



**CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS  
MANITOU ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE BOARD**

Special Meeting Minutes  
Remote Meeting via Zoom  
January 29, 2026

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL (ALSO DETERMINE VOTING STATUS OF ALTERNATES)**

Chair Routon called the Manitou Arts, Culture, and Heritage (MACH) Board meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL:**

Chair Ralph Routon  
Vice Chair Kinsey Watts  
Board Member Wren Almitra  
Board Member Mark Lee  
Board Member Marcus Medina  
Board Member Peter Sommers  
Alternate Board Member Lisette Casey  
Alternate Board Member Gerald Mitchell  
Alternate Board Member Jason Wells

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT FOR ROLL CALL:**

Board Member Neale Minch (Excused)

Board Member Lee motioned to promote Alternate Board Member Jason Wells to a voting member for this meeting and that Alternate Board Member Lisette Casey be promoted to vote for all grants in place of any recusals. Vice Chair Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-0).

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Board Member Sommers moved to approve the agenda as presented. Board Member Wells seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

**C. PUBLIC COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

There was no public comment.

## **D. BUSINESS**

### 1. Tier 2 Invitees (Upstairs at the STACC, Nancy Fortuin and Susan Watkins)

Applicant Nancy Fortuin presented the goals and objectives for Upstairs at the STACC. She stated that the overall goal for the project is to provide a non-profit, community ran community center. St. Andrew's Church is in full support of the project. The requested \$20,000 would be used as seed money to secure the lease, which would be \$40,000 for the first 360 days.

There was discussion regarding the concern for the use of the grant money for things like equipment. Applicant Fortuin suggested that it can be stipulated that money only be used for rent. She also confirmed that the grant money would only be used to secure the space upstairs for the community center, not for the downstairs space. She reported that the project is largely dependent on the grant funds. There is a current plan by the Church to build bathrooms upstairs. There is no fee schedule for renting the space set yet, though there will be. The goal is to form a committee to make decisions for the space. Applicant Fortuin added that there would be an anti-discrimination policy in place and the Church is in agreement.

## **E. MINUTES**

### 1. January 22, 2026 Minutes

Vice Chair Watts moved to approve the minutes with corrections to change "Wine Pig Farm" to "Flying Pig Farm" and to correct the spelling of Peggie Yager's name. Board Member Sommers seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

## **F. REPORTS**

### 1. City Staff Report (Rebecca Davis)

Finance Director Davis reported that the sales tax for November was better than expected. She stated that the Board should be on track to meet budget expectations. She confirmed that the marijuana sales tax revenue loss doesn't have a large impact on the MACH grant funds.

### 2. City Council Liaison Report (Judith Chandler)

Council Liaison Chandler reported that City Council met for a special session on January 23, 2025. The only agenda item discussed was a proposal for Resolution 0626, a Resolution creating a parking benefit program for downtown residents and employees contingent on the dissolution of the Metropolitan District. The resolution passed six to one. She shared that there is a resident-led committee getting information out to the public. She announced that the 31<sup>st</sup> Great Fruitcake toss is on January 31, 2026 in

Memorial Park between 12:00 PM and 3:00 PM. Collections for food donations will be accepted, helping the Food Pantry in Manitou Springs.

## **G. BUSINESS - CONTINUED**

### **1. Discuss ongoing unresolved grant eligibility questions from submitted list**

Chair Routon reported that he followed up with several of the applicants that the Board had questions for. The Archeology Day grant applicant is withdrawing his application. The Drum Circle needed a local applicant and Board Member Lee agreed to become a co-applicant. The two applicants for Indigenous Peoples Day are currently trying to work something out and it is anticipated that one of the applicants may withdraw their application. The response from Parenting Village Circle was forwarded to the Board for review. The Pawnee Pollinator Garden confirmed partnership with the City of Manitou Springs for their project. The Direct Mail Connection is eligible for consideration. The Wildlife Ascending Mural is eligible for consideration based on City support, though official permission will be granted only after grant approval. All grant applicants that require a pass-through letter have been sent an email requesting letters of sponsorship.

### **2. Any additional recusals for Board Members to self-report or ask for Board input**

Chair Routon confirmed that Board Member Minch recused from Saving Black History in Manitou Springs, Historic Voices of Manitou Springs podcast and The Heritage Museum.

### **3. First pass at Tier 2 mini-grants, straight up or down**

Chair Routon called for informal “up or down” votes on each Tier 2 Mini-Grant application. An “Up” vote indicated consensus to retain the application for further consideration, while a “Down” vote indicated consensus to remove it from consideration.

- **Blue Hands Events** – Up unanimously with full funding
- **Community Costuming Creation** – Up unanimously
- **Direct Mail Connection** – Up with Chair Routon and Board Member Sommers voting down. The Board will follow up on pass-through eligibility.
- **Student Pottery - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade** – Up unanimously
- **PACMAN: “Let’s Get Walking and Rolling, Mantiou!” 2025** – Up unanimously
- **Flying Pig Album Release and Show** – Up unanimously
- **Thursday Summer Drum Circle** – Up unanimously

Board Member Sommers suggested a few notes be kept for rejection of grant applications in order to answer any questions surrounding the failed application. It was agreed by the Board this would be good practice.

4. Discussion on how to approach Tier 2 regular grants on Feb. 7 or beyond. The Chair proposes postponing the planned Feb. 7 meeting until Feb 14 or Feb 19, then Feb 26.

There was a discussion about cancelling the February 7, 2026 meeting and voting on grants during meetings on February 12, 2026, February 19, 2026 and February 26, 2026. Board consensus was reached for all proposed future meeting dates in February.

## **H. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Routon adjourned at 6:41 PM.

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