

Meeting Minutes for Ennis Arts Association Business Meeting

MEETING DETAILS

Location: **Madison Valley Public Library Meeting Room
210 Main Street
Ennis, MT 59729**

Date/Time: **September 8, 2026, 10:00 AM**

ATTENDEES:

Louise Stevens, President
Barbara Chalupa, Treasurer
Lori Fink, Secretary
Barbara Gillispie
Margie Reck
Chelsee Mahsman
Jan Beekman

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Louise Stevens at 10:01 AM.

HANDOUTS

Three documents were distributed to attendees:

- **EAA September 8, 2026, Business Meeting Agenda**
- **EAA Financial View to Date**
- **MVAF 2026 Budget vs Actual 8/11/26**

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, AUGUST 12, 2026, MEETING

1. The August 2026 minutes and agenda were posted on the website on the "Meeting Info" page and a link was sent via email to the entire membership.
 - a. No objections or corrections were raised, so minutes are presumed to be approved.

II. REVIEW OF BLOOMS AND BRUSHES

1. Positives
 - a. The weather was perfect.
 - b. Two artists reported good sales.
 - c. The artist in the Jacobs garden in Virginia City had positive remarks.
 - d. Stephano said the traffic was good.
 - e. There were many repeat customers.
 - f. We got great coverage in the Madisonian.
2. Negatives
 - a. The women in the Library in Virginia City seemed abrupt/uncaring.

- b. Sold 50 tickets this year – down from last year. Competition from the Fly-Fishing Festival? We did not know when we scheduled the Tour that the two events would be the same day.
- c. There was no way to check when people bought online on the day of the tour.
- d. Not enough EAA members are willing to volunteer.
- 3. Suggestions for Improvement
 - a. We should consider separating Garden Tour Info and sales from the Info Booth at the MVAF.
 - b. Although this is technically a fundraiser, we can look at it more as a strong community/social event.
 - c. We need to be more “in your face” about ticket sales.
 - d. Should we have the Garden Tour take place before the MVAF?
 - i). Weather in June may be unpredictable/dicier.
 - ii). We could possibly use the tour to display raffle items for the MVAF.
 - iii). This would not really interfere with planning the MVAF as it is a separate planning committee.
 - e. Our combined MVAF/Bloom & Brushes posters were often taken down after the MVAF. We should have just a B&B poster for distribution (after the festival?).
 - f. We need to get Bloom & Brushes in the Chamber Calendar.
 - g. Need ideas for more and better publicity and more pre-sales.
 - h. It would be good to have a larger planning committee.
 - i. Pursue publicizing to garden clubs in Montana – there is a website listing them with contact information.
- 4. General Comments
 - a. We can investigate alternate dates – perhaps in July - but also keep August 14, 2027, in mind. Check with the Chamber. We will try our best to not conflict with other major events.
 - b. Attendees wanted to buy the hats that we gave as volunteer gifts.
 - c. Including volunteers, we had total participation of about 64.
 - d. Next year we are thinking of expanding the tour out near Troutdale.

III. BUDGET UPDATE

- 1. Madison Valley Arts Festival Budget vs Actual
 - a. Barb is expecting invoices for the items marked “Pending,” including Signs West for \$250; Chelsea M. for \$16 (30th Anniversary Balloons) and \$30 (Family Activities Booth items).
 - b. \$50 for gifts for Banks/Library? We gave them baked goods this year.
 - c. Louise S. insists on paying for the \$179 ad in the Bozone because she feels bad about the double-booking musician snafu.
 - d. There will be some adjustments to the spreadsheet, including \$80 for food booth fees and possibly some more raffle money that was found in the cash box after Blooms & Brushes.
- 2. EAA Overall Budget – 3Q
 - a. Revenue
 - i). Includes \$5000 grant for Three Rivers for the Senior Center Mural
 - ii). We have 70 paid memberships to date - \$1400.
 - iii). Total Fundraising revenue is \$6789, including the MVAF and Blooms & Brushes
 - b. Expenses
 - i). Far right column shows remaining budget unspent. What upcoming expenses do we have?

IV. REVIEW OF PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

1. We are \$2000 short on grant money for the Senior Center Mural. We have received a total of \$6000, \$1000 of which is reimbursable.
2. We could ask the Women's Club but are wary of abusing their goodwill.
3. Should we absorb this in our working budget? We don't use all of the budgeted amount for Blooms and Brushes. We could probably use \$1000 of that budgeted amount.
4. We should consider funding some of the mural because it is our own project.
5. We were turned down for several grants this year. Louise suggested that we start the process of applying earlier in 2027.
6. We should consider producing an informational brochure to help raise funds for public art.

MOTION: A motion was made (Barbara G.) and seconded (Jan B.) to use draw \$2000 from our existing funds to make up the difference in the Senior Center Mural Project, and request \$5-\$8000 from the Madison Valley Women's Club for Public Art Projects in 2027.

Motion passed unanimously.

7. Barbara C. will revise our Budget to add a line item for Public Art, and to also reflect changes in other budgeted line items discussed today.
8. Louise met with Stephano at the request of Barbara & Roy Washburn. They have purchased artwork from Stephano in the past. They have expressed interest in a large-scale mural next summer, hopefully for the green building at the end of town. This building is for sale, so this may or may not work out. Stephano has designed some artwork which looks similar to the old "Greetings from..." postcards. This artwork would be three dimensional. For that size building the price would be \$25,000. For the smaller Madison River Foundation building, it would be about \$16-18,000.
9. The Town Hall is not pursuing public art at this time.
10. If we apply for a Montana Tourism Grant, we could ask for enough money to do a couple of buildings. Grant application is due in January. If we approach the Women's Club for funding, we could go for matching funds in the grant. Representatives from the EAA should go to an MVWC Board meeting and make presentation.
11. The Yellowstone Club does sponsorships of about \$1000/each. It would be good to approach them if we have a project that needs multiple funders.
12. The Grand Unveiling of the Senior Center Mural will be September 26th, time TBD.
13. We will have an article in the Madisonian.
14. We will have on site signage – Funded by the Ennis Senior Center, 3 Rivers, The Montana Arts Council and The Ennis Arts Association.

V. IMPLICATIONS OF VC ARTS FESTIVAL

1. This show is 2.5 days, September 18-20.
2. All indoors in the Community Center.
3. Seems to be going for a more upscale audience.
4. The artist group comes from across the state.
5. \$50/person for the Quick Finish Invitational
6. Two elements they have that we do not:
 - a. Gala Opening – we could have on Friday night with live music?
 - b. Quick Draw – should we consider?

7. We should think about things to add to our festival. Some members of EAA will attend and report back.

VI. SOFTWARE AND SQUARE INVESTMENTS DISCUSSION

1. Louise looked at the Eventeny software and did the tutorials. We could use it for both the Arts Festival and Blooms and Brushes.
2. We tabled this discussion so everyone will have a chance to look at it.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

1. December get together at Barbara Gillispie's will not be an official meeting. It will be an ornament exchange and potluck.
2. Lori suggested that everyone look at the Ogden Arts Festival website that Ken P. recommended. It's a good guideline for organizing a festival start to finish.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:58 AM.

The next EAA Meeting will be on October 13, 2026, at 10:00 AM at the Madison Valley Library. This will deal mostly with Festival business.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Fink, Secretary