

**HERNANDO COUNTY**  **COUNCIL**

# Annual Report 2021

**ART** *in the*  
**PARK**  
SINCE 1984

**art**everywhere  
by the hernando county fine arts council

*Art Mark*  
**SUMMER ART CLASSES**  
WITH THE HERNANDO COUNTY FINE ARTS COUNCIL



**ARTS IN EDUCATION**  
a hernando county fine arts council grant



**COMMUNITY ARTS GRANT**  
a hernando county fine arts council grant

300 S MAIN STREET, BROOKSVILLE FL 34601  
[hernandoarts.org](http://hernandoarts.org)

# Hernando County Fine Arts Council's Mission

is to encourage, promote, and support all the creative arts in Hernando County and to provide a means to showcase the arts.

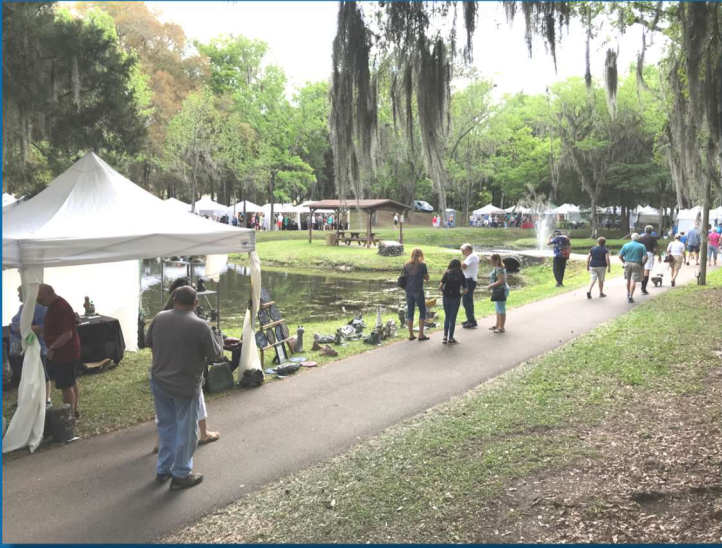
## HISTORY

The Hernando County Fine Arts Council (HCFAC) traces its roots back to 1982, when several professional artists in Hernando, Pasco and Citrus counties formed the Tri-County Professional Art League. At that time there was no place in the three counties that had a regular yearly show for the professional artist. In 1983 Hernando County's Library Director Hester O'Leary formed a little organization called Hernando Fine Arts Council. The first art show was held at Masaryktown's Kennedy Park in 1984.

In 1987 the Hernando County Commissioners passed a resolution based on Florida Statutes that formally created the Hernando County Fine Arts Council. The core members of the Hernando Fine Arts Council became the first set of council members appointed by the commissioners. Fast forwarding to 2021, Art in the Park is now in its 37th year and continues to be HCFAC's signature event and Hernando County's premier art festival. Our by-laws continue to stipulate that up to 15 county residents can be approved for membership by the County Commission for up to two four-year terms. The Council's current membership is composed of energetic volunteers from varying backgrounds and experiences all committed to supporting Hernando County arts, artists, art teachers, and art-related businesses. In addition, the Hernando County Fine Arts Council has been designated as the official Local Arts Agency. Local Arts Agencies provide services, support, and programs for arts organizations, artists, and their local communities. This designation also entitles HCFAC to income from Florida "State of the Arts" license plates purchased or renewed in Hernando County.

Included in the Council's mission is to "provide a means to showcase the arts." There have been several attempts over the years to acquire an Arts Council facility to showcase the arts. In 2019, the Council selected a consultant—DLR Group—to undertake a Market Assessment for a Cultural Arts Center Feasibility Study. The work was completed in 2020 (during the COVID-19 pandemic). Although, the study did not find Hernando County likely to sustain a standalone center at this time, the consultant provided valuable recommendations for us to help the county be ready when the time is right. These recommendations are designed to help us cultivate a community and culture of broad arts participation and attendance. Appropriately, the recommendations refocused our efforts on doing just that.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING



Strategic planning communicates an organization's priorities and offers a road map for completion. Thanks to Mike Dolan, Hernando County Fine Arts Council's first Strategic Plan was completed in 2017, refreshed in 2019, and refined again in 2021. The Council has made significant progress on all Strategic Initiatives in 2021.

