

# City of Norcross

*65 Lawrenceville Street*

*Norcross, GA 30071*



## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 26, 2026

6:00 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room

### **Norcross Public Arts Commission**

**Chair Elizabeth Simpson**  
**Board Member Samantha Spitzner**  
**Board Member Robert Forro**  
**Board Member Jacques Murphy**  
**Board Member Nicole Morgan**  
**Board Member Michael MacManus**  
**Board Member Angela Faustina**

## A. Call to Order by Chair Elizabeth Simpson (Roll Call)

Please silence cell phones and electronic devices.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Elizabeth Simpson at 6:32 p.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Elizabeth Simpson	Chair	Present	
Jacques Murphy	Vice Chair	Present	
Michael McManus	Board Member	Present	
Nicole Morgan	Board Member	Present	
Robert Foro	Board Member	Present	
Samantha Spitzner	Board Member	Present	
Angela Faustina	Board Member	Present	

## B. Approval of Minutes:

### Approval of the Norcross Public Arts Commission April 28, 2026, meeting minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2026, Norcross Public Arts Commission meeting.

*RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS] 6-0*

*MOVER: Samantha Spitzner, Board Member*

*SECONDER: Jacques Murphy, Vice Chair*

*AYES: Simpson, Foro, MacManus, Morgan, Murphy, Faustina, Spitzner*

## C. Citizen Input: None

## D. Treasurer's Report: Mike

Mike McManus presented an overall budget update covering hospitality, office supplies, White Squirrels of Norcross (WSN), fundraising, and grant-related projects.

### **White Squirrels of Norcross (WSN) Project**

The Board discussed keeping hospitality expenses separate from grant-funded projects, noting that grant funds must be used strictly for project-related costs. The White Squirrels reception was recorded under the WSN budget, and members agreed to keep hospitality funds available for future standalone events. Fundraising for the WSN project is ongoing, with early contributions reported and continued outreach needed.

### **Vinyl Box Wraps**

Updates were also provided on various project budgets and grants, including the Norcross Forever Stamps CID grant, which has been partially reimbursed, and confirmation of receipt of CID grant funds by the City. Additional allocated funds remain for ongoing and future project needs.

The Board also discussed tracking improvements, including the potential creation of a separate line item for Flag Boxes to better organize related expenses. Several follow-ups were noted for outstanding payments and budget clarifications, and a reimbursement request for a small expense will be submitted.

## E. Board Updates

**White Squirrels of Norcross Ribbon Cutting and Reception Recap** — Board members reviewed the White Squirrels of Norcross kickoff reception and agreed the event was successful, with approximately 25-30 attendees. Members discussed improving publicity for future events through printed invitations distributed to local businesses and identified the June 19th summer concert as an opportunity for outreach and fundraising. Promotional merchandise ideas, including T-shirts and ball caps, were also discussed.

**Social Media & White Squirrels of Norcross Hashtag Update (Samantha)** — Board members discussed social media promotion for the White Squirrels of Norcross project and agreed to use **#NorcrossWhiteSquirrels** as the official project hashtag.

**Discovery Garden Expansion Ribbon Cutting (June 9th at 3:30 p.m)** — Board members were reminded of the upcoming Discovery Garden Expansion Ribbon Cutting scheduled for June 9, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. and were encouraged to attend.

## F. Council Updates:

Liz provided an update on items presented to City Council during the May Policy Work Session. The Norcross Amplified project and the Norcross Forever Stamp Collection are expected to receive approval at the June 1, 2026, City Council meeting.

Liz also reported that the Commission's bylaws were ratified; however, provisions related to member onboarding/interviewing and member removal were not included. Members discussed the need for broader guidance regarding attendance and removal procedures and supported pursuing updates to the City's policy manual to address these issues. As part of the discussion on board appointments, members noted that the video application process will be retained. A resolution outlining member interviewing and selection procedures will be brought forward for future Commission consideration.

## G. Returning Agenda Items:

### 1. 25-7369: **White Squirrels of Norcross Fundraiser**

Mike McManus reported that he will begin outreach to downtown businesses and City Council members to support fundraising efforts for the White Squirrels of Norcross project. Members discussed a public fundraising tracker concept featuring a tree with donation levels displayed on its branches and a movable white squirrel indicating fundraising progress. Mike also suggested ordering four additional marble composite squirrels instead of three to accelerate the program, noting an approximate six-week turnaround time. The tracker is intended for use at community events, including the June 19th concert.

Members also discussed potential locations for displaying the tracker, including city-owned properties, and explored the possibility of incorporating a seasonal public art mural into a permanent display space. The Commission expressed interest in adding a QR code and electronic payment options, including credit card and Venmo donations, to simplify the donation process. Liz and Mike will coordinate with City staff regarding electronic donation capabilities.

