

Arts and Culture Commission Minutes

January 14, 2026

Pat Clower called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken with Pat Clower, Ayla Samson. Monica Sweeney and Megan Verbic were present. Greg Peerbolte arrived at 4:17 p.m.

Also present were staff liaisons Tom Durkin and Melissa Mazintas.

Approval of Minutes:

Samson made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2025 minutes. Clower seconded. The meeting minutes were approved.

Public Comment:

Three residents introduced themselves to the Art and Culture Commission. All three residents saw the write up about the Arts and Culture Commission in the Village of Channahon's winter newsletter and are interested in finding out about the commission's activities..

AACC Scholarship Fund:

Clower said that the Arts and Culture Commission minutes read that the scholarship would be available to any Channahon resident but she had been focusing on Minooka High and she had not been in communication with any other high school. The Arts and Culture Commission can not offer the scholarship until it gets approved by the Village Board.

Durkin said in talking with Minooka High they had a deadline to have the scholarship ready so they could release it with their other scholarships. He strongly encourages the Arts and Culture Commission to make the scholarship our own and not be affiliated with any high school. Rather than having the scholarship applications submitted to the high school we should have the applications sent to the Village of Channahon. It would be our scholarship and the Arts and Culture Commission would present the winner at a Village Board Meeting.

Clower said Minooka High sent us three examples that were used as a backdrop to write up the Arts and Culture Commission scholarship application.

Mazintas asked the Art and Culture Commission to look at the third page in the Scholarship Procedure write up. She said she created a mock up for the application based on previous

discussions at Arts and Culture Commission meetings. The formatting is based on the examples from Minooka High. Mazintas read the scholarship procedure, scholarship application and scoring sheet. She said that the procedure was created to be handed out to the Village Board when the Arts and Culture Commission seeks approval.

Durkin said to change the scholarship committee from 3 commissioners and 2 board members to two commissioners since three commissioners would be considered an open, public meeting.

Clower asked to update "Scholarship payment will be sent to the winner's college/university" to say "accredited institution" or "accredited higher learning institution" to not exclude trade schools or other art schools.

Durkin said what if a student is a great musician but they are going to school for accounting.

Verbic said the Arts and Culture Commission needs to specify that they will be pursuing a further education in the arts.

Sweeney said she agrees and to change it to specify that the scholarship will go to someone continuing their education within a Fine Arts Field.

Mazintas said she would like help with the wording around the required submissions.

Verbic said to change "Artist- an original art work" to "Visual Artist- digital portfolios of original art work"

Mazintas said most of the application examples asked for the parents' names and occupations. She left all of that off because it did not seem relevant. She said they all asked for GPA and class rank which she did add but wanted the Commission's thoughts on removing that from the form.

Sweeney and Samson said to remove class rank and GPA.

Sweeney said to ask the students to include any community service when they list their activities and programs on the application.

Verbic said she would like to see an essay component where the student could also speak to any community service or on how the fine arts have impacted them.

Clower said she would also like to see a short essay requirement.

Mazintas said a lot of the examples asked for a minimum of 300 word essays so she will add that requirement to our application.

Sweeny said to remove the GPA scoring scale on the scoring sheet and add a scoring scale for the 300 word essay.

Durkin said after Mazintas updates the procedure she will email it to all the Arts and Culture Commission members and then it will be brought to the board for approval at the first February meeting.

Mazintas said once this is completed she will send it out to all the schools and ask them to advertise it to their students. She will include Minooka High, Joliet Township High, JCA, Providence and Families of Faith.

Clower asked if the Arts and Culture Commission should add the information to the Village website.

Durkin said Thompson can add it to the website and post on social media.

Clower asked Durkin if the Arts and Culture Commission needed to make a motion at this meeting to approve allocating the \$500.00 for the scholarship .

Durkin said to hold off until after the Arts and Culture Commission got board approval for the scholarship.

Clower asked after approval from the board who would want to be on the scholarship committee to pick the winner. Samson and Verbic were selected to serve on the scholarship committee with a Village board member designated by the Village President.

Fitness Mural:

Clower said she has one more meeting with the National Fitness Campaign. She asked Peerbolte if he was able to submit the window designs to the Park District yet.

Peerbolte said he thought they would be reaching out to him.