### 2020-2024 Strategic Plan

#### 2021 Initiatives, Team Leaders, and Status

In January the Council held its third Strategic Planning retreat and revised its plan to focus on the following six initiatives. Each Initiative has a dedicated team leader responsible for developing a plan to accomplish the goal(s) of the initiative. These plans include tactics for accomplishing the goal, timelines, and a budget.



## Community, Advocacy, Outreach – Cheryl Hill

**Purpose:** Support the Arts Community to benefit artists, art organizations, art businesses, and Hernando County's economy

### Accomplishments

- ▶ Chair Beth Putnam and Facilities Chair Bill Yerrick presented results of the Cultural Center Feasibility Study to the County Commission.
- ▶ Expanding outreach to the western portion of the county, the Council held two meetings at offsite locations—Hernando Beach and Stage West Playhouse. The Hernando Beach meeting featured County Commissioner Wayne Dukes, the Council's liaison to the Commission. The meeting was heavily promoted to the west side of the county with excellent results.
- ▶ The Council's online Art Directory was created to help artists, art-related businesses, and art venues find customers. It is being promoted across Council's social media platforms and currently has 20 members.
- ▶ Our social media presence promoting activities of the Council and local artists has grown with excellent results.
  - From Sept 2021– October 2021: Reach was 15,164 accounts (up 84% from 2020)
  - From Jan 2021– October 2021: Reach was 34,176 accounts, with the largest audience being 3,000 people on Oct 5, 2021
  - Since April 2021, we have gained 400 followers on Facebook, showing a year-end total of 1,178 followers.
- ▶ The Art Opportunities page was launched to connect people and businesses looking for artists to do art projects.
- ▶ The Community Arts Grant Program offers grants to civic, cultural non-profits or charitable groups for projects that support art and encourage art appreciation in Hernando County. In the last four years, more than 20,000 people have been involved in the arts as a result of

these grant-funded projects. For 2022, the maximum grant amount was increased from \$500 to \$1,000 each. Fifteen applications were received and 11 were selected for funding.

- ▶ Efforts are underway to create a speakers bureau to increase the Council's outreach into the community. In 2021, presentations were made to six groups, reaching approximately 2,000 people.

## Projects and Partnerships – Allisa Babor

**Purpose:** Create and promote opportunities to experience and appreciate the arts across Hernando County

### Accomplishments

- ▶ The Council hired event consultant Highest Point Coaching to review our Art in the Park planning process and event venue. Suggestions from the consultant were incorporated into the 2022 plan.
- ▶ The 2022 Art in the Park festival is moving forward with a juried art show, a new registration system (ZAPP®), an expanded children's section, a better location for the main stage, and a new sponsor prospectus.
- ▶ Planning is underway for alternative fundraisers in 2022.
- ▶ A new project called "Art Everywhere" has been created by Nina Mattei and is being rolled out with support from our communications team. The project is intended to extend opportunities to our businesses to display art at their locations. This will be a collaboration among local artists, the Arts Council, the Chamber of Commerce, and businesses in Hernando County.
- ▶ We partnered with Brooksville Main Street to produce two Mobile Mural Tours, inviting muralists to paint canvas murals, which are displayed in Hernando Park then hung in several locations around the City of Brooksville before being auctioned.
- ▶ The annual "Art Stroll" in downtown Brooksville was a success with artists stationed in businesses. Wine and hors d' oeuvres were served and tickets were sold to cover costs.

