

**ARTS COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 24, 2026  
City Hall, Conference Room #6**

**Attendees:** Chairman Mary Lee Ryba, Vice Chair Abby Light, Commissioner Charlotte Doutriaux, Commissioner Lindsey Sichelstiel, Commissioner Cynthia Newkirk, Commissioner Nora Crabtree, Commissioner Alysyn Amaya, Commissioner Denise Yost, Commissioner Kate Walker (attended online), and Interim City Administrator Ron Jacobson.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Ryba called the meeting to order. She introduced interim City Administrator Ron Jacobson.

Mr. Jacobson explained that he will be serving in his current role only until the end of June, noting that he is filling in until the City hires a new City Administrator. He expressed appreciation for Coeur d'Alene's Arts Commission and complimented the community's artistic progress.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Crabtree, seconded by Commissioner Yost, to approve the January 27, 2026 meeting minutes. **Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT:** Chair Ryba provided a brief overview of the January 2026 financial report. She noted that Fund 076 (Public Art Fund – ignite) continue to earn interest income and there are no expenditures. Fund 074 (Public Art Fund – 1%) earned interest income and expenditures include \$250.00 for the Emerge youth scholarship for the month of December 2025, \$3,676.46 payment to the CDA Resort for the CDA Arts Awards event last October 22, 2025, and \$5,000.00 for the Art Spotlight CDA grant for Lake City Playhouse. Fund 077 (Maintenance) earned interest income, and the noted expenditure was \$37.64 for the electricity for the feather artwork at NW Boulevard.

**MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Light, seconded by Commissioner Sichelstiel, to approve the January 2026 Financial Report. **Motion carried.**

**MURAL CO-FUND PROGRAM PROPOSAL:** Vice Chair Light presented the proposed mural co-fund program, modeled after a successful program in Vincent, Perth, Australia. She adapted their comprehensive guidelines to fit a smaller scale. She emphasized that applicants such as artists, businesses, or organizations, must already be working together and able to secure at least half of the project funding before applying, as the program is meant to help projects reach the finish line rather than manage or fully fund them. Vice Chair Light stated the need for strong partnerships, noting that murals benefit businesses, but small businesses may struggle financially, making collaboration with tourism partners and sponsors essential. She is willing to help facilitate sponsorship discussions. Inspired by the success of Gabrielle Lewis' mural, the goal is to encourage more murals without taking on full project management. Vice Chair Light asked the Commission whether this structure is feasible and referenced a recommended three- to four-month application window. With a proposed \$15,000 annual allocation, the program could support up to five murals each year at \$3,000 each.

**DISCUSSION:** Chair Ryba noted that the proposed mural co-fund program should remain consistent with the structure used for Art Spotlight CDA. She emphasized the need to consider how the program will be launched whether through a general call, a mural festival, or a rolling application process. Vice Chair Light suggested preparatory workshops before August to explain expectations, followed by an application window from August 1 to October 31, similar to the Living Lake project. Chair Ryba raised concerns about the timeline and the workload for commissioners and city staff. She encouraged discussion about whether murals should occur at one coordinated time or individually throughout the year and highlighted the need to define the logistics more clearly. Vice Chair Light reflected on the timeline of previous mural projects and discussed how this program could help match businesses seeking murals with artists, addressing recurring requests received by the Arts and Culture Alliance. She explained that the proposed timeline for the mural co-fund program was flexible and mainly intended to start discussion, though she felt the suggested application window could still work because applicants need time to gather materials and funding. She referenced Gabrielle's mural as an example, noting that she had already secured half her funding before the commission contributed and she ultimately completed the project between April and October. She emphasized that interest in murals comes from both businesses and artists, and the program is meant to streamline those separate requests. Chair Ryba added that the Commission could consider accepting applications year-round and then reviewing them in groups to limit repeated Council approvals.

Commissioner Newkirk asked whether the Commission had considered creating an America 250 mural, noting ongoing national celebrations and mentioning a program she saw online that might. Chair Ryba pointed out that any America 250 project would need to be completed by July, leaving a compressed timeline. Vice Chair Light emphasized there was no rush on the proposed mural co-fund program and that the Commission could take time to review guidelines and potential locations. She added that the program is intended to support smaller businesses, those with fewer than 20 employees, since larger businesses could typically fund murals on their own.

Commissioner Yost inquired about long-term maintenance of murals, asking who would be responsible for monitoring their condition and determining when repairs or graffiti removal should occur. She noted that cities like Tucson face similar challenges and emphasized the need for clear roles and expectations. She also suggested that the Arts Commission have a consistent, recognizable way to be acknowledged in murals. Vice Chair Light stated that maintenance should remain the responsibility of the property or business owner and that contracts must clearly outline durability and upkeep requirements, especially since the City cannot assume that responsibility. Commissioner Yost also encouraged considering various mural materials, noting that not all murals are traditional painted works. Additionally, she offered to share her experience creating a DIY mural map and treasure-hunt-style tour in Tucson, which could inform similar efforts locally.

Chair Ryba stated that murals included in the proposed program should stay within defined city limits and be located in publicly visible areas. She asked whether a mural festival should be incorporated into the proposal or kept separate, noting that a festival could give artists and businesses a sense of urgency if timed around October, traditionally a busy arts month. She reiterated the importance of including a clear timeline in the proposal and suggested that partnerships such as collaborating with the Arts & Culture Alliance could help reduce workload and support community engagement. She suggested the program could stay open year-round,

allowing fully developed proposals with complete designs, secured funding, and alignment with guidelines, to come to the Commission for decision. She proposed inviting the Chamber, which has long been interested in sponsoring a mural, to pilot the new approach.

