

**ARTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2025
City Hall, Conference Room #6**

Attendees: Chairman Mary Lee Ryba, Commissioner Summer Ward, Commissioner Chuck Ethridge, Commissioner Lindsey Sichelstiel, Commissioner Tracey Benson, Commissioner Adeline Smith, Commissioner Nora Crabtree, Commissioner Alesa Momerak, Commissioner Cynthia Newkirk, Commissioner Charlotte Doutriaux (attended online), Commissioner Kate Walker, Commissioner Sally Shortridge, and Councilmember Amy Evans.

Guests: Jeni Hegsted, Emerge CDA Executive Director and Jaiden Haley, Emerge Operations Manager

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Ryba called the meeting to order.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mr. Jacob Garringer expressed curiosity about whether there had been any conversation or engagement with the head of the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) regarding the I-95 and the potential overpass of Appleway. He mentioned the blue lighting at the overpass in Sandpoint and offered to help facilitate the conversation if there was interest. Chair Ryba requested more information on how it would look like. Councilmember Evans mentioned the open house held at Best Western Inn, where they discussed connectivity and bypass information, suggesting that details could be found on the ITD website.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Ward, to approve the February 25, 2025 meeting minutes. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT: Chair Ryba noted that there were no expenses for February under Fund 076 – Public Art Fund (Ignite) and the fund has earned interest income for both the Lake and River Districts. Fund 074 - Public Art Fund had an expense of \$1,655 paid to Emerge CDA for youth arts programming, leaving an ending balance of \$70,061.00. Fund 077 for Art Maintenance had expenses of \$91.50, of which \$7.50 was paid for lighting of the feather art on Northwest Boulevard and \$64.10 is for cement used for the installation of “Reins” artwork by Francis Fox at Riverstone. This artwork was damaged and repaired by the City Streets and Engineering Department.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Momerak, seconded by Commissioner Ethridge, to approve the February 2025 Financial Report. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

UPDATE ON EMERGE CDA YOUTH ART CLASS: Chair Ryba introduced Jeni Hegsted, Emerge CDA Executive Director and Jaiden Haley, Emerge CDA Operations Manager. She mentioned that the new chair of the Emerge Arts Scholarships Subcommittee is Commissioner Kate Walker. Commissioner Walker stated that the subcommittee met with Ms. Hegsted and Ms.

Haley a couple of weeks ago, and they would like to renew the same scholarship program from last year without making any changes. She added that Emerge experienced great success, particularly with the summer programs, which attracted a lot of interest from local students. She noted that Emerge has just a little under \$12,000 remaining which they request to use for next year.

Ms. Hegsted thanked the Commission for its support in providing numerous scholarships to local youth. She mentioned that the program has been successful and meaningful to the families involved. They received many messages from parents and grandparents expressing their gratitude for the opportunity to enroll their kids in activities, especially during the summer when options are limited. Ms. Hegsted stated that the program is growing and requested continuing to use the remaining funds for next year and then reassess if there is higher demand. Ms. Haley stated that the scholarship funding has allowed them to offer and fill many more classes. From April 2024 to March 2025, approximately 33% of the students attended with scholarships. Compared to last year, the number of youth-specific students in their classes was nearly doubled. Most of the classes cater to kids, and adult classes are open to high school students aged 16 and up. A total of 82 scholarships were awarded from April 2024 to today. Commissioner Momerak asked if these were funded from the scholarship program with Ms. Hegsted explaining that they had an overlap in funding with a grant received from United Way.

Chair Ryba thanked Ms. Hegsted and Ms. Haley for the successful first poetry pop-up event at Emerge on March 15. She stated that Poet Laureate Jennifer Passaro wrote several poems that day. Ms. Hegsted added that Ms. Passaro will return to conduct a free writing workshop, which has already attracted many participants. She also mentioned a collaboration they had last year with Coeur Climbing, where kids could sign up for a half day of climbing, and parents could opt to add on a half day of art. This program provided a great balance of physical activity and creativity, which many parents appreciated. They plan to offer the same program again this summer. Chair Ryba suggested that it may be good to look into considering a summer camp that has art, music, and theater. Ms. Haley stated that they are open to collaborations. Ms. Hegsted added that they have some conversations with Lake City Playhouse.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Shortridge to extend the contract with Emerge for art scholarships for youth to April 2026. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

