

Maryland Public Art Commission

Approved Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2025

12:15 – 2:00 pm

Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Attending:

Elizabeth Hughes, Jamie Heater, Molline Jackson, Flannery Winchester, Rebecca Massie Lane, Jerome Gray, Brittney McGowan, Elaine Bachmann, Judy Kwon,

Elaine Bachmann, Jerome Gray, Jamie Heater, Elizabeth Hughes, Molline Jackson, Judy Kwon, Rebecca Massie Lane, McGowan McGowan, Flannery Winchester,

Commissioners Absent: Ben Seigel

MSAC Staff:

C. Ryan Patterson, Steven Skerritt-Davis, Nora Howell

Members of the Public:

David Hess, Sandy Hess, Stacia Goodman, Kathy Beechler, Bethany Ann Thomas

Call to Order (Kwon)

Meeting Called to order 12:15

Meeting Logistics (Patterson)

Reviewed bathroom locations, food, Google Meet controls, and announced yourself when speaking to accommodate a hybrid meeting. Instructions for members of the public.

Grounding Slides

Land Acknowledgement (Patterson); Equity Statement (Winchester); Vision Mission (Skerritt-Davis); Strategic Plan (Patterson); Creative Meeting Actions (Kwon)

Artist's Remarks to the Commission

David Hess: The artist expressed an early interest in science and art. He traveled to Italy to pursue his interest in sculpture and public art in particular. In Baltimore, he began using found artifacts in public sculptures. Shared multiple significant commissions throughout his career as a public artist. The commission for Frostburg State University represents the land sliced through the earth, and the patterns represent geomorphology. The top layer is based on a skin cell viewed under a microscope. “Doing public art work is such a privilege, I'm lucky to live in Maryland, in a State that invests in public art and artists' careers. It's an amazing opportunity to do this work. Thanks to the commission and Public Art Program Director Ryan Patterson. “

Stacia Goodman, “Apologies for not being in attendance in person, thank you for dedicating my work today.” Goodman is a graduate of public schools and a State University. The artist shared the story of her journey as a self-taught artist from Minnesota, emphasizing her passion for installing art at state universities, drawing on her own background as a first-generation state college graduate. Stacia expressed gratitude for the opportunity to create the artwork, highlighting the value of site visits and the importance of public engagement. This is exemplified by the accessibility offered through tactile work with found objects and by encouraging touch. She hopes that the work will capture and convey the story of the unique land and geography surrounding Frostburg State University.

Ryan Patterson shared that the student who contributed to the fossils for the artwork attended the dedication and shared rock samples with event attendees.

Welcome to Western Maryland from the Garrett & Allegany County Arts Councils

Presentation on Garrett County Arts Council by Kathy Beechler, Executive Director of Garrett County Arts Council & Maryland State Arts Councilor

Kathy highlighted the vital support, professional development, and funding provided by the Maryland State Arts Council. Kathy discussed how the arts enrich the Appalachian region's identity, preserve traditions, and play a crucial role in education and economic impact through workshops, apprenticeships, tourism, and cultural events. Garrett County Arts Council has been the recipient of multiple Public Art Across Maryland grant awards including New Artworks grants that have supported the Historic Mile Marker project, and Conservation grants that supported the cleaning and restoration of “Buckwheat Harvest”(1942) by Robert Gates for the U.S. Post Office in Oakland Maryland, which is one of the two remaining examples of milk tempera public post murals remaining in the state. In closing, Kathy proposed looking for opportunities to commission local artists to install artworks in new public buildings, like the ones highlighted at FSU. This could be coordinated in partnership with County Arts Councils to advance local artists.

Patterson mentioned that purchasing works for display is an eligible use of the Public Art Premium funds allocated by the state, and this could be an option to explore for future projects.

Allegany Arts Council Updates by Bethany Ann Thomas, the recently appointed new Executive Director of the Allegany Arts Council. Bethany Ann Thomas is brand new to her role, but comes from a background in performing arts, non-profit management, and government grants. Allegany Arts is celebrating its 50th anniversary in the coming year. She shared programming highlights, including Levitt AMP Cumberland Music Series, Wills Creek Fine Art Exhibition, Mountain Maryland Film Festival, and Mountain Maryland Plein Air Festival. In recent years, the Council purchased a new building, but is now making plans to sell that building and move into the Footer building, close to Canal Place. They look forward to hosting future programming in the new space.

