- Desire for strong focus on city limits
- Concern that funding will disproportionately benefit large and established regional organizations over local ones
- Desire for more review of local organizations who could receive field trips

Next Steps:

- Short term: working with VPS/EPS staff to update field trip list and implement greater priority on local trips
- Long term: seek to build organization capacity to meet field trip needs locally

An open discussion was held regarding concerns for mandatory spending on at least a percentage of the funds being spent within school city limits. We have a baseline 55% for grant expenditure for the overall grant program, and it is intended for schools to comply, and we will be reviewing and reporting to ensure that the mission and values of the program will be upheld.

Commissioners expressed interest in seeing which opportunities come up in the first year.

#### **c. Ambassador Training**

Perlick reminded commissioners that we have additional open house events set up for education for the Inspire Vancouver program. Commissioners were encouraged to participate in ambassador training to share background information with the community. Commissioners can contact Burton to sign up for a training session. Lewis shared that she has hosted information sessions, with support from Inspire Vancouver staff to answer questions.

Betancourt shared that the team is in the process of partnering with key organizations to host more info sessions.

#### **d. Arts Hub Update**

Staff shared an update with Council on Monday night to get them updated on initial highlights, where project is, and next steps. The project has been emphasizing community engagement and key stakeholder feedback to assess how it is going now, and what an investment in greater capacity might look like for the building. We had a session last week at First Friday and at the Farmers Market. High level themes:

1. Affordability
2. Accessible and equitable; representative of our community
3. Flexibility
4. Ensuring no competition, but complimentary
5. Sustainability

Having an open building during initial activation has led to helpful feedback and has demonstrated goal alignment in our direction. We will continue with community outreach, and in August we will have further information from a recent Council presentation with an updated conceptual design and operating model. It was shared that once the concept and operating model are developed, we could begin the phase of deciding the naming process – there is not a timeline on this yet, but this will be acknowledged in the recommendations in August.

Gaspar expressed concern regarding organizations and artists growing organically with the right amount of support without becoming overlooked or gentrified.

#### **e. Vancouver Art & Music Festival Update**

Erik Miletich shared the following details for 2026 VAMF:

- August 7-9, 2026, at Esther Short Park and the surrounding area
- 2026 Preview
  - We are closing 6<sup>th</sup> street for the full weekend to increase safety for the event.
  - We will have over 50 artists and marketplace booths (out of 125 applications)
  - Juried art show will be featured in the Hilton
  - 4 stages (movement, community, music, and main stages)
    - Stage lineups are now posted online! Visit the website for the schedule
  - Entertainment is lined up throughout the event with different partnerships
  - Friday will be concluded with a movie in the park (Fantasia)
  - 13 local food vendors
  - We had over 200 dance and music applications this year; we are accommodating 16 on each stage to maximize capacity.
- Volunteer opportunities – shifts are up and ready!
  - Please consider volunteering – staff will share volunteer opportunity links with commissioners.

It was suggested that the festival explores different themes in future years. An open discussion was held regarding criteria for scoring and selection for performing groups. For the after-hours programming, it was suggested that we open it up to the community to host events in tandem to provide more flexible opportunities, both for the event organizers and for business owners for nightlife festival activities. An open discussion was held regarding training for volunteers and high-level talking points for understanding rights.

#### **f. America250 Update**

Richardson shared some background on the America250 event, and Washington250 efforts. State and local level had no robust funds or resources; however, the planning committee has aligned to connect events with the commemoration. We have chosen a local coordination committee with a combination of organizations

having agency around how they approach the event programming. This calendar has been created through Visit Vancouver to help coordinate our regional partnerships. The coordination committee is wrapped up and ready to launch. More information can be found on the Museum's website about joining the committee or submit events.

#### **Item 4: Community Forum**

None presented.

#### **Item 5: Commission and Staff Reports**

##### **a. Cultural Services Manager**

Perlick gave the following updates:

- We have many volunteer opportunities this summer, including our movies, festivals, and special events.

##### **b. Commission President**

President Lewis had no updates at this time. Commissioners were encouraged to check their city emails and commit to a small amount of time to participate in the Vancouver Arts & Music Festival.

##### **c. Clark County Arts Commission**

Ford gave the following updates on CCAC:

- There are several art festivals happening across the county.
- Artstra had Betancourt give a presentation on Inspire Vancouver, the board members had a robust conversation about coordinating legal representation.
- At VAMF, Ford is committed to hosting 4 different mask making workshops for free; he requested commissioners to join if they are interested and send him an email with group information.

#### **Item 6: Open Discussion and New Business**

Gaspar asked if we have a list of qualified 501c (3) organizations to serve as fiscal sponsors. Perlick confirmed that there is a lot of review as interest is expressed. Gaspar asked about the timeline, and Perlick has shared that while we do not have an exact distribution date, we are on track to distribute later this summer while we focus on our first set of grant categories. This first cycle will focus on relationship building and refining processes.

#### **Item 7: Next Meeting – July 9, 2026**

Perlick gave a brief summary of agenda items planned for the July meeting, including a recruitment update.

#### **Item 8: Between Now & Then**

Commissioners and Staff shared any known events:

- Juneteenth – Celebration at Esther Short Park on 6/20 from 10am – 3pm
- 2026 Northwest Book Fair and Media Fest – KXRW at Clark College on 6/27 from 10am – 4pm featuring over 100 authors
- Staff will be sending commissioners calendar invitations for future ambassador training opportunities.

This meeting adjourned at 6:32pm.



