

Cultural Arts & Heritage Commission
February 4, 2026

A regular meeting of the City of Waxahachie Cultural Arts & Heritage Commission was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. in the Mean Green Conference Room at the Charles Beatty Municipal Services Building, 408 S. Rogers, Waxahachie, Texas.

Members Present: Rhyan Phillips, Chair
Twyla U. Williams, Vice Chair
Victoria Russell, Secretary
Von Aday
Emily Finch
April Honore
Ezriel Wilson

Others Present: Laurie Mosley, Director, Convention & Visitors Bureau
Patrick Souter, Mayor Pro Tem
Chris Wright, City Council Member

1. Call to Order

Chair Rhyan Phillips called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Introduction of new Commission Members

New Commission members April Honore and Ezriel Wilson introduced themselves.

April Honore recently moved to Texas from the East Coast, and she participates in local neighborhood government. She's been looking for a place to be active in the local community government.

Ezriel Wilson is a local to Waxahachie; she's a local artist and is active in various events around town. She's happy to be even more involved in the arts and historic preservation.

4. Consider approval of minutes of the Cultural Arts & Heritage Commission meeting of January 8, 2026

Action:

Emily Finch moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2026 Cultural Arts & Heritage Commission meeting as presented. Motion was seconded by Twyla U. Williams and carried unanimously (7-0).

5. Discuss criteria and processes for annual funding qualifications and applications

The Commission reviewed the following items for the sake of the new members:

1. Funding for the arts and historic preservation comes from hotel/motel tax.
2. The Commission makes funding recommendations to City Council, who will then make the final decision.

3. The Commission is creating a plan to shift the distribution of funds from being equally split among the groups to a more transparent, merit-based system.
4. The Commission needs to create a new application with new requirements for the groups who want to receive funding.

The Commission determined that the new application/questionnaires must include the following items:

1. Proof of non-profit status for at least 3 years;
2. Profit & Loss statements for at least 2 years;
3. Evidence of out-of-town attendance at the events (e.g., ticket sales, sign-in sheets, visitor logs, etc.)
4. Information regarding other sources of funding that the group may have received.

The Commission also discussed the following ideas that might need to be included in the new application/questionnaire:

1. Noncompliance with reporting makes groups ineligible for funding the following year;
2. Groups should request specific amounts based on their actual funding needs;
3. Application should require event specific data, even if multiple groups handle the same events.

Introducing a tiered approach was discussed again, potentially creating tiers based on event size and funding needs. The Commission decided that startup organizations will not qualify for funding and the organization needs to establish a track record before applying for funding. The Commission also determined that the tentative application deadline needs to be in September so the Commission has time to review and make a recommendation to Council before the end of the year.

Lastly, the Commission determined that the Commission Secretary will draft a sample questionnaire for all the members to review prior to the next meeting. They determined that once City Council has made the final decision on the updated application/questionnaire, an Information Session should be held, where all the groups are invited to participate to learn more about the updated application.

6. Set next meeting date and time

The next meeting is set for March 5, 2026 at 4:30 p.m., with a work session scheduled for February 26, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Russell, Secretary
Cultural Arts & Heritage Commission