**A motion to approve \$1,500 to order four additional marble composite squirrels.**

*RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS] 6-0*

*MOVER: Jacques Murphy, Vice Chair*  
*SECONDER: Angela Faustina, Board Member*  
*AYES: Simpson, Forro, MacManus, Morgan, Murphy, Faustina, Spitzner*

**2. 25-7252: White Squirrels of Norcross — Phase I, Part 2**

The Commission discussed distribution of original and duplicate squirrel sculptures between historic Norcross and Pinnacle Park, as well as Phase 2 grant planning.

Jacques Murphy reminded the Board that installation decisions directly impact the strength of the grant application, emphasizing the importance of requesting the maximum support possible for the placemaking project. Based on this discussion, the Commission agreed that original pose sculptures should be prioritized for Pinnacle Park as part of Phase 2 of the White Squirrels of Norcross initiative, with duplicate sculptures installed in historic Norcross.

The Commission also voted on the next sculpture poses. Parks and Recreation will be consulted regarding final placement within Pinnacle Park. The approved poses include the Ground Pose, the Window Pose, and a Standing Pose with the head turned.

Members also raised questions regarding risk management, including whether installations are covered under City insurance and how theft or damage to sculptures would be addressed.

The estimated Phase 2 budget remains approximately \$15,750, and the grant strategy continues to support expanded placemaking in Pinnacle Park.

**3. 2025-345: Gwinnett Creativity Fund Grant Opportunity - 5 minutes**

The Commission received a status update on the Norcross Amplified grant application. Jacques Murphy reported that the application passed the first round at the Policy Work Session and is pending approval at the June 1, 2026, City Council meeting.

**4. 2026-75: Norcross Forever Stamp books - Mike/Jacques**

A status update was provided on the Forever Stamp Collection project, which is in the same approval stage as Norcross Amplified and is awaiting consideration at the June 1, 2026, City Council meeting.

Accent Creative, along with Mike and Julie, is currently developing final artwork; however, no final designs are ready for printer review at this time. The grant will remain pending City Council approval on June 1, 2026, and final artwork will be submitted to Accent Creative once approval is received.

Julie's verbiage was selected as the preferred option; however, final artwork has not yet been completed. The agreed-upon verbiage will be forwarded to Accent Creative following City Council approval.

**5. 2026-111: Gwinnett Creativity Fund Grant 2026 Placemaking - 5 minutes**

The Commission discussed the Phase 2 grant application for Pinnacle Park squirrel installations. The grant opened May 15, with submission targeted for the end of June ahead of the July deadline. The project scope and budget were clarified through prior discussion, and Jacques Murphy will lead the application process.

**6. 2026-119: 2027 Project Planning and Budget Considerations**

The Commission reviewed six priority public art projects and assigned leads for each: Tiny Door Project (Angela, Nicole supporting); Beaver Ruin Wall Mural (Samantha, Mike supporting); Art Directional Totem Pole (Liz, Robert and Angela supporting); Gwinnett County Library Student

Art Mural (Liz, Angela and Nicole supporting); Skin Alley Crosswalk (Robert, additional support needed); and QR Code Vinyl Box Wraps (Mike, with support from Accent Creative).

Members agreed each team will put together a simple one-page outline (scope, cost, timeline, etc.) and report back within two months. Mike McManus also encouraged looking beyond the Commission for ideas by engaging local artists, community groups, and other city boards, along with using social media and possible town hall-style input sessions.

The group discussed expanding future projects to include non-visual arts like music, dance, and performance-based ideas, and noted that Art Splash should be added as a recurring item. The Johnson Dean trail area was also mentioned as a possible location for future installations.

Liz noted that jurisdiction needs to be confirmed before moving forward with the library mural, and Robert suggested bringing in local artist support to help manage costs.

## H. New Agenda Items:

### 1. 2026-191: **City Ordinance Draft Mandating Public Art Funding from All Capital Projects**

**Tabled Item** — Due to time constraints, the item was not discussed in detail. A motion was made to table the item to the next regularly scheduled June board meeting. Robert Forro will review the topic prior to the next discussion.

*RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS] 7-0*

*MOVER: Jacques Murphy, Vice Chair*

*SECONDER: Michael MacManus, Board Member*

*AYES: Simpson, Forro, MacManus, Morgan, Murphy, Faustina, Spitzner*

## I. Additional Input/Discussion Not Otherwise Addressed By This Agenda:

## J. Adjourn Motion

Nicole Morgan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 pm, seconded by Mike McManus. The vote was unanimous, 7-0