## Arts in Education (AIE) – Barbara Blavatt

**Purpose:** Engage more children in the arts to improve their developmental and academic success

### Accomplishments

- ▶ AIE Grants are offered to arts educators working in K-12 classrooms in Hernando County Schools. The purpose of this grant is to support arts educators in delivering and promoting arts experiences students. Grants are offered twice a year.
- ▶ Eight AIE grants were awarded in September 2021, totaling \$3,679. Program funds have been increased for 2022 to \$4,500.
- ▶ The process for reviewing and approving the grant requests was updated and approved along with increasing the number of reviewers to five.
- ▶ A summer 2021 program called “Art Mark” was piloted to provide dance, visual art and music appreciation classes during the summer months for students K-12. Two locations were selected – Stage West Playhouse to serve the west part of the county and the Florida’s Adventure Coast Welcome Center in Brooksville for the east part of the County. It was a successful pilot program and plans are underway for summer 2022.
- ▶ Other programs to extend more options to serve our community with art offerings are under discussion for 2022.



## Fundraising – Kure MacDonald, Mike Dolan

**Purpose:** Expand our financial resources to fund programs that promote the arts and improve our capability, sustainability, and efficiency as an organization

### Accomplishments

- ▶ Planning for the 2022 Art in the Park is proceeding (managed by the Projects Team).
- ▶ Consultant Highest Point Coaching is advising the Council on ways to improve how we define and acquire sponsors for events, as well as, on improving operations.
- ▶ Grant writer Dr. Lori Romano is under contract to provide support for future grant opportunities (funding of \$5,000 was approved in the FY2022 budget).
- ▶ Several fundraising ideas outside of events are being explored for 2022: improving our online donation page, setting up an annual gifting program, exploring an online fundraising activity, and launching the “Arts Circle” program to identify individuals who want to support our mission and provide a stable income stream (in conjunction with the Capacity Building team).



## Facilities – Bill Yerrick

**Purpose:** Provide and/or acquire a flexible arts programming space to showcase the arts. This initiative specifically addresses the last requirement in our mission statement and was recommended by consultant DLR Group, which completed the feasibility study for a standalone Cultural, Visual and Performing Arts Center for Hernando County. One of DLR's recommendations was to work with Stage West Playhouse to explore development opportunities at their facility.

### Accomplishments

- ▶ Set up a joint committee with Stage West to explore how their existing spaces could be used by members of the arts community.
- ▶ The joint committee explored expansion of the Stage West facility to include classrooms, workshops, gallery space, office, and meeting rooms. Working with DLR, the consultant put together a cost proposal for a 6,000-square-foot expansion at a cost of approximately \$2.5 million.
- ▶ Further discussions with Stage West will continue in early 2022 to define our future relationship and whether to proceed with the project.
- ▶ Concurrently, the Facilities Team will explore commercial space for lease or purchase for comparison.





## Grow Council's Capacity – Executive Team (officers)

Purpose: Grow the capacity and capability of the Hernando County Fine Arts Council to better achieve its mission. This initiative encompasses all of the elements needed to move our mission forward with financial stability, strategic planning, communications, succession planning, technology, staffing, and volunteer recruitment. For this reason, the executive team members (chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, and immediate past chair) assess what is needed for the Council to advance its mission and set direction for the future.

### Accomplishments

- ▶ Strategic planning is being managed by Mike Dolan, who works with the strategic initiative owners to help them accomplish their goals as identified in their approved Strategic Initiative plans.
- ▶ Staffing is being managed by Beth Putnam who developed a job description and specific duties for a part-time contracted worker (funded in part through a 2021-2022 Florida Arts and Culture grant). A search for a candidate was completed and a contractor began work in early November.
- ▶ Improving financial stability is being worked in concert with the Fundraising team to upgrade our donations webpage (as an example); Based on earlier work from Kure McDonald and Sandi Brown, Diane Ziemski is developing the Arts Circle as a stable funding source and potential for volunteers.
- ▶ Updating technology is in process with acquisition of a new laptop, monitor and projector for the office.
- ▶ Contracting with ZAPP has improved Art in the Park's reach to artists, communications with prospective exhibitors, the jurying process, and the registration process.
- ▶ Improving volunteer recruitment and leadership succession planning will be part of our efforts in spring 2022.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, the Council had to cancel its major 2021 fundraiser, Art in the Park, which has been held annually on the second weekend in March for 37 years. Expecting the pandemic to see improvement by the fourth calendar quarter, a new fall gala fundraiser was initiated to be hosted by Stage West Playhouse in early November. Unfortunately, this too had to be canceled due to COVID-19 concerns.

