

**ARTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 26, 2026
City Hall, Ron Edinger Conference Room**

Attendees: Chairman Mary Lee Ryba, Vice Chair Abby Light, Commissioner Charlotte Doutriaux, Commissioner Chuck Ethridge, Commissioner Sally Shortridge, Commissioner Tracey Benson, Commissioner Lindsey Sichelstiel, Commissioner Cynthia Newkirk, Commissioner Nora Crabtree, Commissioner Denise Yost, Commissioner Kate Walker (online), Commissioner Duncan Menzies (late arrival 4:41 pm), Interim Parks & Recreation Director Adam Rouse, and Parks & Rec Administrative Assistant Melissa Brandt.

Guests: Anne Solomon

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

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Chair Ryba made a comment about last month's meeting and calls she received from many commissioners not understanding the change of the commission going under the umbrella of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Not sure if the commission is entirely under the department or if there is still independence or is it mostly administrative. It's a big transition and we will be transparent.

ART ON THE GREEN GIFT OF ART: Anne Solomon shared her proposal to make a \$1,000.00 grant to purchase a piece of art and have someone from the Arts Commission attend the Art on the Green Juried Show on July 31, 2026. The three-day festival is in its 58th year with approximately 112 artists traveling from across the United States. There are no paid staff, supported by 400 volunteers. Chair Ryba mentioned her discussion with Interim Director, Adam Rouse, about the Jewett House as a place for art potentially including a piece from Art on the Green. Solomon noted the grant would allow for the purchase of ceramic, wood, a painting, or whatever was desired. Preliminary planning for the 60th landmark festival is scheduled to begin next year. Chair Ryba indicated the Commission would partner with Art on the Green and that the planned endowment would benefit arts organizations, like Art on the Green. Solomon shared that grants of \$500 are also being given to eight fire stations and families of the firefighters killed and injured last June and thanked the Commission for the chance to partner with the city to include the very first painting that will be part of the city's art collection. Chair Ryba noted she would like to nominate Anne Solomon for the Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards, specifically the Sandi Bloem Arts Legacy Award, and acceptance of the grant will be added to next month's agenda as an action item to receive the piece of art selected by the Arts Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chair Ryba noted a change to be made to the minutes; page 5 the third paragraph should indicate Jake Garringer works for the University of Idaho. **MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Doutriaux seconded by Commissioner Yost to approve the April 28, 2026, meeting minutes. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT: Chair Ryba provided a brief overview of the April 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 expenditure include \$40.00 for the Emerge youth scholarship for the month of March 2026 for the drawing and painting workshop. Fund 077 (Maintenance) earned interest income and noted \$29.69 expenditure for the electricity for the feather artwork at NW Boulevard.

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

COMMISSIONER/ STAFF COMMENTS: Chair Ryba noted that at the April meeting there was discussion about the commission’s involvement in the America 250 celebration with the County and Coeur d’Alene Historic Commissions. The activities are planned for July 3rd at 1:30 pm, on the lawn of the Kootenai County Courthouse. A time capsule will be opened and a new one installed as well as art for children. Commission members are encouraged to attend the activity.

ALI & CALLIE ARTCAST FUNDING REQUEST: Chair Ryba spoke with Finance Director, Katie Ebner, she indicated funds were available. If we fund them, in return they will partner with the Commission to provide marketing by mentioning the commission on all their podcasts. They provide increased engagement with local artists, filmmakers, and cultural initiatives. Commissioner Yost noted that the podcast should naturally be covering these local art topics and promoting the Arts Commission and asked of there be a more consistent mention of the Commission and access to their digital archive if needed. She also asked about their podcast metrics, how visible they are, and what their reach is. Chair Ryba stated she had been interviewed by them several times, as have many other organizations in town, she indicated availability of the digital archive and could be part of the funding proposal. She stated that Commissioner Yost raised good questions and asked the rest of they could wait for the next month’s meeting to get these questions answered or go forward with a motion. Commissioner Benson agrees they are valuable questions, but the value of the program to the commission and to the community is clear.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Benson seconded by Commissioner Ethridge to recommend to Council to grant funding assistance in the amount of \$600.00 to cover the legal filing and administrative costs associated with establishing Ali & Callie Artcast as a 501 c(3) nonprofit entity. **Motion carried.**

RENEWAL OF GRANT TO THE SELECTED PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE ART SPOTLIGHT CDA PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER 2026 TO OCTOBER 2027: Commissioner Benson explained that these grants are for a second year of funding. Lake City Playhouse has an after-school theater program for middle school students. Coeur d’Alene Summer Theater implemented a musical theater training institute, and the Music Conservatory of Coeur d’Alene has a youth music scholarship fund. The selection committee, during their May 7 meeting, recommended that all three continue into their second year of funding. Commissioner Ethridge gave an update on the theater and their offerings this summer and recused himself from the vote due to his involvement with Coeur d’Alene Summer Theater. The renewal of Art Spotlight CDA: Performing Arts grant recipients’ funding request will go to the June 2nd Council meeting

for approval.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Shortridge seconded by Commissioner Sichelstiel to approve another grant year 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 program from November 2026 to October 2027. **Motion carried.**

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:

Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards: Chair Ryba noted that the timeframe will be tight again this year the event will be October 21, 2026, and a call for nominations will go out soon. Please add Commissioner Newkirk to this subcommittee.

