

1 **TOWN OF APEX**
2 **CULTURE AND ARTS ADVISORY BOARD**
3 **MONTHLY MEETING**
4 **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2025**
5 **6:00 P.M.**
6

7 The Culture and Arts Advisory Board with the Town of Apex met on Monday, November 17,
8 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Apex Town Hall, located at 73 Hunter Street in
9 Apex, North Carolina.

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11 This meeting was open to the public. Members of the public were able to attend this meeting
12 in-person or watch online via the livestream on the Town's YouTube Channel. The recording of
13 this meeting can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/live/ohFvXtt9qw0>
14

15 **[ATTENDANCE]**

16 Board Members - Present

17 Tom Colwell, Chair

18 Sean Durham, Vice Chair

19 Aspen Ambrose, Board Member

20 Aaron Barnes, Board Member

21 Bethany Bryant, Board Member

22 Juliana Corsetti, Voting Youth Representative

23 Brad Erickson, Board Member

24 Susan Kirley, Board Member
25

26 Board Members - Absent

27 Ranjit Hota, Board Member
28

29 Town Staff Present

30 Taylor Wray, Cultural Arts Center Manager
31
32

33 **[CALL TO ORDER]**
34

35 **Chair Tom Colwell** called the meeting to order at **6:00 p.m.**
36

37 **[APPROVAL OF MINUTES]**
38

39 A **motion** was made by **Member Sean Durham** and seconded by **Member Bethany**
40 **Bryant**, to approve October 20, 2025 minutes.
41

42 **VOTE: UNANIMOUS [8-0]** with Member Ranjit Hota absent

1
2 **[TOWN LIAISON REPORT]**
3

4 **Taylor Wray**, Cultural Center Manager welcomed new members Aspen Ambrose and
5 Aaron Barnes. She gave the following updates:
6

7 **Salem Street Crosswalk** - Still under review by NCDOT, review process is lengthy. The
8 selected artist has been informed of the project status.

9 **Video Projection Project** - A new potential location has been identified as a strong
10 candidate; the project has received 2 of the required 5 approvals. The technical vendor has
11 begun preparing drawings needed for planning review.

12 **Budget Reminder** - Members should submit budget request items by the December
13 meeting. Items will be discussed in December to determine whether they fit into the next
14 fiscal year or a later one. Submissions may be in Excel format and should include Project
15 name, Brief project description and Estimated cost.
16

17 **[CHAIRMAN'S REPORT]**
18

19 **Chair Colwell** gave updates on the following:
20

21 **Music Fest Planning** - Initial brainstorming meeting was held with Sean met offline,
22 additional discussions are needed to further develop the concept. The event will not occur
23 until at least next fiscal year and may be included in the upcoming budget request.

24 **Mural Projects** - Two murals are funded for the current fiscal year. Planning staff provided
25 input on acceptable mural locations, additional details are being finalized. A proposal will be
26 brought to the committee in December, with an RFP planned for release shortly after the New
27 Year.
28

29 **[PUBLIC COMMENT]**
30

31 **Chair Colwell** opened Public Comment and called the first speaker.
32

33 First to speak was **Daniel Buck** of 105 Linden Berry Drive:
34

35 "I appreciate the opportunity to talk to the Culture and Arts Advisory Board. Tonight, I
36 wanted to speak about an issue that I care about. I wanted to highlight why Apex should lean
37 more intentionally into performance arts. Actually before I came here, I saw there was a
38 comedy show in January at the Halle, and so I'm talking not just about traditional stage arts,
39 which is great and I think we should support that, and I know we've done a lot on that, but
40 also street-level performers who can animate public spaces: musicians, acrobats, jugglers,
41 magicians, living statues, live chalk artists, and other creators who turn sidewalks into small
42 moments of wonder. These arts fit naturally with our local spot and our social districting,