The Council has traditionally relied on Art in the Park to provide the bulk of our operating funds, so the cancellation had a significant impact on our finances. In total, reduced attendance at the 2020 Art in the Park event, cancellation of 2021 Art in the Park, and cancellation of the 2021 fall gala resulted in a loss of up to \$40,000. Prudent management in prior years provided a reserve which was bolstered by the sale of two properties gifted to the Council. These funds allowed us to move forward with operations, including funding a feasibility study to determine if the county could support its own Cultural, Visual, and Performing Arts Center.

In 2020, although we ranked high enough to be included in the state's budget for a \$22,300 grant from the Florida Division of Arts and Culture, the entire funding line for these grants was cut. We subsequently received a Fast Track grant for \$2,500. Since Art in the Park had been canceled, we were allowed to use these funds to support one of our partners, Brooksville Main Street, on the Mobile Mural Tour and Art Stroll. We also received grant funding from Walmart and the Tourism Development Council.

In 2021, the Council received a \$22,300 grant for Art in the Park 2022. We are again ranked high enough to qualify for a similar amount in 2022 to be used for 2023 Art in the Park, pending state budget approval.

Planning for the 2022 Art in the Park is moving ahead with several improvements in the works! Looking at our year-end 2021 financial position, the Arts Council is well positioned to continue advancing our mission.

## Financial Summary

Hernando County Fine Arts Council is on a fiscal year budget and accounting calendar that runs from October 1 to September 30 of the following year.

With the loss of funds due to cancellation of the 2021 Art in the Park event, the Hernando County Fine Arts Council ended the year with an operating loss of \$10,853.23.

However, our financial picture going forward is strong with the following 2021 year-end balances:

### Assets

Operating Account	\$ 2,349.53
Reserve Account	17,674.36
License Tag Account	3,683.17
Petty Cash Account	1,345.00

Funds Available for Operations on September 30, 2021	\$ 25,052.06
Investment Account (MMA)	\$ 50,159.93

<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 75,211.99</b>
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### Liabilities & Equity

Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	\$ 56,208.51
Retained Earnings	29,856.71
Net Operating Income	-10,853.23

<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>\$ 75,211.99</b>
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## THE FUTURE



### From the Council Chair

The year 2020 shook the world, especially the art world. An unprecedented international COVID-19 pandemic continues long after most of us expected it to with wave after wave of variants. The Arts have taken a dramatic hit across the world and right here in Hernando County as well. Patrons continue to be skittish about crowds, seriously affecting attendance at performances, gallery openings, and festivals.

Meanwhile, here in Hernando County, our recently completed feasibility study for a Cultural Center in Hernando County concluded that the time is not right for the county to support such a facility.

But there is good news! The feasibility study consultant gave the Arts Council its “marching orders” – prepare the County for when the time is right for a standalone facility. Our job is to cultivate a community and culture of broad arts participation and attendance. These invaluable recommendations have become the bedrock of our strategic plan, and thanks to our dynamic members and excellent partners, we have made significant headway. Together we work to increase support for all the arts, paving the way for a healthy, vibrant art scene in Hernando County.

We encourage you to play your part – attend performances, spread the word on social media, enroll your child in an art class, participate in events like Art in the Park, and buy art! Our artists need you!

Thank you for caring about our local arts community.

Beth Putnam, Chair  
Hernando County Fine Arts Council