

ERIE COUNTY ARTS IN PUBLIC PLACES

General Committee Meeting

July 16, 2025

Meeting Minutes

The Arts in Public Places General Committee Meeting was held on Wednesday July 16, 2025 in the Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Garden, 2655 South Park Avenue Buffalo, NY 14218 and by video conference, in accordance with NYS Open Meetings Law. A quorum was present as indicated:

Members:

Alexa Wajed
Edreys Wajed
Don Siuta
Bernice Radle

Susan O'Connor Baird (excused)

Ex-Officio Members:

William Geary (Commissioner of the Department of Public Works)
David Bojanowski (County Executive's Office)

Other Attendees:

Thomas E. Baines (Deputy Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development)
Monica Boutin (Project Coordinator)
Tracy Cichocki (Deputy Commissioner Buildings and Grounds)
Erin Grajek (Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens President / CEO) and team

1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum:

- The Arts in Public Places Committee was called to order by Chairwoman Wajed at 12:05 PM, roll call was taken by Monica Boutin and a quorum was declared present.

2. Approval of Draft Minutes:

- Upon motion by Mr. Wajed and seconded by Mr. Siuta, draft Minutes for the June 11th 2025 Meeting were approved.

3. Election of Officers

- Upon vote via paper ballot, Committee members re-elected Alexa Wajed as Chair and Don Siuta as Vice Chair.

4. Whistleblower and Conflict of Interest Certifications:

- Present Committee members completed their annual Whistleblower and Conflict of Interest certifications. (Ms. Radle was participating via video conference at this point and had not yet arrived).

5. 2025 Small Works Update

- Ms. Boutin provided an update on the Small Works program, highlighting important dates, including:
- July 25th – deadline to send scoresheets to Ms. Boutin
- July 29th – Selection Committee Meeting to identify semi-finalists
- August 13th – General Committee Meeting to identify finalists
- Ms. Boutin gave an overview of the scoring process and organization of Small Works submissions.

6. Special Guest: President/CEO Erin Grajek and Team

- Ms. Grajek provided an in-depth overview of the Botanical Gardens Expansion Project and, together with her team, presented a location for public art along what will become the main entryway into the newly remodeled Gardens. Ms. Wajed noted the location would be an ideal place for public art.
- Discussion ensued regarding the potential installation of public art within the main hallway of the new classrooms building, or behind the new building in the space looking out into South Park. Ms. Grajek was open to these options but noted the internal spaces of the new building have not been entirely finalized yet. Mr. Geary also noted that the space behind the new building intersects with South Park so if the Committee was interested in commissioning a work for this space, depending on the exact location, it may have to work with the Olmstead Parks Conservancy and the City of Buffalo. The entryway location proposed by the Botanical Gardens is entirely on county property.
- Upon motion by Mr. Siuta, and seconded by Ms. Radle, the Committee moved to include the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens as a public art location in the 2026 Call for Art.

7. Unfinished Business: Ms. Boutin provided a quick update on the 2025 Large Works. Both public art projects at the Buffalo Convention Center and Erie County Health Mall are underway and on schedule.

8. New Business

9. Public Comment

- No public comments.

10. Adjournment

- Upon motion by Mr. Wajed, and seconded by Mr. Siuta, the meeting was adjourned at 1:01 PM.