Clower said the commission needs to submit the art for the windows on the back of the fitness station to the park district and then in February the National Fitness Campaign would be working with Peerbolte to complete the mural portion. The Arts and Culture Commission will need to write up what we want on our side of the fitness station.

Mazintas asked if there was a set date for that next meeting with the National Fitness Campaign.

Clower said they are running about the 20th of the month.

Mazintas said she will have a mockup at our February meeting.

Clower said it needs to include our mission statement, potentially our history, and a few words about Mapcraft. They did say they will not be putting logos on the fitness station. She will be attending the last meeting in February. Peerbolte will be stepping in and attending those meetings. Clower asked Peerbolte if he would have any issues with that since they are typically during the day.

Peerbolte said it should not be an issue.

America 250:

Mazintas said because of the 250th anniversary of America and the 100th anniversary of Route 66, the Village of Channahon is being approached with a lot of opportunities. One of the organizations that reached out is called the Discovery Trail and they are hosting an America 250 Relay which will travel a path consisting of trails, paths and roads that stretch from California to Delaware. They will begin in California in the spring and end in Delaware around Thanksgiving. When they reach our area they will be travelling down the I & M Canal. As you know the I & M Canal goes straight through town. Mazintas encouraged the commission members to visit the Discovery Trail website. Mazintas said Durkin had brought this to Mayor Missey's attention and she thinks we should participate. She asked the Arts and Culture Commission if and how they would like to participate.

Clower asked if we knew when they would be in town.

Mazintas said she emailed them today with that very question and is waiting for a response. She said the Arts and Culture Commission could potentially plan an event the day the relay will be through town, the week or can even plan an event that travels down the canal with them.

Clower asked if she could stop by later in the week and do some more investigation into the relay. She asked Durkin what the gentleman's name is who takes care of the I & M Canal.

Durkin said Dan Bell at the Department of Natural Resources out of Morris.

Clower said if this is going down the towpath the Arts and Culture Commission should try to tie it in with Morris.

Mazintas said Channahon has many access points to the towpath to utilize. The Park Districts Community Park, Will Counties Lake Chaminwood, Four Rivers and McKinley Woods, The State Park, and Channahon's new Gateway. Depending on how large we would like to make the event, the Arts and Culture Commission could potentially partner with them. We could even partner with the Heritage Corridor or the I & M Canal Historical Area out of LaSalle.

Clower said more information is needed to figure out where the relay is travelling and how it will look. She asked if the relay would actually be handing over a baton.

Mazintas said it seems like at this point Discovery Trail is just seeing who is interested. She said she emailed them and will find out more information for the next meeting.

Several Commission members expressed they think it could be a great opportunity.

Clower brought up several ideas for ways the Arts and Culture Commission could celebrate America 250. She suggested having residents adopt a banner on the streetlights down Navajo for their veterans. Clower mentioned that it was previously discussed adding plaques for each arm of the service to the memorial out front of the Village Hall.

Verbic said she likes those ideas but she wonders if they would fall under Arts & Culture.

Sweeny said she thinks the Arts and Culture Commission should try to keep our projects or initiatives within the confines of our mission statement and focus on Arts and Culture and let the Village pursue other projects.

Samson said the Arts and Culture Commission could have an art competition and have them do something with the 250. Either the art has to have 250 in the art or just America themed.

Durkin said he likes that idea.

Samson said the Arts and Culture Commission could ask them to design art inside of the numbers or include the numbers. Then make it so residents can win prizes or 1st, 2nd, 3rd. place.

Verbic said if the relay becomes a large event the winning art piece can be used in the design of a sticker or patch or button, or pin to hand out to the participants of the relay.

Samson said every community is going to be doing something for the 250th Anniversary so the Arts and Culture should also make it big.

Clower said the Arts and Culture Commission should open it up to the community and not just the residents of Channahon like we did for Sips, Sights and Sounds.

Verbic said she thinks the Arts and Culture Commission should advertise it to people who reside in Channahon. We would want our 250 design to be specific to Channahon.

Route 66 100th Anniversary

Durkin said that he had Mazintas add the 250th Anniversary and the 100th Anniversary to the agenda just in case there is something to talk about. We were going to leave them on the agenda probably for the remainder of the year but if there is nothing to talk about then the Arts and Culture Commission can just skip it.

Clower said the latest information received about the bench project and it is believed that we got the grant.

Mazintas said that OHI Design got the grant. They submitted for the entire Route 66 bench project which will include several communities. She said she spoke with Steve Streit briefly and he said right now he has not officially heard anything and they have not received any money yet.

