



WARREN CULTURAL COMMISSION
CITY OF WARREN, MICHIGAN
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025 - 6:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeff Cutter at 6:26 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

- **Members Present:** Jeff Cutter, Jon Oaks, Carl Weckerle
- **Members Absent:** Shima Begum and Rebecca Zainos (excused)
- **Guests:** Candice Mayer, City Attorney
- City Attorney Candice Mayer noted that the Commission currently had five appointed members. With three members present, a quorum was established.

A motion was made by Jeff Cutter, supported by Jon Oaks, to excuse the absences of Shima Begum and Rebecca Zainos.

- Yes: All
- No: None
- Motion Carried.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Carl Weckerle, supported by Jon Oaks, to accept the agenda of the Warren Cultural Commission Meeting of December 8, 2025, with the addition of "Meeting Location Discussion" under New Business.

- Yes: All
- No: None
- Motion Carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 16, 2025 Minutes

- Carl Weckerle presented a consolidated corrected version of the June 2025 meeting minutes for approval.

A motion was made by Jon Oaks, supported by Jeff Cutter, to approve the June 2025 meeting minutes with the amendment to the budget language discussed above.

- Yes: All
- No: None
- Motion Carried.

B. September 15, 2025 Minutes

- Carl Weckerle presented the September 15, 2025 minutes and noted that they were more detailed than may be necessary for future official minutes.
- The Commission discussed using a more concise minutes format going forward. City Attorney Candice Mayer offered to provide sample agenda and minutes templates from other commissions.

A motion was made by Jon Oaks, supported by Jeff Cutter, to approve the minutes from the September 15, 2025 meeting as presented.

- Yes: All
- No: None
- Motion Carried.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

A. 2025-2026 Expenditures

- Chairman Cutter reported that approximately \$13,000 remains in the 2025–2026 account, with summer 2025 concert expenditures coming in below budgeted amounts.
- No new expenditures requiring approval were reported.
- The Commission discussed the City fiscal year, which begins July 1, and how purchase order timing affects summer concerts and late spring or early summer events.
- It was noted that all summer concert expenses fall within the 2025-2026 budget and that purchase orders for events near the end of the fiscal year must be submitted before City deadlines.

A motion was made by Carl Weckerle, supported by Jon Oaks, to receive and file the financial report.

- Yes: All
- No: None
- Motion Carried.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Poet Laureate Update

- Jon Oaks reported that Rosemarie, a local poet, applied for a CultureSource grant and asked the Commission to support the effort as a community partner.
- The Commission is waiting to hear back from Rosemarie regarding the status of the CultureSource grant application.
- The broader Poet Laureate proposal previously discussed by the Commission was submitted to Mayor Stone and Councilman Lafferty. Jon Oaks is still awaiting a response.

No formal action was taken.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2026-2027 Budget Request

- The current Commission budget is \$44,100.
- Members discussed possible future enhancements to concerts and events, including tents or shade, food trucks, an ice cream truck, additional activities, multiple acts, artist booths, and other ways to increase attendance and community engagement.
- Members also discussed the need to understand future Juneteenth costs and attendance before proposing a larger budget request.

- Chairman Cutter recommended requesting the same allocation for 2026-2027 as the Commission received for 2025-2026.

A motion was made by Carl Weckerle, supported by Jon Oaks, to request the same budget allocation for fiscal year 2026-2027 as the Commission received for fiscal year 2025-2026.

- Yes: All
- No: None
- Motion Carried.

B. Commission Enabling Ordinance

- City Attorney Candice Mayer presented proposed language to amend the Commission's enabling ordinance regarding meeting frequency.
- The proposed change would update the ordinance from monthly meetings to at least four meetings per year, with special meetings as deemed necessary by the Chairperson.
- The change is intended to align the ordinance with the Commission's current practice of meeting quarterly while preserving flexibility for additional meetings.

A motion was made by Carl Weckerle, supported by Jon Oaks, to accept the proposed updated language for the Commission enabling ordinance and send it to City Council for approval.

- Yes: All
- No: None
- Motion Carried.

C. Coordination with Parks and Recreation and Event Enhancements

- Jon Oaks suggested considering a mini art fair or artist booths during one of the summer concert nights as a possible use of remaining funds and a way to expand the cultural programming around concerts.
- The Commission discussed the need to coordinate more closely with the City's Parks and Recreation Department on event planning, food truck connections, scheduling conflicts, movies in the park, and other possible enhancements.
- Members noted that better coordination could help avoid conflicts with events such as the Birthday Bash and could create opportunities to combine or sequence events, such as a concert followed by a movie in the park.

No formal action was taken.

D. Meeting Location Discussion

- Carl Weckerle suggested exploring the Mark Twain Room at the Warren Civic Center Library as a possible future meeting location because the room appears to offer better technology and presentation capabilities.
- Members discussed that the library closes at 8:00 p.m., so meetings held there would need to begin on time and conclude before the building closes.
- Carl Weckerle will look into availability and coordinate with Chairman Cutter and the City regarding any required meeting notice updates if the location changes.

No formal action was taken.

E. Reappointments and Commission Vacancies

- Chairman Cutter reported that Commissioner Paula Wild's reappointment was not completed; the seat is now treated as a vacancy. The Commission has five currently appointed members.

No formal action was taken.

F. Special Concerts and Sponsored Events

- Chairman Cutter reported that the Warren Concert Band appreciated the Commission's support and provided a framed photo or recognition item to the Commission.
- The Commission briefly discussed the upcoming Warren Civic Theatre event and noted that it had not yet occurred.
- Members also discussed the City's performer waiver requirement. The waiver is a citywide policy related to liability and independent contractor status, and payment will not be processed unless required forms are completed.

No formal action was taken.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The location is to be determined.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Jon Oaks, supported by Carl Weckerle, to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

- Yes: All
- No: None
- Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Weckerle, Secretary
Warren Cultural Commission