1 complement the Apex strong visual arts that we're trying to encompass, with the bus stops
2 and the murals, and so forth. I also want to highlight that this is important as we transition to a
3 post-COVID world because live performances are key to getting people away from their
4 home theaters and engaged with living public arts. I think that's a mission that can work in
5 tandem with everything. Performance arts are a proven small-town catalyst. The UNC School
6 of Government research shows that arts-based placemaking boosts foot traffic, visitor
7 spending, and business viability and visibility. The National Endowment for the Arts also finds
8 that street performances in towns under 100,000 increases linger time, a key driver of
9 customer activity. Additionally, Apex is well positioned with a real historic district, emerging
10 hotspots, and proximity to Raleigh, a large metro area. We have access both to talented
11 performers and audiences that might be willing to come if there's something special to come
12 and see, and they'll be ready to engage. Performance arts adapt beautifully to place. Every
13 small business already has a potential stage, a sidewalk, a patio, or a courtyard. One idea is a
14 simple venue-friendly list of businesses open to occasional performances that could create an
15 easy, flexible arts loop with just a few anchor locations. When community members and
16 visitors recognize that a Historic District and other hotspots offer frequent delightful surprises,
17 they might be more likely to stop in spontaneously. This can spark a virtuous spiral, as more
18 visitors attract higher-profile arts and other performers and activities. We can also activate our
19 local history. Sites like the Tunstall House naturally lend themselves to live storytelling and
20 heritage-based performances that highlight Apex's identity. On a brief personal note in
21 closing, the acronym CAAB also makes me smile. It's a little bit silly for me because I used to
22 be a taxicab driver. I encourage the continued collaboration of this board with the MTAB and
23 support people who want to use and enjoy our sidewalks, our bikeways, and our multimodal
24 routes, not just those who rely on them to get from point A to point B, but transportation itself
25 can be part of the engagement when it's pleasant, safe, and even has a little entertaining
26 activities that pop up along the way. As people move between hot spots, it strengthens and
27 connects our local arts and businesses and can ease parking concerns as people realize they
28 might want to walk or bike and move from place to place and see something amazing along
29 the way, perhaps at a bus stop or along the sidewalk. So, in closing, I want to thank you for
30 your time, and as you look forward to initiatives, think about performance arts and street arts,
31 and I want to thank the CAAB for your excellent work and for letting me come and talk about
32 how we might shape the cultural experiences worthy of the Peak of Good Living. Thank you
33 very much."

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Chair Colwell closed Public Comment with no one else to speak.

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39

[OLD BUSINESS]

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OB1 - Art Guide

1 **Member Susan Kirley** said the Art Guide final draft is complete and the guide is
2 almost complete.

3 **Mrs. Wray** gave quoted prices between \$4.75 and \$6.64 and overview of the book's
4 quality and timelines and turnaround time options. **Mrs. Wray** stated the turnaround time for
5 the lower cost is 12 days vs 5 days turnaround time for the higher cost. She noted that the
6 more affordable option is an Apex based business. There was a discussion about staple
7 binding vs. stitch binding and the cost options.

8 **Member Kirley** will reach out to Discover Durham to see who printed their Art
9 Guides.

10 **Mrs. Wray** said that there will be a digital version of the Art Guide available on the
11 Cultural and Arts Advisory Board page.

12 13 **OB2 - Downtown Window Painting (Dec 1st from 3:00 - 6:00)**

14
15 **Member Bryant** said that the rain date is on December 2nd, Bailey's, Apex Friendship,
16 Apex High and Felton Grove will be there and will be held at the Halle and the Fire Station.
17 Materials needed are cookies and hot cocoa.

18 19 **OB3 - Public Art Master Plan**

20
21 **Mrs. Wray** gave an update; bids closed on November 6th and there were 8 proposals
22 when last looked at. Email and mail were required for the proposal. She is currently reviewing
23 these and some are quite large with bios and they will be sent out to the Board Members for
24 feedback. The goal is to make an offer to a company and start negotiations in the month of
25 December.

26 27 **OB4 - Music moments**

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29 **Member Ranjit Hota** was absent. Mrs. Wray said that she had not heard back from the
30 Senior Center Manager at this time.

