



**Duncanville Arts Commission  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

City Hall, Briefing Room  
203 E. Wheatland Road  
Duncanville, TX 75166

**Tuesday, March 24, 2026  
6:30 PM**

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City of Duncanville Arts Commission meetings are available to all persons regardless of disability. The Duncanville City Hall is accessible to people with disabilities. If you need assistance in participating in this meeting due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call (972) 780-5000 or email [city.secretary@duncanvilletx.gov](mailto:city.secretary@duncanvilletx.gov) at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled meeting to request accommodation.

Persons may participate by live broadcast via Swagit. To view the live meeting or previous meetings, click on the following link: <https://duncanvilletx.new.swagit.com/views/454/>

1. Call to Order
2. Receive Public Comments, limit 2-minutes per individual speaker.

To submit a comment via email and for your comments to be read, the following information is required:

Submit a comment by 4:00 PM, March 24, 2026

Email [alex.hamby@duncanvilletx.gov](mailto:alex.hamby@duncanvilletx.gov)

Email title: Arts Commission Public Comment – March 24, 2026

First and Last Name; and address.

3. The Arts Commission to consider the following Minutes:
  - A. Consider the February 24, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
4. Commissioners Reports (limit to 2 minutes each)
5. Briefings and Discussions
  - A. Hotel Occupancy Tax Discussion
  - B. Importance of Quorum
  - C. Danieldale and Cockrell Hill Mural Discussion
  - D. Duncanville Poet Laureate Discussion and Planning
  - E. Annual Report Briefing

F. Arts and Business Mixers Update

6. Items for Individual Consideration

A. Arts Commission to Consider Hosting a Table/Booth at the 2026 BloomFest

7. Adjournment

I, the undersigned authority, do hereby certify that this Notice of Meeting was posted in accordance with the regulations of the Texas Open Meetings Act on the bulletin board located outside the entrance to the City of Duncanville City Hall, next to the entryway doors, a place convenient and readily accessible to the general public, as well as to the City's website and said Notice was posted **by** the following date and time: Tuesday, March 17, 2026, by 5:00 PM and remained posted for at least two hours after said meeting was convened.

**Alex Hamby**  
**Communications and Marketing Administrator**



# STAFF REPORT

**MEETING:** - March 24, 2026

**TITLE:**

Consider the February 24, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes

**Vision Statement:**

**“Duncanville, a City of Champions, is a safe, vibrant, diverse community committed to excellence in education, business, and good governance.”**

**Pillar:**

**STAFF RESPONSIBLE:**

Alex Hamby, Communications and Marketing Administrator

**BACKGROUND/HISTORY:**

**POLICY EXPLANATION:**

**FUNDING SOURCE:**

**ACTION ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve.
2. Disapprove
3. Other actions as directed by Council.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

2026-02-24 - Arts Commission Regular Meeting - Minutes



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, February 24, 2026

A meeting of the Duncanville Arts Commission was held on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, in the Briefing Room at City Hall (203 East Wheatland Road, Duncanville, Texas 75116) with a quorum to wit: Chair Angela Thorpe-Harris, Vice Chair Mac Browning, Linda Lydia, Amy Jackson, and Mary Ann Taylor. Luke Durmon, Patricia Coleman, and Julio Avila were absent.

Council Liaison, Mayor Pro Tem DeMonica Gooden, was absent

Alex Hamby, Marketing and Communications Administrator, was present

Devon Handley, Event Coordinator, was present

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM.

**2. Receive Public Comments, limit 2-minutes per individual speaker.**

Toby Lackey, Chair of the Community Engagement Advisory Board, introduced himself to the Duncanville Arts Commission.

**1. The Arts Commission to consider the following Minutes:**

**A. Consider the December 15, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes.**

Linda Lydia made a motion to consider the December 15, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mac Browning. All present voted in favor. Luke Durmon, Patricia Coleman, and Julio Avila were absent. None opposed. The motion passed.

**B. Consider the January 12, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes**

Linda Lydia made a motion to consider the the January 12, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mac Browning. Luke Durmon, Patricia Coleman, and Julio Avila were absent. All present voted in favor. None opposed. The motion passed

**Commissioners Reports (limit to 2 minutes each) During this time, members of the Arts Commission will present brief reports, each limited to two minutes.**

Linda Lydia reported attending several arts-related events in the Dallas area, including a Nelson Mandela exhibit at the African American Museum, a birthday celebration honoring Jewel Craft that featured an art display, and an art exhibition by Frank Frazier highlighting emerging artists. She also connected with a member of the Dallas Arts Commission and shared information about the Duncanville Arts Commission.

