

**ARTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
August 26, 2025
City Hall, Conference Room #6**

Attendees: Chairman Mary Lee Ryba, Vice Chair Abby Light, Commissioner Tracey Benson, Commissioner Kate Walker, Commissioner Cynthia Newkirk, Commissioner Charlotte Doutriaux, Commissioner Sally Shortridge, Commissioner Lindsey Sichelstiel, Commissioner Chuck Ethridge (attended online), Commissioner Duncan Menzies and Troy Tymesen

Guests: Kathryn Kincel

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

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Kathryn Kincel, Coeur d'Alene, shared concerns about a 90-year-old maple tree near her property at Foster and 7th Street, which appears to be dying despite her ongoing efforts to nurse it back to health. While she remains hopeful, applying anti-fungal treatments and monitoring its condition, she acknowledged that removal may ultimately be necessary. As a contingency, she proposed transforming the remaining trunk into a carved art piece, such as a totem, inspired by similar installations around Coeur d'Alene. She expressed willingness to cover the cost of the artist, noting that she would be paying for the tree's removal regardless, and requested to be connected with a chainsaw artist. Ms. Kincel emphasized the potential artistic and historical value such a piece could bring to the neighborhood. Mr. Tymesen noted the possibility of a partnership if the carving were to occur within the city's right-of-way and suggested repurposing the wood, referencing past projects like benches made from fallen trees. Commissioner Light offered to share the contact information of the chainsaw artist who worked on a piece in Phippeny Park.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Sichelstiel, seconded by Commissioner Light, to approve the July 22, 2025 meeting minutes. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT: City Administrator Troy Tymesen provided a brief overview of the July 2025 financial report. He noted that Fund 076 is earning interest, and the \$3,600 expenditure is for the painting supplies for the Tomlinson Sotheby's mural project. Chair Ryba commented that the mural looks great and asked if it was finished, to which Commissioner Light confirmed it was nearly complete. Mr. Tymesen then reviewed Fund 074, highlighting interest earnings and a \$26.10 expense for professional services for business cards of the Chair she will use for sponsorship requests. He also noted a \$2,995 Emerge Youth Arts Scholarship awarded to 14 students for various summer art programs. Lastly, Fund 077 for Arts Maintenance included interest earnings and two expenditures totaling \$55: installation of an algae guard on the library fountain and a recurring electricity cost of \$23.96 for lighting the feathers artwork on Northwest Boulevard.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Light, seconded by Commissioner Shortridge, to approve

the July 2025 Financial Report. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

COMMISSIONER/ STAFF COMMENTS: Chair Ryba and Commissioner Ethridge congratulated Commissioner Menzies for his important role in Aspire Theatre's Sweeney Todd showing in October.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF SELECTED PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE ART SPOTLIGHT CDA 2025 PROGRAM: Commissioner Benson shared that the Selection Committee met on August 25, and the process went smoothly, especially considering it was the inaugural year of the Art Spotlight CDA program. The Committee reviewed eight applications and selected three: Lake City Playhouse, the Music Conservatory of Coeur d'Alene, and Coeur d'Alene Summer Theater. Commissioner Benson stated that the Committee's decision is based on significantly higher scores, all focused on youth education and scholarship initiatives. She added that the Committee decided to fund three projects at \$5,000 each. She thanked Ms. Mateski for the excellent preparation, having organized the scoring in a spreadsheet that made the selection process efficient. Chair Ryba expressed excitement over the success of the process and noted the Committee members' appreciation for being involved. Commissioner Benson stated that after the Arts Commission approval, the next step is to request City Council approval. Chair Ryba emphasized the importance of confidentiality until the winners are officially announced at the Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards event on October 22. Mr. Tymesen stated that the information would become public once it goes to City Council and suggested Chair Ryba to present at the Council meeting. Commissioner Ethridge expressed enthusiasm about the grant process and suggested that sharing the rubric used for evaluating applications could be helpful for all the applicants, especially for future submissions. He noted from his experience adjudicating drama competitions that rubrics provide valuable clarity. Chair Ryba responded that while the rubric would be made available for the next grant round, this year's applicants would receive a letter. Commissioner Ethridge appreciated the approach and reiterated the usefulness of rubrics for those interested in applying again. Chair Ryba added that the program committee is already considering improvements for the next round. She added that she will try to get sponsors to match the grant amount for next year's program.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Duncan, seconded by Commissioner Doutriaux, to approve the grant of \$5,000 each for Lake City Playhouse, Coeur d'Alene Summer Theater, and Music Conservatory of Coeur d'Alene for a total of \$15,000 for the Art Spotlight CDA 2025 Program from November 2025 to October 2026. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:

Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards: Chair Ryba noted that the deadline for nominations will be Friday, August 29. The call for nominations was released in June and then a second press release on August 19. She asked everyone to nominate if they know someone that will fit into the four categories: Excellence in the Arts, Support of the Arts, Arts in Education, and Student Excellence in the Arts. She mentioned that the guidelines and nomination form are found on the Arts Commission web page. The pictures of the awarding ceremony as well as past recipients are there too.