CDA PUBLIC ART PROGRAM GUIDELINES: Chair Ryba noted that the CDA Public Art Program Guidelines Subcommittee has met and explained that the section on Arts Education and Engagement is to highlight performing arts because of Council's suggestion to support performing arts. She explained that while the guidelines outline various initiatives, it serves as like a five-year plan that the Commission can adapt, and revise as needed. As an example under community awareness and outreach efforts, she mentioned concerts at Riverstone and McEuen Park and the possibility of having a booth at the Farmers Market similar to Spokane Arts. This booth would allow artists to sell their work and engage with the community. Additionally, activities like art walks, murals for high school students, and sidewalk art to further promote visual and performing arts can also be considered. Chair Ryba also mentioned bringing back the PedBike brochure featuring the City's Public Art on a three-fold layout with location directions for biking to each location. Commissioner Ward noted that the brochure idea is similar to what their subcommittee had discussed. They had also considered creating an annual edition for performing arts and

producing a yearly brochure.

Chair Ryba mentioned that there are many ideas regarding the guidelines, and she has already received numerous suggestions. The goal is to gather these ideas to create a roadmap for the Commission's activities this year. She noted that if the Commission wants to issue a call for performing arts or organize a summer camp or pop-up event, it should be done soon as theater activities are progressing rapidly. Regarding the guidelines, Chair Ryba stated that it is a working document. Councilmember Evans highlighted that the City Council amended the ordinance several years ago to include performing arts, allowing the Commission to support these activities. Chair Ryba stated that the plan is to fund one or two entities this year, possibly at \$5,000 each, depending on the decisions of the Commission and subcommittee. This will be added to next month's meeting agenda. Commissioner Ethridge inquired about the budget, and Chair Ryba confirmed that it will be under Public Art Fund 074 Community Arts Partnership.

Commissioner Momerak inquired about the Commission's participation in the Farmers Market by getting a booth to showcase visual arts. Chair Ryba stated that the booth could be open to everyone to promote arts and crafts. Commissioner Ward shared her experience as a vendor last season, noting that the cost depends on the booth size, with the smallest being 10x10. She mentioned that typically, vendors need to apply for either a yearlong spot or occasional pop-ups, but the dates must be known in advance. The application for the Farmers Market is currently open. Commissioner Ethridge suggested that Emerge could run the booth one weekend, followed by the Lake City Playhouse the next. Commissioner Newkirk recommended reaching out, as the booth is provided for free to non-profits. She also mentioned that the Music Conservatory has a booth, and it might be beneficial to explore expanding that space for visual and performing arts.

Chair Ryba stated that the Commission discuss one section of the guideline each month. She encouraged anyone who has reviewed the guidelines and has a good idea or has heard of another City implementing a great idea, to share it at the next meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:

Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards: Chair Ryba mentioned that the subcommittee will have its meeting in April.

ArtCurrents: Commissioner Sichelstiel noted that the subcommittee met and mentioned adding Commissioner Walker. They have set all the dates, aiming to release the call to artists for Art Currents by mid-April at the latest. The deadline for submitting art is the end of June, with all dates for Commission and City Council approval laid out, and the art installation scheduled for October. Commissioner Sichelstiel mentioned that she is revising the document to allow for larger art dimensions due to past issues with smaller pieces. She stated that they are making minor changes and will release the updated document soon. She emphasized the importance of giving artists more time by starting the process earlier. Additionally, she noted that the subcommittee has previously focused on existing art, but now they want to give artists more time to create new pieces. They plan to start meeting in December or January next year to continue improving the process. Commissioner Doutriaux requested to be added to the subcommittee. Commissioner Sichelstiel invited her to attend the subcommittee meeting on Monday, March 31 at the Bakery by the Lake

at 2:15p.m.

Commissioner Doutriaux mentioned that the O'Keefe 8 art piece was moved to a different location and shared the appreciation of Innovation Den goers of this change and that the concerns around the art piece were heard and appreciated. She acknowledged that while they might not share the same opinion, it was important that the community's voice was heard. She suggested that to avoid similar incidents in the future, it might be beneficial to check in with the businesses where the art pieces will be installed before finalizing anything. Councilmember Evans suggested consulting the City Attorney to get some legal advice. Commissioner Sichelstiel explained that the Art Currents pieces have designated locations. The O'Keefe 8 was damaged, and the city purchased and relocated it because it was no longer part of the Art Currents program, which falls outside the subcommittee's responsibilities. She added that all selected pieces already have assigned locations, and there have been no complaints about these placements.

