

RESOLUTION NO. 28-01

A RESOLUTION CREATING A CULTURAL HERITAGE PLAZA INCLUDING THE EXISTING TEN COMMANDMENTS MONUMENT

Recitals.

Whereas in 1943, a Minnesota juvenile court judge decided that many juveniles were “without any code of conduct or standards by which to govern their actions,” and further that the judge thought that those juveniles “could benefit from exposure to one of mankind’s earliest codes of conduct, the Ten Commandments;” and,

Whereas the judge made clear that such exposure “was not to be a religious instruction of any kind;” and

Whereas the judge, as Chair of the Youth Guidance Committee of the Fraternal Order of Eagles, sought and received the support of the Eagles in his effort; and,

Whereas the Eagles, with help from representatives from the Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic faiths were able to develop a version of the Ten Commandments which was not identified with any particular religious group; and

Whereas the effort to distribute the Ten Commandments was assisted financially by movie producer Cecil B. Demille, who wished to promote his movie, “The Ten Commandments;” and,

Whereas one of these monuments was given to the City of Grand Junction by the Grand Junction Eagles in 1959 for non-religious purposes and has been on display on the City Hall grounds for 42 years; and

Whereas court decisions since 1959 have ruled that monuments such as the Ten Commandments may violate the First Amendment of the Constitution under certain circumstances; and,

Whereas, through legal research and public testimony, the City Council has determined that the Ten Commandments is not only a religious monument, but also a part of our cultural heritage with intrinsic secular value to the community; and

Whereas, through public testimony, the City Council has also determined that a small minority in the community believe that the Ten Commandments monument on the City Hall grounds could mislead some to believe that the City of Grand Junction has endorsed a particular religion; and,

Whereas the City of Grand Junction does not desire to either promote or discourage any particular religion or faith.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION THAT:

The City of Grand Junction proclaims that freedom of religion, as protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and Article II, § 4 of the Colorado Constitution, shall be honored and respected;

Be it further resolved that:

- (1) The City of Grand Junction, in order to honor the cultural heritage of the United States of America, will retain the Ten Commandments monument on the grounds of City Hall;
- (2) The City will add a disclaimer to the Ten Commandments, similar to the one displayed in Pocatello, Idaho, which will make clear that the monument is not an endorsement of any religion or faith;
- (3) The City will add to the City Hall grounds other monuments to our cultural heritage which will enhance the public's recognition and appreciation of the rule of law, democracy, freedom and independence;
- (4) The City will solicit and accept contributions for the disclaimer and additional monuments in order to prevent the expenditure of public funds which might be interpreted by some as an endorsement of a particular faith or religion.

Passed and adopted this 19th day of March, 2001.

City of Grand Junction

By: /s/ Gene Kinsey
Gene Kinsey, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Stephanie Nye
Stephanie Nye, City Clerk