Mary Ann Taylor shared that both she and Dr. Anne Perry had poems selected for the Virtues Project, noting that their names appeared alongside Dwight Powell. She mentioned that the poems are available to read on the Virtues Project website.

Amy Jackson reported on Duncanville Community Theatre activities, noting that she directed the season's final play, which closed on February 14, 2026, with high attendance and a nearly sold-out performance. She highlighted the diversity of the cast, crew, and audience. She also attended Bishop Lynch High School's production of *Rock of Ages*, which featured a diverse cast.

Vice Chair Mac Browning reported attending the *Can't Beat the House* production with his family and shared that he enjoyed the performance. He also shared a poem titled *Twirling Round* during his report.

Twirling 'Round

Will you dance  
When I provide  
The music  
And the sway?

In step with Me,  
To follow as  
I lead this dance  
In turns a  
Twirling 'round?

Will you let  
Yourself be free  
And safe to move  
Within the sound,  
That swings a  
Twirling 'round?

Let your heart now  
Listen to  
The rhythm  
Of the beat,  
And feel  
The turns a  
Twirling 'round,  
A twirling round,  
A twirling round!

Chair Angela Thorpe-Harris reported attending meetings on the Duncanville Fieldhouse mural and grant presentations with the City Council. She provided updates on the podcast project, including subcommittee meetings and an upcoming dry run supported by the City's Communications and Marketing Department. She noted interest from Vice Chair Jay Reece Edwards of the Keep Duncanville Beautiful Board in a youth mural collaboration with Economic Development and mentioned a storm drain art project with Public Works planned for 2027. She attended local arts events, highlighted upcoming community events, introduced new information cards with QR codes for public outreach, and discussed plans for Juneteenth activities.

## **5. Briefings and Presentations**

### **A. Arts and Business Mixers, in collaboration with the Duncanville Community and Economic Development Corporation, presented by Interim Director of Economic Development Marlon Goff.**

Interim Director of Economic Development Marlon Goff discussed the Arts and Business Mixers, noting interest from the business community and the potential to resume these events to promote local arts while supporting economic development. He emphasized the use of mixers to attract investment, engage commercial brokers, and leverage the arts as a tool for business and community growth. He outlined plans to coordinate with the Duncanville Arts Commission, share costs, and schedule events for spring and summer, with future discussions involving the Duncanville Community Coalition Board to refine programming and funding. Mr. Goff highlighted the potential of arts-driven initiatives to stimulate economic activity and support the use of vacant commercial spaces.

### **B. Neighborhood Town Halls on the Arts presented by Community Engagement Advisory Board member Ron Thompson.**

Ron Thompson, Community Engagement Advisory Board member, outlined the board's plan to improve resident engagement and communication across Duncanville's boards, commissions, and City Council. He proposed creating public forums, including arts-focused town halls, to give residents a voice, consistently capture input, and preserve institutional knowledge. Mr. Thompson highlighted structured, goal-oriented discussions, scalable engagement, and opportunities for residents who cannot serve on boards to participate. He suggested starting with a pilot Arts Town Hall, using shared council and staff resources, and tracking outcomes to inform future initiatives. He invited feedback and proposed a joint meeting to refine the approach.

### **C. Ellafair at BloomFest 2026**

Event Coordinator Devon Handley confirmed that the D.L. Hopkins Senior Center is booked for the Ellafair reception on Friday, May 8, 2026, and the main event on Saturday, May 9, 2026. Setup can begin after 3:00 PM on Friday due to ongoing senior activities, though an earlier time may be possible if the calendar allows. BloomFest is also on May 9, 2026, from 4:00 PM to 10:00 PM, but it is separate from Ellafair and not yet on the event calendar. Mrs. Handley noted that advertising details still need to

be finalized, including times, dates, and location, and that advertising coordination is being handled by Ron Thompson, with Duncanville Arts Commission members invited to assist if desired.

**D. Cockrell Hill and Danieldale Mural (Items D & E are the same.)**

Communications and Marketing Administrator Alex Hamby brought up the unfinished mural at Cockrell Hill Rd. and Danieldale Rd., originally started by Curtis Ferguson before COVID paused the project. Commissioners noted that questions about the mural have come up repeatedly from the public and at city meetings. The discussion focused on determining what is needed to complete the mural, including assessing the current state, identifying necessary resources, and estimating costs. It was agreed that Curtis Ferguson, who was involved in the original project, should be invited to the next Duncanville Arts Commission meeting to provide background, outline what has been done, and explain the steps required to complete it. The goal is to gather information so the mural can be completed, and public concerns addressed

**E. Second quarter grant applications, policy revisions, and third quarter application cycle briefing.**

Alex Hamby provided an update on the second and third-quarter grant cycles. He explained that the February 17, 2026, City Council review of grant recommendations was delayed due to a discussion with the City Attorney, and the item is now scheduled for the next council meeting taking place March 3, 2026. He noted one revision to the grant resolution: funding for the city podcast was removed to make it available to applicants, with the Communications and Marketing department supporting the podcast's production. Mr. Hamby also reviewed policy revisions, including clarifying start dates for grant cycles and adding guidance on mural permits to align with the mural ordinance.