Clower asked if Streit had a plan.

Mazintas said the plan is still the exact same as before. She asked Streit if the Arts and Culture Commission would still be able to pick a design. Streit said the Arts and Culture Commission could still use our own artist if we had one or we could use one from the Illinois State Museum. She said she is thinking, since we do not have any dates or a timeline, the Arts and Culture Commission should come up with a list of design concepts or things we definitely want featured on our bench to share with the artist. The Arts and Culture Commission have already discussed a lot of elements we want included over the past couple meetings.

Samson said the first thing that comes to mind would be showcasing the three rivers that connect to form the Illinois River.

Mazintas said the crossroads have been mentioned so the Arts and Culture Commission should ask to include Route 6.

Peerbolte said to list it as the Grand Army of the Republic Highway, it is called the GAR and it is a historic highway. Peerbolte said the GRA Highway was founded the same year as Route 66, Route 6, our other crossroad, is also 100 years old this year. So the Arts and Culture

Commission should want to include the intersection of the two highways. They were both adopted with the Highway adoption Act in 1926.

Clower said the Arts and Culture Commission should contact the Park district and see if we can place the bench near the fitness station mural so the big "Channahon" is in the background of the photo.

Sweeney said the Arts and Culture Commission should make sure that the bench is on a main roadway.

Clower said we don't have to have it set back right by the mural but instead right off the bike path with the mural in the background. That way people using the bike paths can stop.

Verbic said if it is something where people are traveling along Route 66 trying to see all of these benches we should make sure that it is accessible and there is parking.

Peerbolte said if they are traveling down Route 66 they are not going to be by the park, they will be traveling down I-55.

Clower said the Arts and Culture Commission would have to draw them in.

Mazintas said the bench would be advertised in everything the Streit's and OH! Design are planning and the Arts and Culture Commission and the Village would need to advertise it themselves.

Durkin said we could try to place them near the Manor Motel. If the Arts and Culture Commission were to contact the owner he would let us place it there.

Peerbolte asked if there was any public land near I-55 the Arts and Culture Commission could place it on. He said if you look at the old post cards of the Manor it was a known Route 66 establishment.

Clower said no one would go there, it is too difficult to access it. To take a picture there you would have to drive to the Pilot, turn down the frontage road and go clear around to the back of the motel.

Durkin said the Manor Motel still gets people from other countries to stay there or even to stop and take pictures.

New Business

Peerbolte said the Joliet Historical Museum is partnering with the Joliet Slammers to host an old fashioned baseball game at the Old Joliet Prison for the America 250 celebration. The Joliet Historical Museum is looking to get municipalities to participate. The museum is still working up the packages to present to municipalities for participation. The main celebration will be in Missouri but there are 5 satellite cities, and the Joliet Prison specifically was selected and it will be the only one in Illinois.

Clower said this sounds like something the Village would be participating in, not specifically the Arts and Culture Commission.

Peerbolte said the museum hopes to have booth spaces, sponsorship or community partner opportunities. It doesn't have to be specifically the Arts and Culture Commission. They plan on it being a very visual event and the Today Show is already booked. We are hoping it will be a good look for the whole region.

Clower said she has been looking into other opportunities and the Village of Oswego has in their foyer in their Village Hall set up where they can display art. The art would rotate, for one quarter you could display photography and then the next quarter would be maybe America 250 themed.

Durkin said why don't we find out who runs Oswego's program and find out more information. Is it the Village that runs it or their Arts Commission, how is it funded, how much did it cost. The Arts and Culture Commission would need a lot more information if we wanted to try to implement something like that here.

Peerbolte said the Arts and Culture Commission needs to pick one project and move forward with that instead of trying to do five little things that will cost the same or potentially more money. It takes a lot of time to do five little projects.

Verbic said she thinks we have a full agenda and while the Arts and Culture Commission can come up with more things for further down the road we should focus on completing the art competition for America 250, the scholarship and our next Sips, Sights and Sounds.

Clower said the Arts and Culture Commission needs to spend most of our time in the February meeting on the budget.

Next Meeting Date:

The next scheduled meeting date is Wednesday, February 11th, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

Samson made a motion to adjourn at 5:35 p.m. Peerbolte seconded. All ayes approved the adjournment.

Submitted by Melissa Mazintas