

# BEMIDJI PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Conference Room  
City Hall – 317 4th Street NW  
1:00 PM



## CALL MEETING TO ORDER

## APPROVE AGENDA

## APPROVE MINUTES

- 1) April 28, 2026 Meeting

## BUSINESS

- 2) 2025 Annual Report
- 3) BDA Kiosk Artist Reception
- 4) Trash Can Lids Painting Project
- 5) Wastewater Treatment Plant Mural
- 6) City of Bemidji Centennial Sign
- 7) Voyageur's School Proposal

## NEXT MEETING

## ADJOURN

Public Arts Commission Meeting  
April 28, 2026

Present: Lisa Bruns, Cindy Burger, Sandy Henson, Lisa Jonas, Michele Miller, Marcia BMarthaler, and Emilie Rivera

Absent: Kristi Miller

Bruns called the meeting to order at 1PM

Agenda: Jonas motioned to approve the agenda and was seconded by Henson

Minutes: The March 10, 2026 minutes were approved on a motion by BMarthaler and a second by Henson.

Agenda Discussion:

1. 2025 Annual Report discussion: Rivera proposed a PAC member come to Council meeting on May 18 to review the annual report in person as an opportunity to educate and inform. Bruns will attend.
2. Dave, Rita, and Sheri from the Bemidji Sculpture Walk team were in attendance and reviewed their plans for 2026 including purchase of 4 sculptures, welding classes, helping artists apply for calls for art opportunities, and more. They have 12 new sculptures to install.
3. Kiosk Project Artwork Approval: The Call for Art and selection criteria was reviewed by Bruns. The committee reviewed the selected artwork for the 5 kiosks. A celebration of the project at an event in fall, would include the original art to be displayed for a period of time beyond the event was discussed. This celebratory event would highlight the partnership between Bemidji Downtown Alliance, Bemidji Area Art Endowment, Bemidji Sculpture Walk, Public Arts Commission, individual artists, and other art entities. A motion by Burger to authorize grant funds to support the project celebration in September 2026 (venue TBD) and seconded by Jonas was so moved. A motion was brought forth by Burger to approve all 5 designs, and was seconded by BMarthaler.
4. Trash Can Painting Project: Bruns and Jonas met with Mary Knox-Johnson at Loon Country Arts and she has identified a few artists interested in the project who will prepare a proposal including materials and artist stipend, as well as sketches to submit for review/approval to Bemidji Trails Director, Schroeder.
5. Wesley May IS available to restore Public Works building mural and Bruns will ask him to provide a bid to include all materials and time, by May 12 in order to submit to the City for fund approval. It is desired to have work coincide with activities in summer (IE: 4<sup>th</sup> of July) to make a story of the project and create awareness of our committee.

6. Voyageurs School: The school has a grant to carve and paint stumps left from the storm to beautify parks and areas around town. Algoma and North Country parks could benefit from these student creations and they have a well thought out plan. Bruns shared samples of their work with us. Through discussions by Bruns with leaders at Voyageurs, the Director of Trails, the Sculpture Walk members, Bemidji Downtown Alliance and others, an opportunity was identified for the PAC to act as a conduit for the ideas and opportunities like these. Promoting PAC as a point of contact for people and organizations would potentially alleviate the pain point of not knowing who to ask/where to go for a given project.
7. Acting as a Fiscal Agent, the BDA will request a grant from Bemidji Area Arts Endowment to fund a person to take inventory of all public art on City property and also include public art on private property within the City. This could tie in to an Art Walk-like activity which reinforces partnerships with the BDA, Sculpture Walk, Kiosk Project, Watermark, Loon Country, etc.
8. Burger motioned to adjourn and Henson seconded

## **2025 Bemidji Public Arts Commission Annual Report**

**Commission Members:** Kristi Miller, Cindy Burger, Lisa Bruns, Lisa Jonas, Marcia BMarthaler, Paula Swenson, Katie Carter and Emelie Rivera, Bemidji City Council representative.

### **Project Updates and Initiatives**

At its February 11th meeting, the Public Arts Commission (PAC) re-elected Kristi Miller as Chair and Secretary, and Cindy Burger as Vice Chair. Commission accepted the resignations of Katie Carter and Paula Swenson and welcomed Sandy Henson as a new member.

- **Policies & Procedures and Bylaws** annual review resulted in changing the title to PCA Policies and updating references by removing the Greater Planning Board and City of Planning Board. The Bylaws were not changed.
- **Bemidji Hotel Sign Restoration:** The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) expressed interest in restoring the Bemidji Hotel sign. This project would involve assessing the current condition of the sign and exploring strategies for its preservation and restoration. PAC determined the project is not within its scope.
- **BDA Corner Kiosk Project:** The Bemidji Downtown Alliance (BDA) corner kiosk project was introduced to the Commission. The artwork applied to the first corner kiosk was completed and the project is ongoing. BDA agreed that all further art installations will be reviewed by the PAC prior to art installation.
- **Wastewater Plant Mural Restoration:** The Commission evaluated the need for restoration and initiated the process of determining necessary repairs, selecting an artist, and establishing the project budget. The Commission is seeking clarification from the City regarding the source of funding for the restoration, given the artist's availability in summer 2026.
- **PAC Visibility Efforts:** The Commission continues to focus on increasing the visibility of PAC within the community. Strategies include outreach, communications, and highlighting PAC projects and achievements.
- **Region 2 Arts Grant Usage:** The Commission discussed the utilization of the \$1,000 Region 2 Arts grant. The grant funds are to support ongoing and upcoming PAC projects, in alignment with the Commission's goals.
- **2026 Goals:** Complete the Art Inventory; City Park art projects, Wastewater Treatment Plant mural & expand partnerships with artists and art organizations.

May 5, 2026

To: City of Bemidji

From: Wesley May, Artist

49 Main Street

Blackduck, MN 56630

(218) 407-9460

wesleymay.125@gmail.com

RE: Wastewater Treatment Plant Mural Restoration Bid

Please accept the following bid to restore the Wastewater Treatment Plan mural.

**Expenses:**

Paint/Supplies                      \$1,600

Lift Rental                              \$ 900

Labor                                      \$5,500

**Total:**                                      **\$8,000**

Payment terms: \$2,500 upon acceptance of the bid for paint/supplies and \$5,500 at the completion of the mural restoration.

I am available to restore the mural this summer, but I would need to know as soon as possible. The lift rental would need to be reserved to coordinate with the start date.

Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions.

There is a centennial sign located within Paul Bunyan Park, adjacent to the Paul Bunyan statue. The sign dates back to 1996 and recognizes the City's centennial celebration from 1896–1996.

As shown in the attached photo, the sign has experienced weathering over time and is in need of a refreshed paint job. Given its location near the Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox statues, the sign is highly visible to residents and visitors. As we are all aware, Paul Bunyan Park is one of the most visited and photographed areas in the community, and many visitors see this sign by proximity when stopping at the statues.

I am reaching out to the Public Arts Commission to see if there would be interest in having a local artist freshen up the sign while maintaining its historical significance and overall character.

The Parks & Trails Department would be willing to use funds from its maintenance budget to compensate a local artist for their time, materials, and expertise.

This could be a great opportunity to improve the appearance of a highly visible park feature while also supporting local art within the community.

