Sterling Opera House Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

June 8, 2026

1.Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call

Present: Gino DiGiovanni Jr., Brian Coppolo, Dana Florenza, Carleigh Paecht, and Karleen Guluzzy. A quorum was established.

4. Additions, Deletions, or Corrections to the Agenda

There were no additions, deletions, or corrections to the agenda.
Motion by Brian Coppolo, seconded by Dana Florenza, to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes

No minutes were received for approval.
Motion by Brian Coppolo, seconded by Dana Florenza, to table approval of the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Public Portion

The Chair opened the public portion and asked whether anyone present in the gallery or on Zoom wished to speak. There being no public comment, a motion was made by Karleen Guluzzy and seconded by Carleigh Paecht to close the public portion. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Old Business

Cabaret Event Recap

Karleen Guluzzy reported on the cabaret event held at Twisted Vine. She stated that approximately 35 to 40 people attended, with additional ticket purchases from individuals who were unable to attend. The event raised approximately $850, and an additional $40 was received from ornament sales, bringing the total proceeds close to $900. Karleen thanked Gary, Brian, and Chris for performing and noted that the event was well received. Commission members discussed the success of the event, including the strong attendance, positive public response, and benefit to both the Opera House and Twisted Vine. Members noted that many attendees stayed for food and drinks and that the event appeared to generate interest in future programs.
It was further noted that many attendees were from outside Derby, including surrounding communities such as Seymour, Oxford, and Bethany. Members discussed the value of reaching a broader audience and increasing awareness of the Sterling Opera House beyond Derby.

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Members also discussed questions received from attendees regarding City support and involvement. Chair DiGiovanni stated that he would speak with City representatives, including Linda and Joe, regarding future participation and support at events.

8. New Business

Walking Tours

Karleen Guluzzy discussed interest in holding walking tours again, noting that the tours held the prior fall were successful and that members of the public continued to ask when the Opera House would be open for tours. Members expressed support for exploring another walking tour, potentially in September. Chair DiGiovanni stated that he would discuss the matter with the city liaison and report back to the Commission.

St. Mary's Festival

Chair DiGiovanni reported that St. Mary's Festival would be held July 9, 10, and 11, 2026, and that the Commission was welcome to set up a table as it had done in prior years. Members discussed participating for at least one evening in order to maintain public visibility, share information, and potentially sell merchandise.

Members discussed the possibility of attending on Friday, with Thursday as an additional option depending on festival logistics and member availability. Karleen Guluzzy stated that she would inquire about booth placement at the next festival meeting, including whether the Commission could be located in an area with better foot traffic. She would report back by email after confirming details.

Paranormal Event Proposal

Chair DiGiovanni reported that he had been in contact with Charles Rosen, producer of paranormal conventions in Connecticut, regarding a possible event involving Twisted Vine and the Sterling Opera House. The proposed event would include a meal at a local restaurant, an introduction to paranormal equipment, and limited access to the Opera House, subject to City approval and Commission protocols.

Members discussed the proposal and noted that paranormal programming may draw interest because of its connection to local history and the public's curiosity about the building. Members also discussed whether a documentary-style project or other limited format could be considered if full tours were not possible.

Chair DiGiovanni stated that July was likely too soon for such an event and that November 21 or 22, 2026, appeared to be the next available dates provided. He stated that he would discuss the proposal with the city liaison along with the walking tour request and report back to the Commission.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the chair at 6:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Desroches