

**ARTS COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
August 27, 2024  
City Hall, Conference Room #6**

**Attendees:** Chairman Mary Lee Ryba, Vice-Chair Abby Light, Commissioner Alesa Momerak, Commissioner Summer Ward, Commissioner Sally Shortridge, Commissioner Lindsey Sichelstiel, Commissioner Kate Walker, Councilmember Amy Evans, and City Administrator Troy Tymesen,

**Guests:** Jacob Garringer, Terry Lee, Paul Fleshner, and Holly Stetson.

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

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION:** None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Chair Ryba introduced well-known artist Terry Lee who has made several sculptures in the city's History Walk. Mr. Lee noted that he completed the life size sculpture of World War II US Navy Nurse made of clay. He mentioned that it stands on a real bed frame with a real stethoscope around her neck and holding a real clipboard. He stated that he had been trying to find an individual patron for this statue for months and that he has exhausted his contacts. He mentioned that the total cost is \$65,000 and with one donor of \$5,000, he is seeking the Arts Commission's assistance to finalize this project or recommendations for possible donors. Commissioner Shortridge said she wanted to help. Chair Ryba also said she would be help and asked Mr. Lee to send her some history or information about the nurse statue. Chair Ryba mentioned the need for a plaque at the History Walk with a QR Code to inform the public on each statue's history. Mr. Lee stated that his favorite is the Lumberjack statue because there were five working sawmills in the city limits of Coeur d'Alene and people does not know that history. Mr. Tymesen asked Mr. Lee where he envisions the nurse statue to be placed with Mr. Lee stating that it will be placed next to the Army soldier by the Veterans Memorial. He invited the Commissioners to see the nurse statue.

Mr. Lee mentioned that the city has the molds for the Mudgy sculpture except for the mouse, and he is concerned about the conditions where the molds are stored because the rubber deteriorates. He asked about the status of the Miner's ore cart with Mr. Tymesen relaying that it would be welded back after the summer season.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Light, seconded by Commissioner Walker, to approve the July 23, 2024 minutes. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT:** Mr. Tymesen noted the following updates in the report: no expenditures under the urban renewal fund for the month of July 2024; \$44.04 was spend for Art-Maintenance; the \$330.00 for the community arts is the partnership with Emerge for the scholarships. He mentioned that he just signed invoices worth \$4,245.00 out of the \$25,000 fund allotted for Emerge scholarships. Chair Ryba inquired about the payments made to Green

Energy Dragon artist Melissa Cole with Mr. Tymesen responding that it is reflected in the Public Art Fund and staff is working on the scanned code referencing Sid. The draft on what it says will be shared with the Commissioners. Chair Ryba added that she can ask Melissa to do a narrative for the Otocast app.

**MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Momerak, seconded by Commissioner Ward, to approve the July 2024 Financial Reports. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

**COMMISSIONER/ STAFF COMMENTS:** Chair Ryba shared that she was approached by someone wanting to do a mural at the underpass of East Sherman Avenue to improve its look. Mr. Tymesen explained that from the city's experience of current murals, the paint will break down due to the excess water flow from the above freeway caused by weather conditions like rain and snowstorms.

Chair Ryba mentioned that Coeur d'Alene has received an Economic Recovery Corp. Fellow, Darya Pilram, who is part of an initiative that aims to establish a Creative District of Coeur d'Alene harnessing and promoting the region's abundant creative talent and cultural vibrancy. This district will be crucial for fortifying the area's long-term economic well-being by serving as hubs of innovation, culture, and entrepreneurship. It will generate jobs, attract tourists, and nurture a diverse cultural scene, advancing regional economic development strategies. The outcome will be the establishment of a vibrant creative district that boosts economic growth and cultural tourism.

**UPDATE ON THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY ENTRANCE ART PROJECT:** Holly Stetson, Coeur d'Alene Public Library Foundation Manager, introduced Paul Fleshner, donor for the Children's Library Entrance Art Project. Mr. Fleshner shared that his family has been coming to Coeur d'Alene since he was in college visiting with his uncle who owned a condo here. His uncle, who is no longer living, left a family foundation, the Fleshner Foundation. They moved here during the pandemic, and he and his wife, Alison, were impressed with the program at the library; it was Alison's idea and wish to do something to inspire more children to go to the library. He mentioned that the foundation application process went great, and the whimsical design will hopefully appeal and catch the eyes of children and parents. The addition of the Children's Library signage will hopefully attract children. Mr. Tymesen thanked Mr. Fleschner and inquired about the lighting of the art project. Mr. Fleschner stated that they also want the lighting, and they received the proposal yesterday, however, he would have to go back to the Foundation for the additional funding for the installation of the lighting next year. Mr. Tymesen stated that the City has to also look into the lighting design. Ms. Stetson stated that Building Maintenance Supervisor Adam Korytko is in coordination with them. Mr. Tymesen mentioned that this item will also go through the Library Board for official approval.

**MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Momerak, seconded by Commissioner Lindsey, to Recommend that Council approve the design of the Children's Library Entrance Art Project. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

**PURCHASE OF GEORGE CARLSON SCULPTURE:** Chair Ryba discussed the proposal of Blair Williams to sell George Carlson's sculpture entitled "Dancers of Norogachic" valued at \$65,000 for the discounted amount of \$25,000 to the City. Chair Ryba said that it can be displayed

at City Hall. She added that the sale will include a copy of the book “George Carlson: The American West,” published in 2021. Councilmember Evans asked about the City’s history in purchasing art and how to make the process a fair opportunity because this is a significant dollar amount even at a discounted price. She pointed out how this can be justified to get the Council’s approval. Chair Ryba explained that this sculpture happens to be an original art piece that is available, and it is part of the Arts Commission’s mission. Commissioner Light stated that she loves that the artist has a connection with Idaho, and he won a Governor’s award, however she would like to know more about the art piece itself because it says it’s an indigenous tribe in Mexico. She asked if there was another artist who made an art piece about the Coeur d’Alene Tribe or if there is enough connection to the indigenous culture here, and if the idea is to display the sculpture in City Hall, how will it represent the local culture. Chair Ryba stated that the artist has many remarkable paintings on indigenous culture, and this is about purchasing from a famous artist and not necessary what it’s about. Councilmember Evans explained that she wanted to understand the process of purchasing art pieces versus making a call to artists so she can articulate it when this goes to Council. She added that this might open doors so having a clear process is important. Commissioner Light agreed that a process should be set up. Commissioner Momerak shared that displaying the sculpture in City Hall would be like limiting it. She suggested having it placed in the museum. Chair Ryba stated that it would make sense to have it in the museum, but it would have to wait until the museum is completed. The goal is to have a portion of the museum that relates to the city’s art. Commissioner Ward suggested having all the information on where the art piece will be displayed before coming up with a decision. Chair Ryba stated to table this item and that she will talk to Blair and the EP at the museum if they will consider.

**PURCHASE OF PATRICK SULLIVAN’S O’KEEFE 8 SCULPTURE:** Chair Ryba recalled that it was mentioned in the prior meeting that the O’Keefe 8 sculpture was damaged. Ms. Mateski shared that the original price of O’Keefe 8 is \$8,500. She negotiated with the artist and the first offer was \$8,000 for the purchase of the damaged O’Keefe 8 but if sold with another art piece O’Keefe 9, the cost for both is \$12,800. The reduced price that was negotiated is \$5,000 with the City taking care of the repair. Mr. Tymesen stated that there is a \$10,000 deductible insurance but it is now eliminated in this year’s Art Display Agreement because most of the art pieces are not even worth \$10,000. He added that the City would be able to fix the damaged sculpture.

**MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Sichelstiel, seconded by Commissioner Momerak, to Recommend that Council approve the purchase of Patrick Sullivan’s sculpture titled “O’Keefe 8” in the amount of \$5,000.00 for the City’s permanent collection. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

**RENEWAL OF GAIA ART PIECE BY DALE YOUNG:** Chair Ryba explained that the Gaia sculpture was part of the ArtCurrents 2021 program and costs \$40,000. It is located at the Atlas Waterfront Park and the item for decision is if it should be renewed for display for another year.

**MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Light, to approve the renewal for another term from October 2024 – September 2025, of Dale Young’s sculpture “Gaia” displayed at the Atlas Waterfront Park. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE COEUR D’ALENE POET LAUREATE:** Chair Ryba stated that the Selection Committee met on August 12 and deliberated on six submissions. She

introduced Mr. Garringer to present the Committee's recommendation. Mr. Garringer stated that the Committee recommends Jennifer Passaro to advance as Coeur d'Alene's first Poet Laureate. He explained what made Ms. Passaro stand out is that she wrote that she wants to encourage poetry into people's day-to-day lives and her willingness to engage with many aspects of the community such as both young, old, and those incarcerated. He added that Ms. Passaro's background in terms of education and work also stood out having a bachelor's degree in English and Creative Writing. Her work as a wilderness ranger is also a factor that she can speak about Coeur d'Alene through her work. Chair Ryba added that she would like to work with the Idaho Prison Arts Collective to establish a creative writing program in Kootenai County Jail.

**MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Lindsey, seconded by Commissioner Summer, to Recommend that Council approve the appointment of Jennifer Passaro as Coeur d'Alene Poet Laureate. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

### **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:**

Arts Commission Applicant Review: Chair Ryba stated that Commissioner Drake has decided not to renew her appointment, hence there are three vacant positions now. She shared that it would be good to have a marketing person, architect, and someone connected to the school district in the Commission. She encouraged everyone if they know someone who is interested to ask them to apply. She mentioned that there are three applicants but we would wait for more applications and group them together for interviews.

Mayor's Awards in the Arts: Chair Ryba said that the name of the award for ignitedca is "Patron of the Arts" award and Councilmember Kiki Miller will assist in the celebration. As suggested in the last meeting, the event will be renamed to Coeur d'Alene Arts Awards. She reminded everyone that the deadline for submission of nominations is August 30. The event will be held on October 9.

ArtCurrents: Chair Ryba mentioned that the installation is scheduled in October.

Visual & Performing Arts: Commissioner Light shared that the concert series is wrapping up. She stated that there will be a concert on Thursday, August 29, at Riverstone and McEuen Park.

Arts Commission History: on-going.

Wastewater Treatment Facility Art Project: Chair Ryba stated that the artist, Melissa Cole, already worked with the Boys and Girls club and had the three panels done. She is working on the metal tube body and the head would take six weeks to complete. She shared that Melissa would have knee surgery this September, but the project is moving along well.

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

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting ended at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

  
Anne Mateski  
Executive Assistant