

Committee for Art and Culture

July 10, 2024 Meeting Notes

Present: Peggy Saporito, Sam Lock, Shelli Gates, Molly Vaughan, Jeremy Russell, Ginny Flowers, Paige Griffin, Kelly Wyatt

Absent: Kerry Oaksmith Sanders

Staff welcomed committee members and provided updates on current programming and initiatives.

Event Programming Updates

Staff reported strong participation across multiple summer programs, noting that July attendance levels were reached earlier than expected, with comparable numbers already achieved in June.

- Yoga participation has increased steadily, growing from approximately 40 participants early in the season to approximately 70 participants in recent sessions. Staff noted interest in amplification options, such as over-the-ear microphones with small speakers.
- Summer Concert Series attendance has ranged between 200 and 300 participants per event, not including playground users. Staff highlighted the recent Soul One concert as having particularly strong energy and community engagement.
- Fitness Fridays are averaging attendance in the 20-participant range. Tai Chi has lower attendance but serves a different audience, supporting the goal of offering programming that reaches diverse segments of the community.
- Family Fun Nights have been successful, with the recent storytelling event drawing approximately 150 attendees, including about 20 children who stayed specifically for the storytelling portion.
- Movie Nights continue to be well attended. The upcoming showing of *The Goonies* is scheduled for Friday, with a rain date set for July 19.

Letter from Bob Muller – Technology and Wayfinding Concepts

The committee discussed a letter from Bob Muller regarding potential technology-based enhancements, including mobile applications and QR code integration.

Staff noted that development of a dedicated mobile application would require engagement with an external app designer, as the Town does not have in-house capacity for app

development. The committee discussed the complexity of maintaining an application with regularly updated content, such as information related to Nags Head Woods.

Alternative approaches were discussed, including:

- Utilizing QR codes that link directly to relevant pages on the Town website.
- Installing signage within parks that includes QR codes.
- Developing an interconnected QR code system that links Dowdy Park with other Town parks, such as Whalebone Park, Barnes Street Park, and the Dog Park.
- Exploring opportunities to incorporate an interactive map element within park signage.

Staff noted that regional event inquiries typically referred to the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau.

Staff will follow up with Bob Muller regarding next steps.

Volunteers and Community Assistance

Staff reported receiving some inquiries from individuals interested in volunteering at Dowdy Park, though many are not well suited to the pace or scheduling demands of events. Sam Lock suggested that National Honor Society students may be a potential volunteer resource. Mary Kelly continues to assist as a volunteer and was scheduled to help at the upcoming market. Paige expressed much thanks for all that Mary Kelly does.

Public Art and Creative Projects

Staff provided updates on several ongoing and upcoming public art initiatives:

- **Kim Allen Donated Art:** The committee discussed hosting a small reception in the fall, potentially with the artist present to discuss the donated pieces.
- **Skate Park Mural:** Artist Chris Wheeler is approximately two weeks out from beginning work. The committee discussed the possibility of pairing the mural installation with a “Skate and Paint” event in September or October.
- **Barnes Street Weaving Project:** Sam Lock described an upcoming weaving installation using algae-based string developed in collaboration with CSI students. Public Services will assist with constructing the loom structure. The installation is planned for July 30 at 10:00 a.m., with consideration given to interpretive signage or QR code information.

Crosswalk Art Project

The committee discussed timing for the crosswalk art project, agreeing it should take place in the fall after the summer break. The project may be structured as a public event and coordinated for a weekend. Staff will confirm scheduling in coordination with the Dare County Schools calendar. The project scope will include the crosswalk only, not the entire intersection.

Committee Operations

Staff noted that the committee is required to meet at least quarterly, with a minimum of four meetings per year, though additional meetings may be scheduled as needed. Staff briefly reviewed attendance expectations, including limits on consecutive and annual absences.

Park and Infrastructure Updates

- **Art Mast:** The Art Mast budget is in place. Jeremy Russell noted concerns regarding leaning poles and bent, damaged, loose hardware; staff will coordinate with Public Services.
- **Whalebone Park:** Staff provided a brief update on planned amenities, including a pavilion similar to Barnes Street Park, restrooms, and a covered picnic area.
- **Dowdy Park:** A damaged children's drum has been repaired. Staff noted the need to consider a Freedom Swing and discussed potential sponsorship opportunities for play equipment, including creation of along the lines of Friends of Jockey's Ridge – or Friends of Dowdy Park.

Next Meeting

The committee will not meet in August. Any necessary business will be conducted via email. The next meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2024.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned following completion of the agenda.