

**ARTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
July 28, 2026
City Hall, Conference Room #6**

Attendees: Chairman Mary Lee Ryba, Vice Chair Abby Light, Commissioner Charlotte Doutriaux (via audio call), Commissioner Chuck Ethridge, Commissioner Kate Walker, Commissioner Lindsey Sichelstiel, Commissioner Sally Shortridge, Commissioner Tracey Benson, Commissioner Alysyn Amaya, Commissioner Adam Kroeger, Councilmember Amy Evans, Parks & Recreation Director Adam Rouse, and Parks & Recreation Administrative Assistant Melissa Brandt.

GUESTS: Jacob Garringer, Chris Meyer

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ryba at 4:04 pm.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Sichelstiel seconded by Vice Chair Light to approve the June 23, 2026, meeting minutes. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT: Chair Ryba provided a brief overview of the May 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 no expenditures. Fund 077 (Maintenance) earned interest income and noted \$27.70 expenditure for the electricity for the feather artwork at NW Boulevard.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Ethridge seconded by Commissioner Sichelstiel to approve the June 2026 Financial Reports. **Motion carried.**

COMMISSIONER/ STAFF COMMENTS: Chair Ryba highlighted the success of the America 250 Community Celebration held on July 3; more than 450 people attended, making it one of the largest community celebrations of its kind. The Arts Commission hosted an information table, distributed materials regarding Arts Commission programs and the Otocast audio tour and engaged with numerous residents interested in local art initiatives. Chair Ryba asked if funding had taken place in support the Ali and Callie. Director Rouse advised that legal review determined that funding the request could create precedence and liability the City was not comfortable assuming; he will resend the legal response to commissioners. Chair Ryba let the Commission know that she did include an Arts Commission envelope in the new city time-capsule.

Commissioner Shortridge shared her positive experience attending Coeur d'Alene Summer Theatre productions and praised the quality of the performances. She encouraged the commissioners to attend the many offerings this summer.

Commissioner Ethridge revisited a previous discussion regarding the possibility of housing artwork received through Art on the Green and other visual arts collections at the Jewett House. Director Rouse explained that the Jewett House operates under unique conditions due to its trust agreement and historical purpose. Current management emphasizes preserving the property's historical character and honoring its connection to Coeur d'Alene's lumber industry heritage. Concerns were expressed that establishing artwork displays could create public expectations that the facility functions as a public gallery, generating access requests that may be difficult to accommodate. Commissioners Ryba and Ethridge clarified that their intent was not to create a public art gallery, but rather to explore the possibility of housing and displaying selected works in a city-owned building. Director Rouse confirmed that decisions regarding uses of the Jewett House are primarily administrative, when appropriate, and may receive guidance from the Parks and Recreation Commission. Additional clarification was provided regarding the trust agreement governing the property and the limitations associated with operating and preserving the facility. Chair Ryba also addressed the availability of the Jewett House for a potential Arts and Humanities Endowment launch event. Director Rouse noted that existing reservations limit October availability but suggested dates later in the month may remain possible.

Chair Ryba reminded that Art on the Green would begin later this week and that artwork selection activities would occur during the event.

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO EDUCATIONAL CORRIDOR/ITD MURAL: Jake Garringer, Director of Strategic Engagement for the University of Idaho, presented a concept for a large-scale mural at the Northwest Boulevard underpass beneath U.S. Highway 95. The project would celebrate the Coeur d'Alene Education Corridor and reflect the partnership among the University of Idaho, North Idaho College, and Lewis-Clark State College. Student artists from the participating institutions would contribute to the mural design through coursework and educational programming. Preliminary meetings involving ITD, City staff, the Mayor, and Arts Commission representatives indicated that the project appears feasible and aligns with several goals identified in the Public Art Master Plan, including community engagement, education, and placement of public art outside the downtown core. Commissioners discussed potential funding sources, project scope, and the educational value of student involvement. Support was expressed for allowing the mural subcommittee to further develop the concept and return with recommendations regarding design, budget, and implementation. Under the proposed framework, student artists from participating educational institutions would develop mural concepts through academic coursework during Spring 2027. Selected designs would then move into production and installation during Summer 2027 under professional supervision. Commissioners discussed opportunities for student engagement, educational benefits, permitting requirements, funding approaches, and alignment with the Public Art Master Plan. Commissioners noted that the project would expand public art beyond downtown locations and strengthen arts partnerships among local educational institutions. Discussion also included potential costs, project scale, and possible future funding sources. Because the proposal remains in an exploratory phase, no budget commitment was requested during this meeting.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Shortridge seconded by Commissioner Walker approve support and participation by the mural subcommittee with the University of Idaho in creation of a mural in the river district along the Northwest Boulevard, U.S. 95 gateway to the Coeur d'Alene