ArtCurrents: Nothing to report.

CDA Arts & Culture Alliance: Vice-Chair Light shared Modus Fine Art Gallery's opening in the old Art Spirit Gallery on June 12; a membership-based gallery with twenty-five artists rotating shows throughout the year, the upstairs gallery will be open to the public to apply for art shows. They will be open daily. Their opening is the same day as the Arts & Culture Alliance Art Walk; 5-8 pm, June 12.

Visual Arts: Chair Ryba stated that the newly approved Art Spotlight CDA: Visual Arts program, approved by the Arts Commission previously, will be presented to City Council at its June 2nd meeting for approval. She also noted that the proposal was revised to more clearly distinguish between the performing arts and visual arts programs. Going forward, the existing performing arts program will be titled Art Spotlight CDA: Performing Arts.

Performing & Music Arts: Commissioner Ethridge shared there is a free performance of Disney's Frozen sponsored by a local philanthropist for underprivileged kids to be able to attend. This performance will allow for kids under the age of five to attend as well as American Sign Language interpreters. We also have available Broadway Experience Day Camps available for the summer; one week camps.

Marketing & Technology: Commissioner Ethridge is going to become the chair of this committee, removing Commissioner Sichelstiel from this committee and adding Commissioner Newkirk. This committee will be very important going forward for the endowment fund.

Emerge Art Scholarships: Chair Ryba noted that there was \$2,877.50 left in the account. The contract is closed and done. She proposed this subcommittee is retired.

Mural Projects: Nothing to report.

Budget: Chair Ryba noted that as the endowment is worked through, there will be much to share once we know

New Member Training/ Policies: Chair Ryba shared that Adam Kroeger was approved by Council.

Poet Laureate: Commissioner Shortridge shared she is meeting with Jennifer Passaro tomorrow.

Guidelines Development: Chair Ryba suggested retiring this subcommittee.

Northern Journeys Publication: Commissioner Newkirk shared the publication is getting renewals for advertising that supports the magazine and spoke with the editor about content for the next issues. They are working on an events application and a calendar. October will be a busy month with Arts & Humanities month, the endowment, award recipients, so we have a lot of content.

Filmmaking & Film Festival Support of NoID: Commissioner Doutriaux stated that submissions are closing on June 19. Met a couple weeks ago and had a very productive meeting about marketing activation as we enter the promotional window. A press release will go out July or August.

Endowment for the Arts & History Humanities: Chair Ryba shared we have approval from the Mayor to change the name. The Endowment for the Arts and Humanities Subcommittee met on May 18, to discuss whether to pursue the creation of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or establish an endowment through the Idaho Community Foundation. After reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of each option, the subcommittee unanimously voted to move forward with establishing an endowment. Chair Ryba subsequently met with Mayor Gookin, who gave approval to proceed with the exploration of the endowment. The project will move forward in three phases: Phase 1 - Exploration: Establish a task force, identify potential community partners, and conduct outreach to prospective partners, including the CDA Tribe, Art on the Green, and the Arts & Culture Alliance. Phase 2 - Organizational Design: Develop the governance structure and operating policies and establish a companion fund to support fundraising and donor engagement. Phase 3 - Quiet Fundraising Campaign: Secure founding donors through individual and corporate gifts, establish levels of giving, and encourage planned giving and memorial gifts. The public launch of the Endowment is anticipated for the fall and will coincide with several major cultural events, including Arts & Humanities Month (and many organizations listed), the Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards, the North Idaho Film Festival, and the annual North Idaho Distinguished Lecture & Dinner hosted by the Idaho Humanities Council. Chair Ryba shared the long-term vision for the endowment, explaining that, over time, it would become a permanent cultural resource for the community, providing sustainable annual funding for grants, public programming, historic preservation, arts and humanities initiatives, and future cultural opportunities for generations to come. She also provided financial perspective, noting that endowments are designed for long-term growth and sustainability. Based on a typical annual distribution rate of approximately 4 percent, a \$100,000 endowment would generate about \$4,000 per year for grants and programs, while a \$1 million endowment would provide approximately \$40,000 annually, while preserving the principal to support the community in perpetuity.

Bus Shelter Design Competition: Nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Light, seconded by Commissioner Newkirk to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried.**

The meeting ended at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Melissa Brandt
Administrative Assistant