CITY OF  
**Vancouver**  
WASHINGTON

# Inspire Vancouver Program Workshops

**Diana Betancourt**

Inspire Vancouver Program Supervisor  
July 9, 2026



# Legal Update

**Dave Perlick**, Director  
Parks, Recreation and Cultural  
Services



# Year One Grant Cycle Provisions

**Diana Betancourt**, Program  
Supervisor, Inspire Vancouver



# Temporary Policy Exceptions

Grant Type	Current Policy	Year One Exception
Innovation	5% allocation; \$5,000–\$25,000; 1-year	Allow requests below \$5,000; 8-month projects
Impact	10% allocation; \$10,000–\$75,000; 1-year	Allow requests below \$10,000 8-month projects
Comprehensive	10% allocation; \$100,000–\$300,000; multiyear	Allow requests below \$100,000; max \$150,000; 8-month projects

- Applicants allowed to request less than the minimum award amounts
- 8-month project window
- Flexible allotment of 10% for funding over the allotted grant category limits



# Year One Grant Cycle Timeline

**Kirsten Hull**, Grants  
Coordinator, Inspire Vancouver



# 2026 Inspire Vancouver Grants

August 2026	September 2026	October 2026	November 2026
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications open</li> <li>• Workshops held</li> <li>• <b>Commission appoints Committee</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application refinement</li> <li>• Applications close</li> <li>• <b>Commission receives update</b></li> <li>• Committee meets three times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Commission awards grants</b></li> <li>• Award/denial letters sent</li> <li>• Agreements drafted</li> <li>• Paperwork processed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checks go out</li> <li>• <b>Commission gives feedback on process</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Culture, Arts &amp; Heritage Commission actions in bold</b></p>			

Applications to open first week of August, awards announced mid-October



# Grant Review Committee Process

**Diana Betancourt**, Program  
Supervisor, Inspire Vancouver



# Grant Review Committee

## Action: Approve subcommittee to recommend panelists

### Recruitment Process:

- Mix of open call and direct recruitment
- Short application form
- CAHC subcommittee will review and select panelists for CAHC to appoint

### Who are we looking for?

- Mix of nonprofit peers and community members who will benefit from programming
- Live within Vancouver city limits or have a member of their household enrolled in Vancouver or Evergreen Public Schools



# Grant Review Committee

## Know someone who might be interested?

- Email [inspirevancouver@cityofvancouver.us](mailto:inspirevancouver@cityofvancouver.us)

## Subcommittee:

- Select subcommittee members to review GRC applications
- Timeline
  - GRC applications close August 3rd
  - Subcommittee recommends panelists at CAHC meeting on August 13th
  - GRC begins meeting in September



# Fiscal Sponsorships

**Kirsten Hull**, Grants  
Coordinator, Inspire Vancouver



# Fiscal sponsor overview

## What does a fiscal sponsor do?

The fiscal sponsor organization:

- Holds primary responsibility for grant administration
- Receives the grant funds as their own income then issues the funds to the sponsored group/individual
- Oversees and manages records including the grant agreement and reporting requirements
- May retain a fee of up to 10% for their fiscal and administrative services



# Fiscal sponsor eligibility

## Which organizations can be a fiscal sponsor?

### **From IRS:**

- Organizations must have a mission aligned with the projects they sponsor

### **From RCW Chapter 36.160 (Cultural Access Program)**

- Must be a 501(c)(3) incorporated in WA and recognized by IRS

### **From Vancouver Cultural Access Program Policy**

- Must have a mission aligned with advancing or preserving arts, culture, heritage, or science.
- Must provide a letter of commitment for the grantee's application



# Eligibility interpretation

## Guidance needed

Policy states "Fiscal Sponsor must have **a mission aligned** with advancing or preserving arts, culture, heritage or science.

Should this be interpreted

- **Narrowly** - fiscal sponsors must have a culture, arts, heritage or science as their primary purpose
- Or
- **More broadly** - fiscal sponsors must do culture, arts, heritage or science activities, but they can have a different primary purpose

\*Organizations that do NOT do cultural activities would remain ineligible



# Potential impacts of interpretation

## Who would benefit? Who would be left out?

- Asking groups who already have a mission-aligned fiscal sponsor to find a new sponsor could limit program accessibility
- New, large source of funding could expose gaps in administration capacity at eligible fiscal sponsor organizations
- Orgs that already offer fiscal sponsorships could have an advantage
- Orgs that already offer fiscal sponsorships could be stretched too thin
- Potential for orgs to use fiscal sponsorship fees as a revenue source



# Program Updates

**Diana Betancourt**, Program Supervisor, Inspire Vancouver

**Abby Ketcham**, Communications Specialist, Inspire Vancouver





## You're invited!

Join us for an informal open house to meet the team, learn important updates about the upcoming grant cycle, and connect with others interested in expanding arts, culture, heritage and science opportunities in Vancouver.

### What to expect:

- Meet the Inspire Vancouver team
- Mingle and connect with other nonprofits, artists, and community members
- Participate in interactive activities
- Attend a brief presentation at 6 p.m. with information about the upcoming grant cycle
- Enjoy light refreshments

Whether you're planning to apply for funding or simply interested in learning more about Inspire Vancouver, you're welcome to attend. Come ready to connect, ask questions and see what's possible!

### Save the date

**Wednesday, July 22**

**5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

Vancouver arts hub

1007 E. Mill Plain Blvd.

*Photos courtesy of The Vancouver Arts and Music Festival/ Vietnamese Community of Clark County, The Vancouver Arts and Music Festival/ Mario De Leon, Nez Perce, Columbia Play Project*

Visit our website to learn more and join the Inspire Vancouver mailing list:

[inspirevancouver.org](http://inspirevancouver.org) | [inspirevancouver@cityofvancouver.us](mailto:inspirevancouver@cityofvancouver.us)