Regarding grant applicant presentations, Mr. Hamby proposed shortening the introduction process by having applicants submit a 30-second "elevator pitch" video about their project. This video would be shown to both the Duncanville Arts Commission and City Council, allowing council members to review applications efficiently while still understanding each project. He emphasized that videos are optional, applicants could still attend council meetings, and all applications—recommended or not—are reviewed by the council. He also noted that council members have historically reached out for additional information to make informed decisions, and applicants' redacted materials are provided to them in advance.

**6. Items for Individual Consideration**

**A. Xela Bistro Mural Reconsideration**

Chair Angela Thorpe-Harris stated that this item has been tabled.

## **B. Consider Recommending a Permit for the Xela Bistro Mural**

The Duncanville Arts Commission reviewed and discussed the process for approving a mural permit for Xela Bistro. Alex Hamby explained that murals now require a formal permit process: applicants submit a mural permit, the Arts Commission reviews it for artistic merit, and then makes a recommendation to the City Council. If the council approves, the permit is issued the next day; if not, it is withheld. The discussion noted that this mural includes the business name, which is addressed in a pending ordinance revision. The commissioners who were present voted in favor of recommending approval of the permit, with work scheduled to begin the following week, pending the final council steps.

## **7. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM.

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Angela Thorpe - Harris,  
Arts Commission Chair

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Alex Hamby,  
Staff Liaison



# STAFF REPORT

**MEETING:** - March 24, 2026

**TITLE:**

Hotel Occupancy Tax Discussion

**Vision Statement:**

“Duncanville, a City of Champions, is a safe, vibrant, diverse community committed to excellence in education, business, and good governance.”

**Pillar:**

**STAFF RESPONSIBLE:**

**BACKGROUND/HISTORY:**

**POLICY EXPLANATION:**

**FUNDING SOURCE:**

**ORG and Object Number**

N/A

**Available Budget**

N/A

**Purchase Amount**

N/A

**After Encumber**

N/A

**ACTION ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve.
2. Disapprove
3. Other actions as directed by Council.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

The Hotel Tax Two-Step (PDF)

# THE HOTEL TAX “TWO-STEP”

By **Bill Longley**, TML Legislative Counsel



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In the grand scheme of things, city hotel occupancy taxes account for just a small amount of city revenue. Property taxes and sales taxes are far more important to most cities. Why does it seem, then, that hotel taxes generate so much confusion and controversy?

The answer is this: Hotel taxes, unlike most other taxes, are levied on a specific category of businesses—hotels. As a result, these businesses tend to pay close attention to how cities expend these funds. Spend city sales taxes in a controversial way, and no particular category of business feels singled out enough to raise a fuss. Perceived misuses of hotel taxes, on the other hand, are a different story.

Fortunately, it's very easy for a city official to remember how to legally spend hotel taxes. A city simply needs to remind itself to always follow the "two-part test." The key element of a two-part test is – surprise – that it has two parts! Cities frequently remember to meet one element of the test, but then entirely forget the other part. This article will succinctly describe the two-part test, and then describe some common situations to which we can apply the test.

### Part 1: Heads in Beds

The first element of the two-part test is this: Every expenditure of hotel taxes must put "heads in beds." What this means is that every funded project must attract overnight tourists to the city's hotels and motels, thus promoting the city's hotel industry.

For example, how about a weekend-long arts and crafts show? There's a very good chance that out-of-town guests might come to visit such an event, so expenditure of hotel tax money on that event would likely qualify.

On the other hand, how about a quilting bee at a local nursing home? While a worthy cause, the quilting bee is unlikely to attract overnight tourists and, therefore, probably wouldn't qualify to receive hotel tax funds.

### Part 2: The Nine Categories

Once a project has cleared the first part of the test, it's time for – you guessed it – the second part of the test. Here it is: Every expenditure of hotel taxes must also fit into one of nine statutorily authorized categories. These are the nine categories: (1) convention and visitor centers; (2) convention registration; (3) advertising the city; (4) promotion of the arts; (5) historical restoration and preservation; (6) sporting events in a county under one million in population; (7) enhancing or upgrading existing sports facilities or sports fields (only in certain cities); (8) tourist transportation systems; and (9) signage directing the public to sights and attractions that

are visited frequently by hotel guests in the city.