Education Corridor. **Motion carried.**

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO RIVERVIEW GALLERY AND LIVING LAKE LECTURE

SERIES: Mr. Garringer also presented a proposal involving the University of Idaho Riverview Gallery and the Living Lake Project. The Living Lake Project was described as a collaborative regional initiative involving artists, environmental organizations, tribal partners, and scientific agencies working to communicate watershed and lake health issues through artistic expression. The project seeks to make complex scientific information accessible through visual art, poetry, public engagement, and educational programming. Commissioner Light provided additional background regarding the artist fellowship program. Fellows spend approximately fifteen months working with scientists, environmental agencies, tribal representatives, and community organizations while developing artistic responses to issues affecting Lake Coeur d'Alene and the greater watershed. The proposed partnership includes: A public lecture series exploring relationships between art and science; a gallery exhibition at the Riverview gallery; marketing and educational outreach activities; acquisition of display equipment and infrastructure to support ongoing exhibitions; opportunities for future rotating displays of community artwork. Commissioners discussed how public art can communicate environmental stewardship, sustainability, and scientific concepts in an accessible manner. Chair Ryba asked about opportunities to align portions of the programming with Arts and Humanities Month activities and the planned Arts and Humanities Endowment Launch. Mr. Garringer indicated that would be a possibility and shared that the University is interested in developing a long-term relationship with the Arts Commission that could create future exhibition opportunities for artists and public art projects.

MOTION: Commissioner Sichelstiel made a motion seconded by Commissioner Benson to recommend Council enter a Memorandum of Understanding and approve funding in an amount not to exceed \$8,000. **Motion carried.**

PUBLIC ART PARTNERSHIP REQUEST PARKWOOD PROPERTIES: Chris Meyer of Parkwood Business Properties presented a proposal involving public art installations adjacent to Heritage Health's new Center for Healthy Living along the Atlas Trail corridor. Mr. Meyer provided background regarding the redevelopment of the former U.S. Bank call center property into a comprehensive healthcare campus serving a wide range of community health needs. He described improvements currently under construction, including trail infrastructure, lighting, landscaping, public gathering areas, and pedestrian amenities. The proposal included four dedicated public art locations positioned along approximately one thousand feet of trail frontage. Heritage Health requested that artwork themes relate broadly to wellness, healthy lifestyles, fitness, recovery, and community health. Mr. Meyer emphasized the project's potential to enhance the user experience along a growing section of the Atlas Trail while supporting Heritage Health's mission of promoting healthier lifestyles. Commissioners discussed the relationship between the proposal and the existing ArtCurrents program. The Commission noted that several ArtCurrents locations are currently vacant and that the proposed sites would represent a valuable expansion into a heavily used recreational corridor. Discussion also explored incorporating historical interpretation at one location through collaboration with the Historic Preservation Commission and local museums. Potential themes included Coeur d'Alene's lumber industry heritage, railroad history, and development of the Atlas Mill site. Commissioners praised the project as an example

of successful public-private partnership and expressed strong support for expanding public art opportunities as development continues along the river corridor. The trail should be completed by September of this year.

MOTION: Commissioner Light made a motion seconded by Commissioner Ethridge to provide four (4) ArtCurrents artwork along the Atlas public trail that runs behind the Heritage Health building. **Motion carried.**

ART CURRENTS PROGRAM TERM MODIFICATION: Commissioner Sichelstiel presented a recommendation from the ArtCurrents subcommittee to modify the ArtCurrents display term from the current two-year structure to a three-year term. She explained that ArtCurrents currently operates as a one-year agreement with an option for a second year, and artwork is often retained for the full two-year period. Because artwork installations have been staggered over time, City staff are required to complete removals and installations annually. The subcommittee reviewed the program and determined that converting all installations to a three-year cycle would improve efficiency by reducing the frequency of installation and removal activities. The proposed change would decrease administrative workload, reduce staff time dedicated to coordinating annual artwork rotations, and lower City costs associated with transportation and installation. Commissioners discussed the benefits of allowing artwork to remain in place for a longer period. Members noted that a three-year display period would increase public exposure to each piece, provide artists with greater visibility, and create a more streamlined schedule for future ArtCurrents rotations. Staff indicated that current artist agreements could be amended through addendums if the change was approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Benson made a motion seconded by Commissioner Walker to extend the ArtCurrents display period from two years to three years. **Motion carried.**

OCTOBER ARTS & HUMANITIES/ENDOWMENT MARKETING EXPENDITURE: Chair Ryba shared that due to time constraints and ongoing discussions regarding broader marketing efforts, the Commission reviewed but did not act on the proposed Arts & Humanities Month and Endowment marketing expenditure request submitted by Cynthia Newkirk. Chair Ryba explained that the Commission is seeking a more comprehensive marketing strategy that extends beyond a single publication or advertising outlet. Rather than approving a stand-alone expenditure, commissioners agreed that a larger communications plan should be developed to promote the Arts & Humanities Endowment launch, Arts Awards, Arts & Humanities Month activities, and other major Commission initiatives. Chuck, recently appointed Chair of the Marketing and Technology Committee, stated that he would prefer to establish an overall marketing plan and budget before committing funds to any specific advertising proposal. She noted that developing a coordinated campaign would better position the Commission to reach a broader audience and maximize marketing effectiveness. Following discussion, the expenditure request was withdrawn and will return at a future meeting as part of a larger marketing and communications proposal.

