

Skokie Fine Arts Commission
January 11, 2023
Meeting Notes

1. Call to Order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson Pam Garbarini

Present: Vice Chairperson Jeff Rhodes, Trustee Representative Ralph Klein, Staff Representative Meredith Gioia and Commissioners Michelle Beatrice, Mira Chandler, Judy Levan, Doris Liberman, Sonya Osseny, Pamela Sloan, James VanOsdol, Sharon Vicke, Ellen Waxberg.

2. Introduction of New Staff Representative

It was announced that Staff Representative Ann Tennes will be leaving her position at the Village in March and that Skokie Communications Manager Meredith Gioia will be assuming her responsibilities with the Fine Arts Commission. Meredith has an MFA in Acting from The Theatre School at DePaul University and worked in the theatre for many years.

3. National Arts and Humanities Month

Vice Chairperson Jeff Rhodes reminded the group that October is National Arts and Humanities Month and that the Commission is looking to recognize the variety of arts available in Skokie.

Rhodes clarified that the commission is not looking to plan events themselves but rather encourage arts organizations/venues to schedule their own events during the month which will be featured on the Village website and publicized via social media.

Organizations/venues would submit their events via a form on the Village website. These submissions would be forwarded to the subcommittee to review prior to being added to the website. Gioia mentioned that the commission could create and maintain a Google calendar which she could then surface on the Village website.

Organizations and venues that submit would also be included in an arts listing on the Fine Arts Commission page of Skokie.org.

Many organizations/venues are already planning their next seasons so commission members with personal contacts at arts organizations/venues are encouraged to reach out to them and let them know that an official announcement regarding the National Arts and Humanities Month will be coming in March.

The commission then split into two breakout groups. One was tasked with constructing a one-paragraph description of the project and the other was to begin discussion of submission criteria.

Group One

“In celebration of the diversity of arts and entertainment in Skokie, the Skokie Fine Arts Commission is marking National Arts and Humanities Month this October 2023. Arts organizations, businesses and venues through the Village are invited to submit their October programming to be promoted in an arts calendar on the Village website and listed in an arts registry.”

Group Two

Both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, businesses and venues will be allowed to submit events. Events are not limited to performances. Applicants could offer adult or

children's class visits or demonstrations. Churches and other religious organizations could offer events if they regularly offer such activities. They could also offer tours of their architecture, statuary, stained glass, etc. Individual artists, however, would not be able to submit. If there are several individuals affiliated with an organization that want to offer up an event, they may have the organization apply and provide the venue. An applicant does not need to have their organization in the Village of Skokie if the programming is in Skokie.

It was suggested that a poster design competition be held for Skokie students. Information would need to be distributed prior to the end of the school year.

Form should have a link to an FAQ for clarifications and a checklist for the applicant to verify qualifications. Whether or not a venue is ADA compliant is not a factor in acceptance but it should be indicated on the link to their event.

As a last note, Rhodes asked if the Commission thought that the Excellence in Fine Awards should be moved up and presented during the month of October to coincide with National Arts and Humanities Month. The group agreed.

4. Upcoming Events

Love Lost and Found storytelling event at Take Flight Spirits (02/16/2023)

The Commission received 12 submissions. The subcommittee will review them and contact those selected. Chairperson Gabarini explained to the group that seating at the venue is limited to 49 people. Commissioners that are interested in attending will have the opportunity to reserve their tickets prior to the public. Gioia told the group that, if members were willing to wait to allow the public time to reserve tickets, she would send an update on sales closer to the event itself. Commissioner VanOsdol offered himself to serve as Emcee for the event.

SOAR art exhibit at Oakton Community College (03/02/2023-04/04/2023)

Schools have been signing up to be included. The next meeting will be dedicated to preparing the supplies for the art teachers. The venue has been reserved for an informal open-house reception on Monday, March 13 from 4 to 6:30 p.m. Mayor VanDusen will be in attendance.

5. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Upcoming meetings: February 8, March 8, April 12 and May 10, 2023 held in conference rooms D/E at Skokie Village Hall, 5127 Oakton Street, Skokie, Illinois 60077.

Skokie Arts & Humanities Month | October 2023

Resources

Americans for the Arts

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/events/national-arts-and-humanities-month>

Illinois Art Council

<https://arts.illinois.gov/ah-october>

Calendar (needs review)

May 2023	Call for submission
July 2023	Resend call for submission
August 2023	Request mayoral proclamation
August 28, 2023	Final reminder for submission
September 6, 2023	Deadline for submissions
September 2023	Post calendar on Village website Distribute poster and marketing toolkit to participating organizations
October 2023	Skokie Arts & Humanities Month
October 2, 2023	Mayoral Proclamation at Village Board Meeting
October 16, 2023	Artistic Excellence Award at Village Board Meeting

Items Needed

- Mission Statement/Boilerplate Text – 1 paragraph
- Submission Criteria
 - What types of organizations are permitted
 - What types of events are permitted
- List of organizations to reach out to
 - Library
 - Park District
 - Illinois Holocaust Museum
 - Sculpture Park
 - Skokie Theater
 - North Shore Center
 - Downtown Galleries
 - Farmers Market
- Text for Invite Email
- FAQ
- Electronic Form to collect event submissions
 - Form fields
 - Software for form/calendar
 - How to post to Village website
- Marketing
 - Marketing text
 - Logo?
 - Poster
 - Participating Organizations toolkit
 - Social Media Plan

Other items to consider

- Inclusivity – see Equitable Engagement Sheet
- Youth involvement
- Reach out to Chicago North Shore Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Reach out to Chamber of Commerce
- Dividing responsibilities among commissioners
 - How to reduce burden on Village staff



Equitable engagement resources for National Arts & Humanities Month

National Arts & Humanities Month (NAHM) is an excellent opportunity to be more inclusive across your community and engage organizations and populations you may not interact with on a regular basis. Make sure you share information and resources with large and small organizations, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, Native American) identifying people and organizations, organizations and people who may have accessibility needs, and other marginalized communities. Include those groups in planning celebrations, promote their events through your networks, and encourage representation of their cultures and traditions as part of uplifting the arts and humanities in October.

Here are some tips on how you can thoughtfully and intentionally engage across cultures in your community:

- **If you're unfamiliar, seek knowledge about a community before reaching out**—it's essential to learn as many aspects of the community culture as possible. Here are some considerations on where to start your research: language; traditional practices, holidays, and festivals; social networks; values; politics, economic conditions, and history; community trends; and current experiences and voices.
- **Make it easy for diverse communities to engage with NAHM.** Be thoughtful about the location, timing, and cost of your organization's events to include folks who may not be able to travel far, who may earn lower incomes, or may have a non-traditional daily schedule.
- **Build out on existing networks** and find community leaders whose strengths and networks can expand the reach of NAHM celebrations even further. Consider individual artists you know and work with who may be part of diverse communities and ask them if they would be comfortable supporting an introduction to other artists and organizations.
- **Your local Chamber of Commerce can be an invaluable resource**, especially if your community has a chamber that focuses on BIPOC or ALAANA businesses. They can help promote events to these communities and connect you with existing events to include as part of NAHM celebrations.
- **Remember that arts & culture events aren't always connected to traditional arts venues**, so reach out to places such as community centers, restaurants, faith-based organizations, libraries, colleges/universities, and more to find and promote cultural events during NAHM.
- **Don't end the engagement when October is over!** Real, meaningful connections are based on trust and cannot be achieved if only made when there is a need or agenda attached to the outreach. NAHM can be the first step in an ongoing relationship with diverse folks in your community.