

Saugerties Arts Commission NOV minutes 11_17_2025

Attendees (best match from transcript)

- Speaker 2 = Peg (town liaison, voucher signer, garlic festival/poster organizer).
- Speaker 4 = Giselle (handles budget tracking and newsletter/web details).
- Speaker 3 = Andrew (design/visual work, meet-and-greet logistics, banners).
- Speaker 5 = Nina (runs agenda, pays web/domain costs; name not 100% clear from transcript alone).
- Speaker 1 = Active member (volunteer-value idea, AI-for-logistics only, mentions Kim Chambers; name not clearly stated in the transcript).

The meeting discussed the financial transparency and receipting of expenses for events, including a \$150 expense for a bartender at the "Immune Shine" event. The committee emphasized the importance of clear documentation and transparency. They also debated the inclusion of AI-generated art in the Garlic Festival poster contest, with a consensus leaning towards original art only. The newsletter format was reviewed, suggesting a return to a simpler, more digestible format. The next meeting was rescheduled to December 15th. The group also discussed the need for a consistent budget and the potential for new members, including Kim Chambers. The discussion centered on the impact of art contests and AI on community engagement. Speaker 4 emphasized the importance of real art made by hand and the potential of AI to influence future art relevance. Speaker 1 highlighted AI's practical uses in climate solutions but warned against its intrusion into humanistic areas like therapy and friendship. The group debated the inclusion of non-artists in art contests, with Speaker 2 noting past issues with artist egos. They also discussed the logistics of art submissions, the benefits of community art programs, and the potential for hosting events to boost local creativity.

Key points (with timecodes)

Money, audit, and vouchers

- Past “Immune Shine” December event: lawyer questioned a \$150-ish expense (tip/gratuity and receipt from Sarah’s “Lush Life” company).

- [0:00:00–0:03:18]

- Commission members are unpaid volunteers, following advice from liaisons and lawyer; concern that the problem is town processes, not the Arts Commission.

- [0:02:10–0:04:18]

- Idea: show the value of your volunteer labor (hours × professional rates) to strengthen budget advocacy.

- [0:05:38–0:07:09]

Systems and budget clarity

- Need clearer, consistent forms and rules for expenses and vouchers across town boards.

- [0:04:45–0:05:27]

- Plan to tally remaining 2024 budget after the last event, once all vouchers are in.

- [0:24:34–0:25:41]

Grant-writing workshop with Caroline

- Plan a free grant-writing workshop for artists led by Caroline at Alana/Ohana Café; about \$300 for coffee/tea/light snacks, venue possibly allowing cash bar.

- [0:11:05–0:13:55], [0:16:36–0:17:48]

- Target early–mid December (e.g., Sat Dec 13), to stay within the current budget year and likely avoid town-board pre-approval.

- [0:12:18–0:16:15]

Winter Meet & Greet

- Ornament-exchange party at Black Walnut Farm; ~38 RSVPs so far; capacity 130–150; DJ and non-denominational “festive/creative” look.

- [0:19:24–0:23:51]

- Need to confirm safety person at the railroad crossing and clarify what the \$150 service charge covers.

- [0:23:54–0:24:30]

Newsletter

- Old version (Autumn): simple chronological list with short blurbs felt easy to use.
- Current version (Hannah): more images and blocks, but harder to scan and more work.
- Consensus direction:
 - Go back toward chronological, text-first format.
 - Use fewer/smaller images (mainly your own event photos).
 - Possibly use forms/AI to collect and format listings, but keep requirements simple.
- Hannah is overwhelmed; her future role (newsletter and/or commission member) is uncertain and needs clarifying.
- [0:32:09–0:35:58], [0:39:36–0:45:20], [0:54:31–0:55:07]

AI and art (Garlic Festival poster)

- Peg reports backlash that one garlic festival poster looked AI-generated.
- Group sentiment: for now, the garlic poster should be original, human-made art; AI either disallowed or clearly separated.
- [1:05:33–1:12:05]

Next meeting and membership

- Next Arts Commission meeting moved to Dec 15 (with cookie exchange). It should:
 - Set 2025 budget needs and event schedule.
 - Prepare for January meeting (officer roles, formal budget ask).
- [1:00:18–1:01:05], [1:01:39–1:03:39]
- Need to recruit new members, e.g., Kim Chambers (local gallery/brick-and-mortar).
- [1:03:39–1:04:07]

2. Unresolved deliverables (simple list)

- Fix/process items
 - Clarify voucher/expense rules and forms with town.
 - Calculate remaining 2024 budget after final vouchers.

- Grant-writing workshop
 - Confirm date (aim: Sat Dec 13 or nearby).
 - Confirm venue and exact cost (~\$300).
 - Double-check if town-board pre-approval is needed this year.
- Winter Meet & Greet
 - Confirm railroad-crossing safety staff at Black Walnut Farm.
 - Confirm what the \$150 service fee includes.
- Newsletter
 - Chair to meet with Hannah:
 - Is she staying on the commission?
 - Does she want to keep the newsletter?
 - How many hours does it take, and what's hardest?
 - Decide on new newsletter format and simple submission rules.
 - Giselle to explore basic automation/AI or forms that are realistic.
- Outreach
 - Make sure newsletter goes to Saugerties Democratic Committee and consider Republican committee and other local lists.
 - Start list of regional outlets (Arts Mid-Hudson, Chronogram, regional IG accounts, nearby Chambers) to send events to.
- Garlic Festival poster
 - Peg to take back a clear recommendation: no AI for the winning garlic poster (or separate AI category, if they choose).
- Membership and 2025 planning
 - Ask Kim Chambers and others about joining.
 - Before Dec 15, draft a 2025 budget + event calendar to refine at that meeting.