



ARTS, CULTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

May 12, 2026 at 8:30 AM

Council Chambers at City Hall - 1123 W. Lake St. Sandpoint, Idaho

Call to Order

The meeting of the Sandpoint Arts, Culture and Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 8:33 am on Tuesday, May 12th, 2026, by Chairwoman Susnis in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Roll Call

PRESENT

Chair Ellen Susnis
Commissioner Barry Burgess
Commissioner Rick Decker-Zoom
Commissioner Kate McAlister
Commissioner William Valentine
Commissioner Darra Collison

ABSENT

Commissioner Carol Deaner

STAFF

Cheryl Hughes and Jason Welker

Public Comment

Clay Hutchinson, representing Carousel Smiles, presented a proposal for a community mural on the north side of the 502 Church building. He described the project as a community-driven public art effort intended to enhance the building façade. Hutchinson noted the application was denied administratively due to concerns it was too closely tied to the building's use and raised questions about distinguishing public art from signage.

Meeting Minutes Approval

1. April 14th, 2026, meeting minutes were approved as presented by the unanimous vote of Commissioners present.

Motion made by Commissioner McAlister, Seconded by Commissioner Burgess.
Voting Yea: Chair Susnis, Commissioner Burgess, Commissioner Decker, Commissioner McAlister, Commissioner Valentine, Commissioner Collison

Financial Report

2. Sandpoint Urban Renewal Agency (SURA) Financial Report

The latest financial information from the Sandpoint Urban Renewal Agency reflects the following for art fund balances:

Downtown: \$245,142.94

Northern: \$134,943.26

Silver Box Project: \$18,315.22 (advanced to date)

\$3,684.68 (remaining)

Commission Business - Culture

3. Panida Board Presentation

A motion was made to move the Panada Theater presentation up agenda item 3.

Motion made by Commissioner Valentine, Seconded by Commissioner McAlister.

Voting Yea: Chair Susnis, Commissioner Burgess, Commissioner McAlister, Commissioner Valentine, Commissioner Collison

Heather White presented upcoming restoration and accessibility needs for the historic Canada Theater ahead of its 100th anniversary in 2027 and acknowledged prior SURA funding for ceiling restoration and roof installation. White outlined three priority grant projects: exterior wall restoration of the south and Sand Creek-facing walls, including potential collaboration with the city on future mural improvements; installation of fire suppression systems in the main and little theaters; and an ADA accessibility upgrade including a stage lift.

Commission Business - Arts

4. Silver Box Project 2026 Selection

Cheryl Hughes reviewed the evaluation and scoring process for the 2026 Silver Box Project submissions. Four artist submissions were received and evaluated collectively by the Commission using the established scoring criteria. Following review and discussion, the Commission selected three submissions for recommendation to City Council:

Dave Gonzo – “Seeds of Growth” at the Farmin Park silver box location.

Maria Larson – “Heron” sculpture at the Post Office location.

Lee Harris – “The Grass Is...” sculpture at the Fifth Avenue/Columbia Bank location.

One submission was determined to exceed the project size limitations and was not selected.

A motion was made to recommend the selected artworks and locations to City Council.

Motion made by Commissioner Burgess, Seconded by Commissioner Decker.

Voting Yea: Chair Susnis, Commissioner Burgess, Commissioner McAlister, Commissioner Valentine, Commissioner Collison

5. Street Lamp Banner Program Update

Mr. Welker reported that the draft RFP and templates for the Streetlamp Banner Program were submitted on May 5, 2026, and are now posted on the City of Sandpoint website alongside the Basketball Court Mural RFP. Both application periods close May 28, 2026, with artist selections anticipated at the Commission’s next meeting.

6. Cedar Street Public Art Planning Update

Staff reported that a draft RFP for the Cedar Street public art project has been prepared and is ready for staff review.

7. Big Belly Monster Wraps Update

Chairwoman Susnis reported that City Council approved the Big Belly art recommendations on the May 6 consent calendar. Susnis is proceeding to digitize the selected designs. Commissioners discussed the potential addition of interpretive plaques or short story descriptions to accompany the installations for public engagement, particularly for children.

A vinyl production quote has been received and approved, and the project remains under budget with approximately \$122 remaining after artist stipends, installation, and printing costs. Susnis will follow up regarding payment schedule for artist stipends.

8. City Beach Basketball Court Mural Update

Director Welker reported that painting of the City Beach basketball courts will begin Thursday, followed by a brief weekend closure and completion expected next week. The project will use a simplified color scheme of two blues and white to reduce cost and time, and the new hoops are already installed and in use.

9. Northern SURA District Potential Art Projects Discussion

Director Welker and commissioners discussed potential SURA North District sites for future public art installations, including two right-of-way locations near the fairgrounds and Milltown corridor. Considerations included visibility, traffic, and site conditions such as wetlands. Director Welker will verify site eligibility and coordinate with partners as needed.

Commission Business - Historic Preservation

10. Historic Walking Tour Brochure Update

Ms. Susnis reported progress on obtaining vendor quotes for the historic walking tour brochure. Two quotes have been received, and a third quote from Minuteman is pending, with follow-up required due to lack of response. Staff were directed to document outreach attempts for procurement compliance. Once the third quote is secured, staff will finalize the requisition and proceed with the purchase order process.

11. CAMP 2026 - Historic Preservation Training

Commissioners discussed attendance for the Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program (CAMP) training scheduled for next Friday in Coeur d'Alene. The training is free and open to commissioners, with additional attendees encouraged to sign up.

It was noted that with expected attendance, no quorum concerns were anticipated.

12. Commercial A Historic Preservation Update

City Planner, Bill Dean, provided an update on the draft ordinance. The ordinance, currently being finalized for delivery to City Council and Planning Commission, emphasizes procedural review standards based on the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines and establishes a formal review process for exterior changes within the historic district.

Examples were discussed to illustrate potential commission review scenarios. Mr. Dean emphasized the shift toward a more structured design review process that may require commission approval for changes that previously did not require permits.

Commission Business - General

Director Welker and Commissioners discussed public comments given at the beginning of the meeting as well as the Panida presentation. Chairwoman Susnis shared that she may have a residential submission for the 48th Annual Orchids and Onions; updates to follow.

Commissioners' Roundtable

Chairwoman Susnis reminded commissioners that Lost In The 50's takes place this weekend.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 10:18 am.

I presided over the meeting and can confirm that minutes, prepared by the Board Clerk and City Staff Liaison, were approved by the Arts Culture and Historic Preservation Commission during their regular meeting held on _____.

Elle Susnis, Chair

Kami Omodt, Board Clerk