



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

Special Meeting Minutes
Remote Meeting via Zoom
February 19, 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 5:04 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 Jason Wells
Alternate Board Member Lisette Casey

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Board Member Neale Minch (Excused)
Alternate Board Member Gerald Mitchell

Vice Chair Watts moved to promote Alternate Board Member Wells to a voting member in absence of Board Member Minch and to promote Alternate Board Member Casey in the event of any recusals from grants during the meeting. Board Member Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-0).

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. February 12, 2026

Board Member Wells moved to approve the minutes with changes to the spelling of “Rocky” to “Rockey”. Board Member Almitra seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA (Please Limit Comments to Three Minutes)

Board Member Wells reported that he attended the Carnival Festival and it was good. Board Members Lee and Medina also reported attending and shared positive feedback about the event.

E. REPORTS – CITY COUNCIL LIAISON & STAFF

1. City Staff Report (Rebecca Davis)

Finance Director Davis was not present. There was no report.

2. City Council Liaison Report (Judith Chandler)

Council Liaison Chandler was not present. There was no report.

F. BUSINESS

1. Status Report on Upstairs at the STACC (Ralph Routon – Judith Chandler)

There was general discussion regarding Upstairs at the STACC. Chair Routon reported that he and Council Liaison Chandler met with Nancy Fortuin. He shared that he sent Applicant Fortuin a list of questions to address concerns the Board has. In an email response Applicant Fortuin shared that the Committee is currently finalizing a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) with St. Michaels Church, which owns St. Andrews. She stated that a multi-year lease is likely and that without MACH funds, the agreement may not be possible. St. Andrews has confirmed that it will be investing all the rent revenue back into the building. Applicant Fortuin also confirmed that if MACH were to approve partial funding that they could move forward with the community center, however this would limit the center to operate only through the second quarter of 2026. She shared that their plan is to join St. Michaels Church in hosting a large community fundraiser in April.

Chair Routon shared that the Committee did submit a well-organized business plan.

Chair Routon reported that Council Liaison Chandler spoke with some Councilors one-on-one and that some had an issue with there not being a lease or certainty of a lease. It was stated that funding the project would essentially be like paying for renovations for a building that the City does not own. Concerns about the building not yet being ADA compliant were raised, as well as that the full funding does not cover the full first year of rent.

There was general discussion about options to offer the applicants that would allow for some forward progress. Board Member Wells suggested that a one year option be

offered, essentially earmarking the funds with a commitment from the Church to hold the space for a year to allow the applicants time to generate more funding. The consensus was to present the application to the City Council with full funding.

Vice Chair Watts moved to approve the grant with full funding with the understanding that it can be cut if needed once the final funding decisions are made. Board Member Almitra seconded the motion. The motion carried (5-3), with Board Member Medina, Board Member Wells and Chair Routon opposed. Board Member Lee recused.

2. Reconsider any decisions from Feb. 12 meeting?

There was no discussion.

3. Resume discussions and votes on Tier 2 grants, starting with the largest requests and working downward.

Board Member Wells moved to fund the Manitou Music Foundation grant request at \$11,600 with a possibility to change the funding amount. Board Member Medina seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-1), with Board Member Sommers opposed.

Board Member Sommers moved to fund the Flying Pig Summer Arts grant request at \$9,000. Vice Chair Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Sommers moved to approve the Poetry & Pottery grant request at \$6,375. Vice Chair Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Almitra moved to approve the Wildlife Ascending Mural grant request with full funding at \$8,435. Board Member Wells seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Chair Routon moved to fund the Community Music Series grant request at \$6,000, with possible funding changes as needed. Board Member Sommers seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Sommers moved to fund the Pridefest grant request at \$5,500. Vice Chair Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Wells moved to approve the Moonlight Market grant request at \$5,000. The motion carried (7-0).

Chair Routon moved to fund the Soul Songs & Healing Sound grant request at \$2,800. The motion carried (7-0).

Chair Routon moved to fund the Pikes Peak Poetry Summit grant request at \$3,500. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Sommers moved to approve the Gift Bags for the Homeless grant request at \$3,500. Board Member Wells seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Chair Routon moved to fund the Artfull Fridays grant request at \$4,000. Board Member Sommers seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Wells recused himself from the Manitou Comedy Festival grant request. Chair Routon moved to fund the Manitou Comedy Festival grant request at \$4,500. Vice Chair Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Vice Chair Watts moved to approve the Children of Gaia grant request with full funding at \$5,000. Board Member Sommers seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Sommers moved to approve the World Dance Festival grant request with full funding at \$4,500. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Wells moved to approve the Blue Hands Art Fest grant request with full funding and the possibility of a funding change. Board Member Sommers seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Sommers moved to fund the Women's Sacred Circle grant request at \$1,500, with possible funding changes if needed. Vice Chair Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-1) with Board Member Almitra opposed.

Board Member Wells moved to approve the Clayfest grant request with full funding at \$3,000. Board Member Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Sommers moved to approve the EPIC Concerts in Manitou Springs grant request with full funding at \$2,800. Board Member Wells seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

Chair Routon moved to approve the Art in Meditation grant request with full funding at \$2,500. The motion carried (7-0).

Chair Routon moved to approve the Altitude Makers Markets grant request with full funding at \$1,960. The motion carried (7-0).

Board Member Sommers moved to fund the Mindfulness and Fiber Art Class grant request at \$750. Vice Chair Watts seconded the motion. The motion carried (7-0).

4. Discuss expectations for February 26 meeting.

There was a discussion about asking the applicants for Upstairs at the STACC and Council to watch the recorded meeting to gain a better understanding of the Board's perspective and deliberations.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Routon adjourned the meeting at 7:16 PM.

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