31 32 **OB5 - Poetry in plain sight**

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34 **Member Bryant** gave an update. She talked with a member from the Poetry and Plain
35 Sight of North Carolina poetry society and had discussed some ideas with him, also discussed
36 Magnetic Words at PeakFest to put together lines of poetry. She said if this is something the
37 Board wants to pursue then the details need to be worked out. There was further discussion
38 about how to move forward and direction. The goal is to have more details at the next
39 meeting in December.

40 **Mrs. Wray** asked Juliana Corsetti, Voting Youth Representative, if she had any
41 feedback on if the school system had any creative writing or poetry specialty classes.

1 **Youth Representative Juliana Corsetti** said that there was a creative writing class that
2 she had taken in her freshman year but the teacher is no longer there that taught the class, so
3 she wasn't sure if there was a class currently.
4

5 **OB6 - Art in Plein Air**
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7 **Member Bryant** had met with a local artist familiar with Apex and it was
8 recommended to start with a simple one-day event. Downtown Apex was suggested as the
9 primary painting area if Streetscape construction doesn't affect access. Artists would paint
10 onsite and possibly be allowed to sell artwork, the event would require extensive outreach to
11 local art groups, should not crossover with other events going on and coordination, including
12 restroom access at the Halle and notifications to the nearby property owners. If this is
13 successful, it could be a twice a year event. She suggested the weekend of April 18th or 25th.
14

15 **[NEW BUSINESS]**
16

17 **NB1 - Apex Sculpture Walk VI**
18

19 **Chair Colwell** said submittals are in and will be sending packets out for each of the
20 Board Members feedback on top choices of submissions. This year will be different from
21 other years being able to get together to discuss, but a subcommittee will be formed and will
22 come back to the Board for final approval. He gave a high overview of the process. The
23 Subcommittee was established to meet next Monday, November 20th.
24

25 Subcommittee members: Chair Colwell, Voting Youth Representative Corsetti, Member
26 Ambrose and Member Kirley.
27

28 **NB2 - PeakFest**
29

30 **Chair Colwell** wanted to start planning on PeakFest early this year. There are ideas
31 such as Poetry and other things that may come up as an activity that can be done at PeakFest.
32 He said there should be presence of the Board at PeakFest and can tag on with other groups
33 that have booths or other committees or departments so that the Board isn't out on their own.
34 He wanted to establish a group to work on PeakFest in the future and asked that the Board
35 Members be thinking about who would want to be in that group. He asked if there would be
36 anyone that would take the lead for PeakFest, it would be held May 2nd and asked everyone
37 to think about it and let himself or Mrs. Wray know offline, he said he would like this to be
38 established before the December meeting.
39

40 **Member Brad Erickson** said that there had been discussions about integrating some
41 type of augmented reality of art and the idea is to add an option as part of the RFP for murals
42 to add an interactive component. He said this could be an option for people who may do this

1 type of work to submit and following up after the meeting he could send out some research
2 and guidelines that he had put together as a suggestion.

3 **Chair Colwell** said that he had discussion with someone that does augment reality
4 and said he would like to talk with Member Erickson about some of the ideas on the topic
5 and this could advance quicker with what they have.

6 There was further discussion about what augmented reality and Otocast is.
7 Augmented reality was described as visual overlay with different objects as an educational or
8 disability accessory. Otocast is what Apex uses for the digital side of the sculpture walk.

9

10 **[ADJOURNMENT]**

11

12 A **motion** was made by **Member Erickson** and seconded by **Member Durham** to
13 adjourn the meeting.

14

15 **VOTE: UNANIMOUS (8-0)** with Member Ranjit Hota absent

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18 **Chair Colwell** adjourned the meeting at **6:43 p.m.**

19

20

Tom Colwell

21

Chair

22 Taylor Wray

23 Cultural Arts Center Manager

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25 Submitted for approval by Cultural Arts Center Manager, Taylor Wray, and approved on 15
26 December 2025.

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