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## Angola Art Festival will be a go

By Ashlee Hoos [ahoos@kpcmedia.com](mailto:ahoos@kpcmedia.com)

Jun 11, 2020



John and Linda Mowry sit with a booth of John's photography in this 2017 file photo from the Angola Art Festival. The 2020 festival is a go as scheduled on Aug. 1.

File Photo by Ashlee Hoos

ANGOLA — The Angola Arts Festival is a go for Aug. 1 as scheduled, beginning at 9 a.m. and ending at 3 p.m.

The Downtown Angola Coalition voted in favor of holding the festival after a lengthy discussion during its Wednesday meeting.

Coalition members agreed that strict COVID-19 mitigation measures would be put in place even though the state technically will be completely open by then.

Under Indiana's Back on Track reopening plan, festivals may be held starting July 4.

Angola Mayor Dick Hickman joined in the meeting briefly by phone and encouraged the Coalition to continue with the festival, though he cautioned that city resources for the event might be limited.

“At this point, I’d say go ahead,” Hickman said. “It’s outside. That helps. To me that makes it more palatable to do it.”

Many Angola events have been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including its largest festival, the Fourth of July.

Coalition President Colleen McNabb-Everage said going into Wednesday’s meeting she wasn’t sure what the decision regarding the festival would be.

“It was a board decision,” she said. “We took input from the festival committee and made the decision and it really helped also having the mayor in on the conversation.”

Hickman said contact with city employees would be limited. For example, police might patrol in their vehicles, but personal contact with festival goers would be limited. Volunteer forces from City Hall might also be limited.

“If one of our police officers gets sick, they all will. Those are resources I cannot afford to lose,” Hickman said.

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The artist application for the festival originally was posted in February on the Angola Art Festival Facebook page, @angolaartfest.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the festival has been sitting in limbo.

Originally, applications were to be due before May 15. But now, as that date came and went because of the pandemic, Everage said applications should be submitted as soon as possible.

“We are now in high gear,” she said.

As applications are accepted and approved, Everage said someone on the committee will reach out to each artist to ensure they have guidelines for the day of the event to ensure vendor and festival attendee safety.

The public, she said, will also receive information on necessary guidelines to safely attend the festival.

“All of the information will be made available on our Facebook page,” she said.

Sponsorships for the event are also still available. Again, people interested are encouraged to reach out through the festival Facebook page.

“If people want to continue to have festivals, please get involved and please sponsor,” Everage said.

The festival Facebook page can be found at <https://bit.ly/3dThNnh>.

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