Chair Ryba stated that the Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards event this year is scheduled for October 22.

Entertainment planning is nearly complete, and a raffle will be introduced this year, featuring baskets and the maquettes. Commissioner Ethridge has already committed a basket from CDA Summer Theater, and other groups will be invited to contribute. Poet Laureate Jennifer Passaro is working on an original poem to present at the event. Chair Ryba encouraged everyone to volunteer for an hour or two on the day of the event, noting how helpful and enjoyable it was last year. Commissioner Sichelstiel will serve as the emcee, and past award recipients will be invited to present this year's awards. The theme for the event, aligned with Coeur d'Alene Arts and Humanities Month for October, is "*Celebrate the Arts Within You.*"

ArtCurrents: Commissioner Sichelstiel shared that there is a buyer for the "Sentinel Watcher" art piece displayed at Riverstone. Mr. Tymesen added that Council approved the selected six art pieces for this year's ArtCurrents program.

Arts Commission Applicant Review: Chair Ryba noted that there are currently two vacancies on the Commission and encouraged everyone to reach out if they know someone who may be interested in applying.

Visual Arts: Vice Chair Light Art shared several upcoming arts events, including a pottery exhibit by Mary Frances Donglinger at Art Spirit Gallery, a new show titled *Global Tapestry* Art Exhibit opening at the Jacklin Arts and Cultural Center in early September, and the annual INK! Print Rally is scheduled for September 13.

Performing & Music Arts: Commissioner Benson mentioned that *Sweeney Todd* by Aspire at the Kroc Center is showing on October 2–12, and there will be a stage reading of *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* by Drawn Together Arts with The Art Spirit Gallery on September 19–20. The Lake City Playhouse will present *The Sound of Music* from September 16 to October 12. Commissioner Newkirk announced the Music Conservatory's annual *Oktoberfest Autumn Affair* fundraiser on September 21, featuring live performances and a beer garden. Commissioner Ethridge shared that Coeur d'Alene Summer Theater's annual carnival fundraiser is on Friday, September 26 and then the *Cabernet Cabaret* event will be held on October 28. Commissioner Doutriaux shared that the NoID 2025 Film Festival is happening on September 25–27 at the Riverstone Regal Cinema, opening with a screening of *Braveheart*. Chair Ryba asked Commissioner Doutriaux to send details to Ms. Mateski so she could share them with the Commissioners.

Marketing & Technology: Commissioner Sichelstiel shared that social media posts are scheduled for the new Art Currents pieces, with additional posts planned for the Arts Awards event and announcement of recipients for the Art Spotlight CDA grant on October 22. Chair Ryba noted that a press release will also be sent out.

Emerge Art Scholarships: Commissioner Walker noted no new updates aside from what Mr. Tymesen provided earlier in the financial report.

Mural Projects: Chair Ryba commented that she had fun painting the mural with the artist, Gabrielle Lewis. Vice Chair Light complimented the mural and noted that the artist is coordinating with Tomlinson Sotheby's for a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Chair Ryba suggested having the unveiling during October's Art Walk. Vice Chair Light will coordinate the date and communicate

further details.

Budget: Chair Ryba confirmed with Mr. Tymesen that the budget is in good shape.

New Member Training/ Policies: Chair Ryba noted that although Commissioner Menzies is a new member, he has already been actively contributing to the Commission's work and may not require formal training.

Poet Laureate: Chair Ryba shared that she had a meeting with Jennifer Passaro, who is collaborating with other poet laureates and has been accepted to present at a national conference in Baltimore, Maryland in March next year. Jennifer will also participate in several October events, including an opening ceremony of the Arts and Humanities Month at the Art Spirit Gallery on October 1 and a poetry reading at the Shared Harvest Family Fun Fair on October 4 at the Community Garden.

Guidelines Development: Chair Ryba explained that Max Mendez was originally scheduled to assist the Commission in reviewing the guidelines during this month's meeting. However, since the Art Spotlight CDA grant is currently on the agenda and next month's meeting will be focused on selecting recipients for the Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards, it has been decided to reschedule the guideline review for the January meeting.

CDA October Arts & Humanities Month: Chair Ryba reviewed plans for Coeur d'Alene's October Arts and Humanities Month, themed *Celebrate the Arts Within You*, which aligns with the national theme. The calendar of events is nearly complete and will be linked from the Arts Commission page in the city website to the Arts and Cultural Alliance website. The committee is also working on sponsorships. She asked the Commissioners to save the date, October 1, 6:00-8:00pm at the Art Spirit Gallery. She highlighted the variety of free, family-friendly events in Coeur d'Alene planned for October; however, the humanities dinner is not happening this year.

The next Arts Commission meeting will be on September 9 for the selection and approval of the Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards recipients.

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

The meeting ended at 4:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jo Anne Mateski
Executive Assistant