Chair Ryba supported keeping the mural co-fund program open year-round without a formal call, noting that it would keep opportunities accessible while placing the initiative on artists and applicants rather than the Commission. She suggested promoting the program through a press release, posting to the city website, and collaboration with the Arts & Culture Alliance, which already receives inquiries from both artists and businesses. She also recommended including Vice Chair Light's name and contact information and ensuring the program details are available on the website.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:**

Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards: Chair Ryba stated that the subcommittee will meet in March or April.

Art Currents: Commissioner Sichelsteil reported that the subcommittee recently met and decided not to issue a call for new pieces this year in order to reduce both city costs and workload. She noted that several existing agreements are expiring, and the program's current two-year terms, with optional annual renewals, will be extended to three-year terms, still with yearly renewal options. Moving to a three-year placement cycle means new artworks will be installed only once every three years instead of annually.

Arts Commission Applicant Review: Chair Ryba shared that the Arts Commission has received an application for its final open position and will be interviewing the candidate, Adam Kroeger from NIC.

Visual Arts/ Arts & Cultural Alliance: Vice Chair Light noted that the Living Lake Project Fellowship received 44 artist applications, and the selection process is underway to narrow the group to 10 final artists. Public announcement of the selected fellows is expected by the end of March. She described the fellowship as a 17-month program in its early stages, with planning underway for an educational curriculum that will include mine tours, water testing, and field trips with the tribe to learn about the watershed and current lake issues. Fellows will create creative projects based on these experiences, and Vice Chair Light hopes to share the list of selected artists with the Commission next month.

Vice Chair Light also shared about the March 13 Art Walk from 5:00-8:00pm featuring a new illustrated map by muralist Gabrielle Lewis and 19 participating locations. She also confirmed that Riverstone concerts will continue this year, beginning in July and running through August, and noted that the Arts & Culture Alliance is hiring an event coordinator to support the expanded workload.

Performing & Music Arts: Chair Ryba shared that subcommittee will be meeting soon to review the Art Spotlight CDA program, noting that if feedback from current grantees is strong, they hope to continue those grants into a second year.

Marketing & Technology: Chair Ryba stated that the short public-art video project will likely be removed and they may introduce a new initiative in its place. She also mentioned keeping the most unique photo angle of public art, noting it is a fun and creative element.

Emerge Art Scholarships: Chair Ryba explained that she hopes to restructure the Emerge Arts Scholarships to function more like the Art Spotlight CDA program so that a broader range of organizations can be invited to apply, ensuring a more equitable process. She noted that Gizmo has expressed strong interest and should be included. She plans to draft the new framework herself and welcomed anyone who wished to help. Commissioner Yost asked what accountability or visibility the scholarship recipients provide in return, and Chair Ryba clarified that Emerge submits quarterly reports and updates from their youth and summer camp projects. Commissioner Sichelstiel added that Emerge also provides photos annually and acknowledges the Arts Commission on its website.

New Member Training/ Policies: Chair Ryba mentioned welcoming a potential new commission member and that his experience will be a strong addition to the group.

Poet Laureate: Chair Ryba stated that Jennifer requested financial support of \$1,683.37 to attend the Association of Writers & Writing Programs Conference in Baltimore, but after meeting with the City Clerk, she learned the City cannot fund conference travel especially given current budget constraints, so they will not be able to support the request. She noted that Jennifer remains active with other projects and will provide a calendar of events soon.

Guidelines Development: Chair Ryba asked commissioners to review the guidelines to encourage public participation in the arts and supporting arts education, explaining that future grant-related responsibilities may shift to a new 501(c)(3) nonprofit the Mayor is working to establish. This nonprofit would focus on fundraising and grantmaking. She also asked for input on optional activities, such as participating on the 4th of July parade with an arts-themed float, acknowledging the time commitment required and noting there may be a registration fee.

CDA October Arts & Humanities Month: Chair Ryba stated that she will try to find sponsorship.

Northern Journeys Publication: Commissioner Newkirk reported that preparations are underway for the upcoming Coeur d'Alene issue scheduled for release in April. Chelsea Cordova is currently securing advertising commitments, while publisher Jason Thomas has been gathering articles from various artists. Commissioner Newkirk noted that Commissioner Menzies has been coordinating the community events calendar, with both of them reaching out to local organizations to submit events occurring between April and September. She confirmed that content layout begins in mid-March and that everything appears to be on schedule for the first issue.

Filmmaking & Film Festival Support of NoID: Commissioner Doutriaux reported ongoing work with Jackie Butera to shape a long-term vision for developing a mobile filmmaking industry in Coeur d'Alene, with the goal of identifying potential city-supported incentives or promotional efforts. They are also meeting with the NoID Film Festival team later this week to brainstorm expanded marketing strategies ahead of the festival's third edition, scheduled for late September. Commissioner Doutriaux encouraged the subcommittee to share ideas, resources, or contacts and

noted the need for additional members to join future discussions. The festival is currently accepting film submissions, with several months remaining before the deadline. She also shared that the film *Recollection* recently had a successful screening at the Panida Theater with about 200 attendees, and another immersive screening is scheduled for March 15 at Regal Riverstone. She will send the link to purchase the tickets.

**ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Sichelstiel, seconded by Commissioner Doutriaux to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried.**

The meeting ended at 5:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jo Anne Mateski  
Executive Assistant