Patterson noted that the Footer Building is an excellent location along the bike trail and will provide access to the arts for many people who travel through Cumberland on that route.

Elizabeth Hughes asked if the Appalachian Regional Council (ARV) funds the arts?

Kathy Beechler noted that she serves as a rep from Maryland on an ARC committee and is working on a comparable arts-related regional council.

Chair Remarks & Review: Move through quickly in observance of the time

Approval of June Minutes (Patterson)

Motion: Jamie Heater to approve the minutes with a note to make the corrections made by and Rebecca Massie Lane and me, as noted in the Google document memorialized via email to Ryan and Nora earlier today

Second: Kwon

In Favor: Unanimous

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Executive Directors Report, Steven Skerritt-Davis

- Secretary Coker has demonstrated strong engagement with MSAC. He is aware of the relevance of the arts to the commerce sector and highlighted investments in public art as part of his regional tours across the state.
- A Statewide hiring freeze has impacted multiple open positions, including the pending addition to the public art team. A hiring freeze exemption request was submitted, and Steven is awaiting feedback on that request.
- Arts Incubator Working Group work is wrapping up, and a final report will be published when it is complete.

- MSAC was subject to an NEA Procedural Audit - Awaiting the final report, a few findings to be addressed in the next 6 months
 - ~10 years since last audit
 - The audit took place for over a year
- Federal Funding: \$25,000 for Arts in Health (arts pharmacy program, for social prescribing (Prescribing art activities to treat depression, etc. Physician prescribes an art experience, insurance pays); and an additional \$25,000 from America250, this money has been allocated to public art, but will be offered as a separate grant program, drawing a distinction from from the regular PAAM grant program
- Demand for MSAC funding has continued to be high and increasing.
 - Overall, there is an average of a 29% award rate of grants across programs.
 - In the last year, staff have responded to 890 feedback requests from staff in FY25
- FY26 Grants:
 - Operating grants, awarding, and being paid. 24 million + in operating grants
 - Arts Capital is currently accepting applications
- Professional Development:
 - Offerings that are not grants
 - Focus on creative businesses, skills, and training

Questions:

- Molly Jackson asked if there is funding to support internships? To help mentor future emerging artists and help them enter the public art field.
- Kwon added that such a program could act as a launch pad - pairing up and coming artists and established artists in a partnership.
 - Patterson responded that staff could review if that aligns with the Department of Labor’s existing “Apprenticeship Program.”

Executive Committee Report (Kwon)

Judy Kwon reported on progress around the committee's goals for 2025

- Uplifting geographic diversity and models for increasing Public Art investments in rural areas
 - Existing Legislation requires eligible capital projects to be >15,000 sq feet and include utility systems. However, many state capital projects in rural areas happen at State Parks and do not meet this criterion.
 - Eligibility of Community College campuses for public art projects
 - The 2019 legislation revisions opened up the program to projects “at least 50% of state funds and the remainder from private entities, however, most Community College projects are State & Local investments, thus considered ineligible.
 - Commissioners interested in advocating for changes to the legislation are welcome to contact or work with *Maryland Citizens to the Arts* for direction and support in how to connect with lawmakers.

- The Committee also discussed a process for soliciting nominations of new Commissioners, as guidance from the newly formed Nominations Committee.
 - MSAC has since been advised that the Nominations Committee serves to elect officers, but Commissioner nominations should be recommended by staff and eventually go through the Governor’s appointments office. Staff are asking for appointments for more direction and clarification of the purpose and role of the committee.
 - If you have a recommendation, submit names to the staff for follow-up
- The By-Laws identify the “Fall” quarterly meeting where officers are elected. The Commission is requested to approve the roles of Vice Chair and Executive Committee members that have been considered “interim” since January 2025.

VOTE:

Recommendation to approve Jamie Heater as Vice Chair of the Commission;

Motion: Kwon

Second: Rebecca Massie Lane

Discussion:

In Favor: Unanimous

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

VOTE:

Recommendation to approve the following members of the Executive Committee: Judy Kwon, Jamie Heater, Rebecca Massie Lane, and Flannery Winchester

Motion: Elaine Bachmann

Second: Elizabeth Hughes

Discussion:

In Favor: Unanimous

Opposed: all

Abstained: all

Collection Management (Bachmann)

Elaine Bachman described that the Committee was formed to create policies to ensure the long-term protection of the state's public art collection

- The committee reviewed MD Economic Development Code § 4-602 (Maryland Public Art Initiative), highlighting that the code states:
 - Artworks funded by the Commission are “property of the commission.”