UTILITY BOX RE-WRAP REQUEST: Chair Ryba gave an overview of a request submitted by Linda Lantzy to replace the artwork wrap on a utility box located at Third Street and Harrison Avenue. Chair Ryba thanked staff for researching the history of the installation and explained that the utility box itself had been replaced, requiring installation of a new wrap. The replacement

project would recreate the previously approved artwork and restore the visual appearance of the site. The total project cost was presented at \$730, including production and installation of the replacement wrap. Commissioners discussed funding the project from the Public Art Maintenance Fund and agreed that restoration of the artwork was an appropriate maintenance expense.

MOTION: Commissioner Light made a motion seconded by Commissioner Sichelstiel to approve the expenditure of \$730 from the maintenance fund for fabrication and installation of a replacement utility box wrap at Third Street and Harrison Avenue. Motion carried. **Motion carried.**

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:

Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards: Chair Ryba reminded commissioners that the Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards are scheduled for October 21, 2026, at the Hagadone Event Center. Nominations remain open through August 28, 2026. Commissioners were encouraged to submit nominations and reserve time to participate in the event, noting that all commissioners contributed to its success the previous year. Chair Ryba asked each Commissioner to volunteer for a few hours on October 21, 2026, to support the event as a team.

ArtCurrents: No additional report was provided beyond the approved three-year term modification.

Visual Arts/CDA Arts & Cultural Alliance: Chair Ryba reported that the deadline had passed and that three organizations submitted applications. The selection committee is scheduled to meet on August 10.

Performing & Music Arts: Commissioner Benson reported that the local theater coalition known as the Community Curtain Collective will meet again in August as it continues defining its mission and structure. Upcoming productions include: *Titanic* - Coeur d'Alene Summer Theatre (August 7-16); *Mean Girls* - Lake City Playhouse (July 29-August 2); and *Crazy for You* - Aspire Community Theatre (August 6-9)

Marketing & Technology: Commissioner Ethridge reported that no additional updates were available beyond those discussed during the marketing expenditure item. The committee will begin coordinating plans for October Arts & Humanities Month activities. Chair Ryba reported discussions with Michael Dziak of CDA TV regarding potential collaboration opportunities. CDA TV has expressed interest in producing arts-related programming for local television and may partner with the Commission's film initiative to highlight community arts activities and promote local artists.

Mural Projects: Commissioner Light reported that the newly presented University of Idaho Educational Corridor mural proposal represents an exciting future opportunity for the Commission and Mural Subcommittee.

Budget: Nothing to report.

New Member Training/ Policies: Nothing to report.

Poet Laureate: Chair Ryba discussed upcoming appearances by Poet Laureate, Jennifer Passaro, including a planned poetry reading before City Council during October Arts & Humanities Month.

Guidelines Development: Nothing to report.

Filmmaking & Film Festival Support of NoID: Commissioner Doutriaux reported that the Film Subcommittee recently launched its public outreach efforts and will host a Filmmaker Meet-and-Greet at the Coeur d'Alene Public Library from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. the following Monday. The event will feature a presentation by Jackie Butera of Paradox Studios, guest speakers, networking opportunities, and information about efforts to strengthen Idaho's film industry. Representatives from the NoID Film Festival will also participate. Commissioners and members of the public were encouraged to attend regardless of filmmaking experience.

CDA October Arts & Humanities Month: Chair Ryba reported that Commissioner Menzies is coordinating kickoff activities for Arts & Humanities Month. Commissioners also discussed requesting a formal mayoral proclamation recognizing October as Arts & Humanities Month in Coeur d'Alene.

Northern Journeys Publication: Nothing to Report.

Endowment for the Arts & Humanities: Chair Ryba reported meeting with Walter Burns, Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission, regarding creation of the Arts & Humanities Endowment. Both commissions will participate as equal partners in developing and promoting the fund. Discussion included development of policies, branding, marketing plans, and permanent name for the endowment. Commissioners were invited to submit naming suggestions that reflect both arts and historical preservation objectives.

Bus Shelter Design Competition: Chair Ryba reported ongoing discussions regarding a future bus shelter design competition and potential meetings with project partners to further develop the concept.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Benson seconded by Commissioner Benson to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried.**

The meeting ended at 5:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Melissa Brandt
Administrative Assistant