



Richard D. Latham Cultural District

Public Workshop

12/30/2025 @ Noon @ Smithville Public Library, 500 Main Street

Agenda/Meeting Notes

View the meeting here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EufJOG4EUTs>

1. Call to Order: 12:10PM
 - a) Committee Members Present: Judy Bergeron (Department Head where Cultural District is housed at the City), Jill Strube (Liaison for the City), Jessica Ries (Liaison for the LPAA)
 - b) Attendees: Pam Latham, John Scallorn, Martha "Marti" Carlson, Genny Wildebrandt, Jenebeth Ortiz
2. Brief Update on Current Projects and Budget
 - a) Update on Longstanding Richard D. Latham Cultural District Programs of FY 2025-2026
 - I. Total Budget for 2025-2026: Only \$3,000 this year. In years past, it has typically been set at \$5,000, with exceptions in 2022-23 at \$12,000 and in 2023-24 at \$10,000, when we have been able to provide grants to local artists for various projects. We have always used these funds to leverage partnership, sponsorships and grants such that we are able to provide something more like \$75,000 in activities all together (including cash and in-kind). This year, we have a much smaller beginning fund, and therefore we are being much more cautious about projects. Also, last year, sponsorships were harder to come by than in previous years, which again means we need to be careful with the dollars.
 - II. 2025 Youth Banner Program: Got off to a late start, but the banners should be installed no later than March. These banners will replace the ones currently on MLK Drive. The upcoming 2026 banner program will replace the banners that have been on Main Street for the past 18 months. If all goes according to our normal schedule, students should get posters at Jamboree, and the banners should be ready to install by June.
 - III. Sculpture on Main: This program was on hiatus during the construction happening at Main and 2nd Street. Because Bastrop County supervised that work, they were not aware that they would need to replace the pedestals. At this time, public works staff know where the pedestals should go but have not had time to install them. For that reason, only two pedestals are available: the one at 1st Street near the Chamber, where "Dr. Thomas Gazley" by Anthony St. James resides, and the one at Loop 230 near Mosaic, where John Scallorn has recently installed his work, "Town Totem." We will be working with John to find a good date to have an artist reception for him. We will need to revisit this program at the Spring Cultural District meeting to ensure the pedestals are installed and we can start a new juried program, as has been the case in the past.
 - IV. Historic Coloring Book: Jose did not complete this task in September. It looks like it should be completed by end of January. We try to get these done by the end of August 2026 to get them to the 3rd graders on time.
 - V. Artist of the Year program: Marti Carlson has agreed to investigate for this year. She will contact the Chamber of Commerce to see if they will include a presentation during the Banquet, which is when we have traditionally held it. Jill will send all the old info forward to her so she can decide if she wants to take on the project.
 - VI. Music in the Park w/Chamber: This is a partnership with the Chamber. Jill will confirm that they are interested in taking it on this year. In general, it is a great fundraiser because many businesses/individuals want to sponsor it.
 - VII. Smithville Music Fest w/Businesses on Main: The Cultural District has sponsored this program since it started. With such a small budget, the sponsorship this year will not be large.
 - b) Update on TCA Grants
 - I. TCA program to renovate MNAC was completed on time and on budget. In addition, City Public Works is continuing some of the additional work needed at MNAC. Eagle Scouts have replaced

the ramp and the large sign. Thanks to all of them! The other two grants from last year were also completed on time. The “Theater in the Park” project featured a “Natural Resources” focus, bringing Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) educational materials out to all the youngsters at the school district, in the day cares, and in homeschool families. The show was well attended and had great comments. The Consultant project helped develop tools to streamline events.

II. June/July 2025 TCA Grants were not submitted this year due to lack of funding for match.

c) Upcoming Grants

I. Discussion on January 2026 TCA Grant program: Genny Wildebrandt and Jenebeth Ortiz brought a few ideas to the table. Genny has been coordinating a “Makers Market” in Giddings, which she would like to bring to Smithville. Jenebeth submitted three ideas, but the group coalesced around the Gingerbread 5K, which would be combined with the Market. The two of them will talk with Jill about how this might work. The caveats are that all sponsorship funds need to come from their efforts (the City cannot afford to sponsor and cannot be the driver seeking sponsorships), and they must coordinate all event-related activities. The City will only be responsible for grant management activities (submission, reporting, etc.).

II. Here is a link to an Arts Respond Project overview training webinar:

<https://vimeo.com/563340050>

III. And here is a link to an Arts Respond Project application walkthrough webinar:

<https://vimeo.com/563339613>

d) Public Comments/Feedback

The decision was to xxx

3. Announcements—None

4. Adjourn: Time 1:05 PM

For more information: <https://www.ci.smithville.tx.us/209/Richard-D-Latham-Cultural-District> or contact Jill Strube at jstrube@ci.smithville.tx.us

FYI: TCA Arts Respond Projects

Projects must address ONE of the following priority areas:

EDUCATION - Intent: Projects that use art to promote innovations in K-12 public education. Designed for projects that impact Pre-K-12 public school students during the school day. Projects must be aligned with the TEKS and conducted in conjunction with school officials. Projects may occur in a school setting or off-site (field trip). Before and after-school projects are not eligible.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES - Intent: Projects that use art to improve human health or functioning. INCLUDES VETERANS PROJECTS. Designed for projects that focus on health-related topics, serve specific populations, or occur in a health care or human service setting (hospital, clinic, senior activity center, women’s shelter, homeless shelter, etc.).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT- Intent: Projects that use art to diversify local economies, generate revenue, and attract visitors and investment. Designed for projects that focus on job growth or cultural tourism (festivals, gallery walks, art fairs, etc).

PUBLIC SAFETY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE - Intent: Projects that use art to prevent delinquency and recidivism in youth and adults. Designed for projects that focus on at-risk youth or incarcerated populations (after school program, juvenile detention center, adult prison, alternative learning center).

NATURAL RESOURCES & AGRICULTURE - Intent: Projects that use art to understand and/or improve the ecological and agricultural environment. Designed for projects that occur in rural counties (festivals, fairs, exhibitions, performances) or focus on natural resources (oil, water, green art, ecological issues).