- The Commission is responsible for providing an annual inventory of artworks to the Department of General Services and coordinating with them on conducting regular maintenance and preservation of works in the collection.
- Program funds may be used for maintaining the collection
- Policies must be in place for best practice in this inventory and collection management process moving forward.
- We are at a pivotal time where we have access to living artists who can best advise on the long-term care and maintenance of their work, but we need a repository for this information.

Patterson:

- The size of the collection has doubled in 5 years, and in another five years, it may be close to doubled again.
- An example of what we are already facing is the 9/11 memorial
 - This is a highly public memorial and is subject to accidents and light vandalism 1-2 times a year. MSAC maintains this work with no dedicated budget
 - The memorial recently needed a cleaning, and staff address it as it comes up.
 - We are now preparing for a full treatment and cleaning of the 9/11 plaza memorial in anticipation of the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.
 - The upstairs memorial, as a part of the 9/11 memorial plaza, is scheduled to be relocated to the World Trade Center lobby on a temporary basis, with more updates to follow.
 - As the collection grows with new works, so does the need to maintain the artwork. Additional artwork in the collection requires care and inventory.

Bachmann: The burden of success! As we grow, we need a policy that grows along with us.

Next Step: MSAC staff to meet with Commerce's Assistant Attorney General to determine if this might be addressed through regulations drafted by the staff, in coordination with state agency partners, and ultimately approved by the Commission.

Program Report & Active Projects Updates (Patterson)

2011 - 2020: 6 completed artworks

2019 legislation revision: Opened up the eligible artworks. As a result, in five years, we doubled the collection

2022- 2024: 4 additional artworks completed

As of 2025: 17 Completed Artworks in the State Public Art Collection, with three planned dedications this fall.

9/18/25: Dedicate two artworks at FSU

10/3/25: Dedicate two artworks at Catonsville

11/4/25: Dedicate one artwork at Bowie State University

When we look at the map of where the 17 works in the collection are located, we see holes in the geographic reach.

If we look at the 13 currently active projects, we can see how the size of the collection will nearly double again. However, we still see missing people in areas in the north, north east, and central-western parts of the state.

One of the important roles of the Public Art Across Maryland grants program is to make funding available to local governments and communities to plan and implement projects in the parts of our state that see less state capital investments.

Significant Updates to Active Projects (Howell):

- Victor Ekpuk's "Conversation", installed at Bowie State Univ.
 - Photos of the installation in progress, and finished artworks
- Semi-Finalist List for BCCC
 - Four semi-finalists, all Maryland-based (due to the budget)
- Rodney Carroll presented the design for MSP Barracks-V, Berlin, to the DGS Secretary and Lt. Governor Miller
 - The contract was approved just in time for the building's dedication
 - Sculpture along Rt. 50, highly visible to those driving to and from Ocean City
- Po Shu Wang presented his latest design for the USMSM campus
- Marc Archambault continues to develop his allegorical stone mosaic design for UMBC
- Mike Sazbo visited Salisbury on a community/campus engagement tour.
 - Four-day tour of the area and campus, including conversations with over 100 students

2026-2028 Maryland Public Artist Roster (Howell)

The staff is presenting a recommendation to approve the 564 artists and artist-led teams to be listed on Maryland's FY26-FY28 Public Artist Roster.

- No artist is being selected for a project or funding. We are voting to approve artists for inclusion on the roster.
 - MSAC received 625 applications
 - After staff review for eligibility,
 - 602 applications advance to review by 25 panelists from across the U.S.

- 564 artists/teams are recommended to the FY26–FY28 Roster
- (93% acceptance rate)
- By the numbers:
 - Retention: 229 applicants from the first roster are included on the new roster
 - New Applications: 335 applicants (14%) of these were artists who responded to targeted outreach from staff.
 - Maryland-Based: The previous roster included 153 Maryland-based artists (35% of total)
 - The new roster includes 171 Maryland-based artists (31% of the total)

VOTE:

Recommendation to approve the 564 artists and artist-led teams recommended for the Public Artist Roster.

