

Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture
Minutes
August 26, 2009

Commissioners Present: Melonie Buchanan Pam McLaughlin
Gisela Flanigan Lora Quesenberry
Jeanine Howe Katherine Rhein
Jeanne Killgore Tanya Smith
Lancer Livermont

Commissioners Absent: Don Meyers, Vera Mulder

Others Present: Legends Historic Sculpture Committee members Tillie Bishop (chair), Miffie Blozovich (co-chair), Jacquie Chappell-Reid (co-chair), Katherine Lopez, and Priscilla Mangnall, Chipeta Elementary School representatives Patrick Buckley (principal) and Tracy LeFebre (teacher), and artist Sara Oakley.

The regular meeting of the Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture was held on the above date. Chair Kat Rhein called the meeting to order at 4pm. A motion was made by Jeanine Howe, seconded by Jeanne Killgore, to approve the minutes of the Commission's last two meetings, both on May 27, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.

LEGENDS HISTORIC SCULPTURE PROJECT: Members of the Legends Committee and the Commission reviewed proposals from 13 artists from Colorado, California, New York, and Utah to do bronze sculptures of historic Grand Junction figures Sister Mary Balbina Farrell (who established St. Mary's Hospital) and John Otto (who was instrumental in designating and preserving the Colorado National Monument). The committee looked at the resumes and qualifications of each artist, photographs of their work, and an assortment of written descriptions, sketches, and/or photographed clay models of their ideas for Sr. Mary and John Otto.

The sculpture proposals for Sr. Mary ranged from \$39,500 to \$192,000 for a 1¼ life size piece and from \$45,500 to \$230,000 for a 1½ life size piece. The ideas included Sr. Mary with a model of the hospital, with a child or with several children, with a crippled farmer, in a horse-drawn buggy, and others. After much discussion, the main stand-outs in the field of artists were Gary Alsum, Chapel, and Greg Todd. After further discussion, a show of hands vote was taken, with Chapel receiving five votes and Greg Todd receiving nine votes. The consensus of the Commission and the Committee was to select Greg Todd to create the sculpture of Sr. Mary Balbina. Todd's proposal included Sr. Mary with a crippled boy pointing toward the future.

The sculpture proposals for John Otto ranged from \$50,000 to \$290,500 for a 1¼ life size piece and from \$62,000 to \$419,250 for a 1½ life size piece. The ideas included Otto with an American flag leading a mule, on a horse leading a mule, clearing rocks in front of a stainless steel etching of the Monument, on a horse with a waving flag, and others. After much discussion a straw poll was taken, narrowing the field of artists to Denny Haskew (four votes), Greg Todd (four votes), and Michael Wilson (four votes). After further discussion, another show of hands narrowed that further to Greg Todd and Mike Wilson. Because of the meeting time already involved in the artist selection for these two historic sculptures, the John Otto piece was tabled until a future meeting.

CHIPETA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 1% FOR ART PROJECT: Chipeta Elementary Principal Patrick Buckley, teacher Tracy LeFebre, and the Commission reviewed proposals from six Colorado artists to do a bust of Ute leader Chipeta. The budget for this project is \$10,000 – \$6,000 through the city’s 1% for Art program and \$4,000 from the school. Some artists suggested sculpting Chipeta’s head and shoulders, others showed her from the waist to her head, and one of the artists, Bobbie Carlyle, suggested a 30” high sculpture of Chipeta’s full figure, noting that she thought this would appeal to elementary children more than simply a bust. The Coordinator reported that another artist, Tracy Munson, said that she could do a 30” tall full figure of Chipeta as well. It was also noted that Munson is planning to do a sculpture of Chipeta’s great, great grandson Roland McCook. After looking through the proposals, qualifications, and images from each artist, a vote was taken, with Carlyle receiving four votes and Munson receiving six votes. The consensus of the Commission and the Chipeta Elementary School representatives was to select Tracy Munson to create the Chipeta sculpture.

GRAND JUNCTION ART STUDENTS LEAGUE: Local artist and art teacher Sara Oakley appeared before the Commission to suggest partnering with the Commission to create a new Grand Junction Art Students League. The purpose of the organization would be to provide an opportunity, on a monthly basis, for community members and area visitors to connect with, watch, and learn about local art teachers, mentors, and art organizations, as well as provide a cross-media group which supports working artists with regular painting/two-dimensional art sessions and opportunities for giving back to other local non-profit organizations.

Oakley’s vision for this arts education support group was discussed at length, Oakley noting that this would hopefully be akin to the very successful art students leagues in New York and Chicago. The initial need would be a place to hold the monthly sessions, preferably on a weekend afternoon. The Coordinator suggested that should the Commission want to start a local art students league, probably the best place for the monthly sessions would be the Lincoln Park Barn, which could be scheduled monthly on a Sunday around only a few annual events.

Oakley noted that she has tried several times to forge a partnership with The Art Center and hold the sessions there but has been unsuccessful. She also noted that she would do all the advertising and publicity for the new organization, and did not expect the Commission to do that. After much additional discussion, and because it was getting late and there was other business, the matter was tabled until the Commission’s next meeting.

REPORTS: The Coordinator’s Reports for May, June, and July were distributed and reviewed. The Commission financial report for the first half of 2009 and the budget for 2010 were distributed and reviewed. The Coordinator noted that the budget is tight this year and next since the City’s sales tax revenue is down, and that no new projects will be initiated in 2010, although the Commission’s existing projects and on-going programs all remain in the 2010 budget.

A discussion about hosting an arts roundtable in October was tabled, and as there was no further business before the Commission, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Cowan Sarmo
Cultural Arts Coordinator