Thus, even if an event puts heads in beds, it cannot receive hotel tax money unless it also fits into one of the nine categories. For instance, what about a livestock auction that will attract attendees from surrounding counties? While that event is likely to attract overnight tourists, it doesn't fit neatly into one of the nine categories. Therefore, it's likely not a valid recipient of hotel tax money.

It's not enough to meet one of the two prongs of the two-part test. A city must meet both! The following are some real-life examples that have been the focus of inquiries received by the Texas Municipal League (TML) Legal Department.

### Fireworks, Anyone?

The prototype hotel tax controversy is an event like a fireworks show or a parade. Cities frequently ask if they can fund a fireworks show with hotel tax money.

Let's subject a fireworks show to the two-part test. Does a fireworks show put heads in beds? The answer is "probably not," unless it is a truly spectacular event. But let's give it the benefit of the doubt. Suppose the Town of Pyrotechnic, Texas, truly does put on a fireworks extravaganza that attracts tourists from around the state. So far, so good.

But what about the second part of the test – the nine categories? Do fireworks shows fit neatly into any of the nine? Not really. Some may argue that such shows "advertise" the city, but this is likely not what that category means. Advertising the city literally means some sort of print or other media that explicitly promote the city. Otherwise, a city could simply say that any popular event "advertises" the city that holds it. Direct funding of fireworks displays and the like are, usually, not a very good fit.

### Signs of the Times?

Another frequent question concerns highway signs promoting the city. May a city fund a billboard touting the city's attractions, restaurants, and hotels? Let's put it to the two-part test. Heads in beds? Well, why not? If a billboard encourages motorists to stop in town, those motorists might stay the night, whereas without the sign they would have driven on to the next city. This is exactly what the statute intends. The nine categories? How about advertising? Prior to 2009, a convincing argument could be made that because a billboard literally advertises the city it refers to, that it would fit within the advertising category. All doubt was erased in 2009, when the Texas Legislature added the ninth category – signage directing the public to



sights and attractions. Travel signs are a perfect fit for hotel occupancy tax expenditures.

### Chambers of Commerce?

Cities frequently wonder if they can fund the local chamber of commerce using hotel tax money. Do chambers put heads in beds? Maybe, maybe not. Chambers of commerce are typically charged with promoting economic development, not tourism. Even assuming a chamber does promote tourism though, how about the nine categories? Funding a chamber doesn't, in itself, fall into any of the nine categories.

Fortunately, there is an easy solution. The laws governing hotel tax expenditures permit the city to delegate expenditure of hotel tax money to another entity, typically a chamber or convention and visitor bureau. As long as the chamber spends the money on projects that otherwise meet the two-part test mentioned above, it's fine to delegate some funds to them. There must be a written contract laying out the duties of the chamber, though. Also, the chamber must keep the hotel funds in an account separate from its general operating fund.

### Arts Organizations

City arts organizations are a common trouble area. It seems that every arts council in the state knows that promotion of the arts is one of the nine categories on which city hotel taxes may be expended. Cities know this because these

arts groups frequently come asking for the money.

The thing to remember about arts groups is this: Direct funding of the organization's operations does nothing in and of itself to put "heads in beds." Put another way, funding the operating budget of an arts council meets the second part of the test (promotion of the arts) but not necessarily the first.

The solution? The city should encourage the group to seek funding only for its festivals and shows that do, in fact, attract tourists to the city. By limiting the expenditure to such events, the city meets both parts of the test.

### Don't Forget to Report

Legislation passed in 2017 that requires cities to annually report hotel occupancy tax information to the comptroller, including information on how the funds are spent. Not later than February 20 of each year, a city that imposes a hotel occupancy tax must submit to the comptroller information that includes the city's hotel occupancy tax rate, the amount of revenue generated by the tax, and the amount and percentage of the revenue spent for each of the following purposes:

- Convention or information centers
- Convention delegates registration
- Advertising to attract tourists
- Arts promotion and improvement
- Historical restoration and preservation projects
- Signage directing the public to sights and attractions

Cities must comply with the annual reporting requirements by either submitting the report to the comptroller on a form prescribed by the comptroller, or alternatively providing the comptroller a direct link to, or a clear statement describing the location of, the information required to be reported that is posted on the city's website.

### What Else?

There are numerous other technical details about how to legally expend hotel tax funds. In truth, by simply learning and remembering the two-part test, city officials are 99 percent of the way toward full compliance with hotel tax laws. City officials with questions about the hotel occupancy tax should call the TML Legal Department at 512-231-7400. ★