Motion: Heater
Second: McGowan
Discussion: None
In Favor: All
Opposed: None
Abstained: None

Review & Selection of New Projects (Patterson)

Ryan Patterson shared a list of public art eligible projects provided by DBM.

- This year, the list was shared later than usual, preventing our team from fully researching all the projects on the list. Only one project is ready to advance for a vote at this time.

Hughes: Do we ever decline projects? If a budget is limited, etc.

Patterson: We make a recommendation for the board to approve a project based on location visibility/public access and budget. Commissioners are invited to participate in our exploratory meetings with the agencies, if that is of interest.

Kwon noted that there are a few projects on the list that are past the construction period, asking if the buildings are completed with no artwork.

Patterson: Yes, those are the Morgan State Projects; they keep us at arm's length. We are looking to revisit to see if we can advance those projects or if it's best to decline them to remove them from our list.

The preference is to come in at the end of the design process, but there have been exceptions. At USMS, that project is completely finished, but we are working on it. Technically, we have 7 years to spend the funds, because it is bond-funded

Howell: If anyone has a relationship with Morgan State, maybe you could help us advance this request.

Jerome Gray replied that he would like to participate in a meeting with Morgan.

Jamie Heater: If funding is allocated, and it doesn't end up working out to get art, what happens to the funds?

Patterson: The funds are not supposed to be additional funds for the project. The funding should go back to the general state fund. The funding is removed from the capital funding budget. MPAC does not get to reallocate the funding. It's an additional capital bond fund, and has to be spent on that bond project.

Heater: It removes our ability to pit one project against another, which is good. But if someone doesn't want to work with us, it doesn't harm us; use it or lose it. If those funds do not come back to our fund, we cannot reallocate the funding to something else.

Patterson: We generally have taken on as many projects as we can, but we can not do all of them. We are just limited in our ability to say yes to everyone.

Howell: It's hard to decline any of the projects; we want to spend the funds on money and artists, but we can not do all of the projects capacity-wise.

Grey: But we really want to do these projects! Utilizing this money that has been allocated, get more projects out into the public, that's what the funding is there for.

Heater: We want to say yes, but we have to look at our constraints with staff capacity AND conservation, collection management. Suppose there is no structure to fund a conservation program.

To replace you would be 10 people; we have to make decisions based on our own resources.

Self-eliminating some projects may be good to balance capacity.

Nora Howell introduced the one project ready to advance: **Health and Human Sciences Complex, University of Maryland, College Park.**

The recommendation to advance this project is based on its location: College Park is the University System of Maryland's flagship campus, the overall enthusiasm and willingness to collaborate exhibited by the client (campus) and project management team, and the construction timeline. This opportunity is coming up at an ideal time in the project schedule.

VOTE

Recommended to approve for staff to pursue Public Art Investment at the New Health and Human Sciences Complex, University of Maryland, College Park.

Motion: Jackson

Second: McGowan

Discussion:

In Favor: All

Opposed: None
Abstained: None

Final Discussion:

Molly Jackson asked if the projects we are pursuing ever get canceled?

Patterson: Yes, projects will get postponed, paused due to budget, etc.

Howell: Three projects were canceled or paused indefinitely within the last year.

New Business, Justice & Equity Sharing

Elizabeth Hughes shared that in October 2025, four Confederate monuments from Baltimore City and others from across the country will be installed in LA as part of the MONUMENTS exhibition. I am curious to see what will happen to Baltimore's monuments afterwards. The Sons of the Confederacy have attended Maryland Historical Trust board meetings for the past several years, demanding that the statues be returned. The exhibition they are part of may travel to other locations. The current loan agreement is only for the LA exhibit.

Brittney McGowan shared updates about her projects responding to history in public parks that were former home sites in Prince George's County. We have space! Interested in installing the artworks in the historic locations, if the works are returned, could we potentially include them at one of these locations?

Elaine Bachmann expressed gratitude to operate in the State of Maryland, which supports our open exploration of ideas and acknowledges our shared and complicated history.

Ryan Patterson expressed gratitude for the Lt. Governor's acknowledgement and vocal support of the Monument to Black Patriots of the American Revolution when it went before the Board of Public Works.

Dates of upcoming dedications and the location for the next meeting will be announced.

Kwon: Our meeting is adjourned!