



Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date: October 20, 2026

Agenda Item: Public Arts Committee Dissolution

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BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

The Public Arts Committee (PAC) was established pursuant to Chapter 12.46.090 of the Whitewater Municipal Code on August 4, 2015. Since its establishment, the Committee has been involved in four public art projects within the City:

- East Gate Project Sculptures;
- Renewal of the Prairie Tiller Mural;
- Cravath Park arch project; and
- Traffic Box Art Project.

The Public Arts Committee subsequently held two meetings to discuss the potential dissolution of the Committee. No action to dissolve the Committee was approved at either meeting.

At its May 19, 2026, meeting, the Common Council recommended that the Public Arts Committee and the Whitewater Arts Alliance Board of Directors participate in a joint meeting to discuss the potential dissolution of the City-appointed Public Arts Committee and the future role of public art review within the community.

On June 10, 2026, a joint meeting of the Whitewater Public Arts Committee and the Whitewater Arts Alliance Board of Directors was held at the Cultural Arts Center. The meeting had 100% attendance from both the Whitewater Arts Alliance Board of Directors and the City Public Arts Committee. Three long-time members of the Whitewater Arts Alliance—Ginny Coburn, Dawn Hunter, and Caryl Yasko—also attended and participated in the discussion regarding the future of public arts initiatives in the City.

Steve Sahyun was elected Chair Pro Tempore and presided over the meeting.

Following the joint meeting, the Whitewater Arts Alliance Board of Directors expressed its willingness to assume an independent role in reviewing and vetting community-initiated public art proposals for the City of Whitewater.

The Whitewater Arts Alliance Board of Directors unanimously adopted a resolution entitled “WAA Board Resolution Authorizing WAA to Review and Vet Community-Initiated Public Art Proposals for the City of Whitewater.” A copy of the resolution is attached for the Common Council's consideration.

The proposed arrangement would allow public art initiatives to continue within the City while transitioning the review and vetting function from a City committee to an independent community organization. The Whitewater Arts Alliance has indicated that it believes it can provide a productive and

meaningful role in supporting future public art initiatives and is willing to take responsibility for reviewing and vetting community-initiated proposals.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

Public Arts meeting November 6, 2025-Disolution tabled

Public Arts meeting December 11, 2025-Motion made to dissolve no second

Common Council May 19, 2026

Joint Meeting between Public Arts and Whitewater Art Alliance Board June 10, 2026, recommended dissolution

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the discussions held by the Public Arts Committee and the Whitewater Arts Alliance, as well as the unanimous recommendation resulting from the June 10, 2026, joint meeting, staff recommends that the Common Council approve first reading of ordinance amending Chapter 12.46 of the Municipal Code to dissolve the City Public Arts Committee.

1. Option to waive second reading

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

-2026-O-25-Ordinance Repealing Section 12-43-090-Public Art Committee

-Whitewater Arts Alliance Resolution

-Joint Public Arts and Whitewater Alliance meeting minutes
