

ARTS COMMISSION MINUTES
March 23, 2021
City Hall, Conference Room #6

Attendees in Person: Chairman Jennifer Drake, Executive Assistant Sherrie Badertscher, Accountant Stephanie Padilla, Commissioner Mary Lee Ryba, Commissioner John Bruning, Council Liaison Amy Evans.

Guest in Person: Joel Bevacqua.

Commissioner Attendees via ZOOM: Ali Shute, Teresa Runge, David Groth, Zoey Hart, Derek Kahler, Margaret Behrmann, and Lindsey Sichelstiel.

Guest via ZOOM: Susanne Knutson.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Jennifer Drake called the meeting to order.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION: There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Guest Joel Bevacqua brought up a few concerns relating to the recent art piece chosen “The Monument to Peace and Unity.” He stated that a few people have brought to his attention that the artist should have been local, the sculpture looks similar to a depiction of the Tower of Babel, and the term “unity” may be a backhanded dismissal of diversity. Guest Susanne Knudson asked if there would be any public education and/or information on the background of the artist.

Chairman Drake explained the process of the calls. She stated depending on the project, some calls are done internationally, others are done nationally, and some are open to local artists only, and the goal being having access to the best pieces that meet the call. Once a piece is commissioned, it becomes the property of the City of Coeur d’Alene and a part of the community. Commissioner Teresa Runge mentioned this flexibility is what has allowed the community to acquire a vast diverse collection of artwork which they are fortunate to have. Chairman Drake stated art is subjective and will always look and have different meaning to different people. Commissioner Mary Lee Ryba stated this call was very specific and the Commission was looking for art that would address diversity. Chairman Drake stated the direction came from Council, and based on the location, the art piece should tie into the community’s call for unity and dedication to fighting for human rights over the past several decades. Commissioner John Bruning stated the call was also put out for public comment and they had received over 600 survey results with comments. He said the artist did her research and provided a proposal that met the call requirements very well. Chairman Drake stated there would be a dedication for the art piece and there would be additional news stories done on the project as the installation date nears.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Ryba, seconded by Commissioner Bruning, to approve the February 23, 2021 minutes. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT:

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Shute, seconded by Commissioner Ryba, to approve the February, 2021 Financial Report. **Motion carried.**

COMMISSIONER/STAFF COMMENTS: Chairman Drake mentioned local artist Melissa Cole is doing a mosaic mural on the outside of Sorenson Elementary School the last week of April, weather dependent. She said they are looking forward to the Arts Commission helping out with the kids and possibly contributing a minimal amount to the project. She would be bringing more information to the Commission at the next meeting.

Commissioner Runge asked about House Bill 311 and how it would affect our Arts Commission. Chairman Drake stated if the proposed bill passes, the Arts Commission would be abolished and the commission would cease to exist. She explained every art piece over \$25,000 would have to go out to public vote and would require a 60% voter approval rate. She encouraged the commissioners to contact the legislature and voice their opposition to the bill. She said the City has a system that works beautifully and as a result, the City has a wonderful art collection. Chairman Drake stated she would compose a letter to the legislators and governor for the commissioners to sign. She also said if the bill passes the legislature, they would write to the governor to urge him to veto the bill.

UPDATE ON 4-CORNERS PUBLIC ART PROJECT: Commissioner Bruning stated the recommendation of the art piece had been approved by Council and they have received a signed contract and required insurance documents from the artist.

PERFORMING ART GRANTS PROGRAM UPDATE: Executive Assistant Sherrie Badertscher gave a short update on the Performing Art Grants program. She stated they have received the annual reporting documents from one of the grant recipients, and have been in contact with another who will be providing supporting documents for a disbursement soon.

UPDATE ON “INSPIRED” PUBLIC ART SCULPTURE: Ms. Badertscher stated City Administrator Troy Tymesen has been in recent contact with artist Jason Sanchez, and although the piece is not yet ready, Mr. Sanchez was working diligently to complete it.