Arts Commission Applicant Review: Chair Ryba noted that there are no new applications.

Visual Arts: Commissioner Ward provided an update on behalf of Commissioner Light, noting that there are several NIC - Get Lit! writing events coming up, specifically on April 10 and 11, there will be book reading and signing by Debra Magpie Earling as well as poetry presentations by Li-Young Lee. Chair Ryba mentioned that Poet Laureate Jennifer Passaro is very engaged with all the Get Lit! events.

Performing & Music Arts: Commissioner Ward mentioned that the subcommittee met last Wednesday, March 19, to discuss their ideas, priorities, and goals. These included project grants, high-impact October performing arts events, and an annual publication or directory of local artists and events to be released in October. They also talked about having a presence on art walks, similar to a farmers' market. Commissioner Ward raised concerns about funding for project grants, including sourcing funds, attracting applicants, and distributing the funds. Commissioner Ethridge noted that they would have a proposal by next month, and Chair Ryba suggested forming a selection committee. Commissioner Ward also stated that WayMaker Arts, a new theater company, would like to attend the Arts Commission meeting on May 27th. Additionally, she brought up the idea of an arts calendar on the city web page. Chair Ryba expressed concerns about the workload involved in maintaining a calendar. Commissioner Ethridge noted that curating information is a challenge. The Arts and Cultural Alliance's calendar is self-submission and only includes events from its members, so it doesn't cover everything. He mentioned discussing a community calendar with the Chamber, but it's not within their scope either, except for promoting events from their members.

Commissioner Newkirk announced that the United States Air Force Academy's clarinet quintet is coming to town and will perform a free concert tonight at 7:00 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Tomorrow, they will host a lunch and learn at the Music Conservatory at noon, which is also open to the community. On the first weekend of April, there will be two concerts at the Kroc Center Theater. There will be a reception on Saturday, April 5, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., followed by a Latin American Piano concert at 7:30 p.m. featuring Matthew Goodrich and Melody Puller. On Sunday, April 6, there will be a matinee concert titled "A Songful Journey," featuring three soloists, including two new faculty members and another soloist from the Messiah concert. Paul

Grove from Spokane will perform on acoustic guitar, and the youth choir will also be on stage.

Marketing & Technology: Commissioner Sichelstiel mentioned that they recently made a social media post for Jennifer's pop-up event at Emerge. She encouraged everyone to follow the Instagram account "cdacityarts" if they haven't already. She noted that there are many events in April, and creating posts for those such as the dedication for the Green Energy Dragon on April 24.

Emerge Art Scholarships: Chair Ryba thanked Commissioner Ward for meeting up with Emerge CDA.

Mural Projects: Commissioner Momerak stated that the subcommittee will schedule a meeting soon. Chair Ryba suggested connecting with an Art teacher at the high school. Commissioner Ward mentioned her recent visit to Carmel, CA, where they saw some great murals noting the good bolting system against the wall, which avoids permanent paint on brick installations. The murals were done on large plywood panels and then bolted into the buildings. Chair Ryba mentioned the possibility of a mural competition to decorate the large fences around the new high-rise buildings downtown. She suggested making the activity manageable by working with an art teacher and having art students participate.

Wastewater Treatment Facility Art Project: Chair Ryba reiterated that the dedication event for the Green Energy Dragon is on April 24 and invited everyone to attend.

Poet Laureate: Commissioner Shortridge mentioned that Jennifer's pop-up event at the Art Walk on March 15 was very successful. Jennifer is also involved in the Get Lit! events on April 10 and 11, and she will read a poem at the City Council meeting on April 15. Commissioner Newkirk shared that Jennifer postponed her lunch and learn event at the Music Conservatory, rescheduling it to the fall due to her busy schedule.

Music and Arts Festival: Chair Ryba mentioned that the subcommittee has not met yet, but she has been personally reaching out to secure funding sponsorships. She also requested that anyone with events planned for October to send her the schedule and other details.

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Momerak, seconded by Commissioner Sichelstiel to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

The meeting ended at 4:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,


Anne Maleski
Executive Assistant