THIRD (FOURTH) STREET GARAGE PUBLIC ART UPDATE: Chairman Drake stated the call closed the end of February and there were 118 that met the call requirements. She said the selection committee has been created and they are currently scoring the RFQs. She stated she is coordinating with Ms. Badertscher to schedule a meeting with the selection committee to select the final 5, but there have been some scheduling conflicts, and the timeline will need to be pushed back. She stated the finalist will be presented at next Commission meeting.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY: Chairman Drake referred to the pictures submitted by the Groundswell Group for their request to dress a statue for a day; the statue would be dressed as a banana. She stated they would like to get a statue in all 50 states, and would provide a \$1500 stipend to the City. The campaign is being sponsored by Sun Bum.

Guest Mr. Bevaqua mentioned he did some research on the Groundswell Group. They have done the statue campaigns before, but felt it was in poor taste to dress the statue as a banana. He also mentioned the Skin Cancer Awareness Campaign is actually held May 4-7, not on May 1 as requested by the group.

Council liaison Amy Evans stated she supports the public education campaign efforts on behalf of skin cancer awareness, but felt this proposal wasn't an appropriate use of the City's artwork. Commissioner Groth stated he was not in favor of using the statue in this way, with Commissioners Runge and Shute in agreement.

Chairman Drake stated they would kindly decline the offer and refer them to Kootenai Health for a possible collaboration.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:

Mayor's Awards in the Arts: Commissioner Shute stated they are still looking at October 6, and she would like the nomination packets to go out by early May.

Utility Box Beautification Project: Ms. Badertscher mentioned she had spoke with a representative from TDS and the boxes are expected to be ready starting the end of May through January 2022.

ArtCurrents: Commissioner Runge stated the subcommittee met Tuesday afternoon and discussed the timeline and some changes to the contract period of the project. There are currently 12 pieces in the collection, but may have up to 18. They would like the contracts to be for 2-year periods and start a rotation. Commissioner Shute mentioned they would stagger the installation of the pieces to be able to alternate the rotation. Chairman Drake stated the subcommittee could make the change and make it part of the call moving forward. Commissioner Mary Lee Ryba mentioned it would be helpful to have the artist add a descriptive paragraph and inspiration for the piece to be included during the selection process. Commissioner Runge said this paragraph would be a nice way to make sure the selection committee has accurate information.

Commissioner Runge stated as soon as the purchase price has been agreed upon, they would bring the purchase of "The Climb" back to the commission as an action item for approval.

Ped/Bike Brochure for Art: Commissioner Shute stated they will have a proof by the next Commission meeting.

Public Art Plaques: Commissioner Shute stated they will revisit this item in the spring once the snow is gone.

Storm Drain Art: Commissioner Groth stated Sorenson Elementary and Winton Elementary are going to proceed with their art projects this spring, and Coeur d'Alene Charter School will proceed in the fall.

Budget: City Accountant Stephanie Padilla mentioned they were getting ready for the new budget year and would need to meet with Chairman Drake and Commissioner Shute to discuss the details.

Mural Festival: Commissioner Derek Kahler stated the festival would not be happening this summer. He said there were too many artists that would have to travel from out of state and it would be a hardship with the different state's pandemic restrictions.

Private Art in Public View: Commissioner Margaret Behrmann is ready as soon as the weather gets better. She has quite a few locations in downtown but would like Commissioners to let her know if they see any other locations that look like a good fit.

OTHER UPDATES: Commissioner Shute said the Arts and Cultural Alliance just started a podcast called "the Ali and Callie Artcast" and it is available on iTunes, Spotify, Amazon, and Google play. She said they were really excited and the first episode was released last Friday. She would love to get the Commissioners' feedback. They are hoping to feature Chairman Drake on April 5.

Commissioner Runge wished to thank and congratulate Commissioner Bruning for his work on the Four Corners Art Project.

MOTION by Commissioner Shute, seconded by Commissioner Bruning, to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Sherrie L. Badertscher
Executive Assistant