



# **Ridgway Creative District Creative Advocacy Team • (RCD CAT)**

## **Meeting Minutes**



June 16, 2020  
3:00-5:00 p.m. on Zoom

**C.A.T. Members in attendance:** Betsy Baier, Joan Chismire, Brenda Ratcliff, Diane Thompson, Andy Nasisse, Kevin Grambley, and Staff: Diedra Silbert, Karen Christian (minutes)

- 1) **Call to Order** - @ 3:04 p.m.
- 2) **Agenda Review** (additions or deletions) - Mural Proposal added to New Business (6b).
- 3) **C.A.T. Prowl Review** (C.A.T. community participation) – Brenda tallied 10 virtual events occurring in the area since the last meeting. There were 11 participants; all of which were attendees of the virtual events.
- 4) **Approval of 5/19 Minutes\*** - Approved via consensus.
- 5) **Old Business**
  - a) **COVID-19 Update: Business/Organization Creativity** – The CATs discussed their observations about the creative ways local businesses are reopening and maintaining operations. Observations: Melissa Countryman has moved her massage business outdoors, scheduling fewer people per day, and sanitizing between clients. The 610 Courtyard has been transformed along with a phenomenal job of scheduling and rescheduling of events. Ridgway Yoga Shala has provided a variety of online yoga classes and started their re-opening by allowing up to 6 students per class, paired with online sessions. Eatery 66 is allowing one group in the restaurant at a time for ordering, the tables are spaced for social distancing, and they are ensuring that customers are wearing masks. Lucky Find modified the merchandise layout to help space customers appropriately. Timber Creek is considering replacing the current entry door with a Dutch door to control the number of people inside the store. Diedra commented that a banner has been placed at the Town’s designated Banner Pole site explaining the Town is following the Governor’s recommended COVID-19 guidelines. The Chamber of Commerce posted information on their website reinforcing the Governor’s order and the Town’s position about being safe.
  - b) **CCI Grant and Liaison Contacts Update** - Betsy urged the Team to contact their assigned businesses and inquire about any need for COVID assistance. Diedra explained she, Pam, Andy and Preston meet virtually each Thursday to consider application requests. Sixteen businesses have been awarded so far, though no applications are pending this week. The maximum award amount allowed is \$350. Diedra reported \$5,700 of the CCI grant money has been awarded in total to 16 businesses to date. The recipients at this time are Weehawken, Sherbino Theater, Amulet Arts, Trina’s Fun House, Ridgway Office Supply, Ridgway Farmers’ Market, Skin Caring, Bluecorn Naturals, Second Chance Thrift Shop, PPE Mask Maker Nadia Peel, Ridgway Pilates, Glow Day Spa, Café Ridgway a La Mode and Voyager. Timber Creek and Cowgirl Creations will receive awards after submitting the required receipts. Diedra also read a thank you letter from Voyager explaining how the award helped them and noted thank you notes have been received from other businesses.

Joan said the Ranch History Museum will be reopening, and a request will be made to receive COVID funds from the CCI grant money. The CATs also recognized the most effective way to outreach to businesses to encourage applications is via face-to-face contact. Betsy mentioned the business list might be expanded in order to broaden

outreach and asked the Group to consider doing something for the community with the remaining \$4,300, if no further assistance is needed by the businesses.

**c) Subcommittee Reports**

**i) *First Fridays and Town Strategy*** – Diedra noted that the Town and Chamber have agreed to emphasize the Ridgway community’s desire for keeping safe and following state guidelines related to COVID-19, rather than broadly promoting tourism at this time. Brenda suggested cancelling 2020 First Fridays. She said that communication with businesses has indicated they need to focus on reopening, there are too many “unknowns” for the businesses to manage, and public gathering rules are still unclear. Though virtual First Fridays had been suggested as a possibility, interest from businesses seemed lackluster. Brenda will send an e-blast explaining that First Fridays will resume in 2021 and asked for any new ideas for the event. Joan suggested using circulation cards for attendees that could be exchanged for a reward via drawing. This would help to incentivize people to visit more businesses during First Fridays, especially businesses located on Sherman Street. It will continue to be a goal next year to involve businesses in the planning of First Fridays.

**ii) *Ridgway Old West Fest*** – The event is rescheduled for the same weekend in 2021. However, the Ranch History Museum and Railroad Museum are moving forward with the 2020 events scheduled September 25-27, which is also Railroad Days.

**iii) *Ridgway Independent Film Festival*** – Andy reported that things are moving forward on the expectation the event will not be cancelled. Approximately 8 submissions have been received, and fee waivers are still rolling in. Deadline for film submissions is Sept. 25. Diedra noted the event may need to be virtual in consultation with the Sherbino.

**iv) *Colorado Creative Corridor*** – Only one local application was received for the Creative Corridor Call for Participants. Diedra will send out another e-blast to see if there is further interest because the deadline has been extended. Andy suggested submitting something that highlights a broader look of Ridgway. Diedra encouraged the CATs to reach out to local Creatives and creative businesses to cultivate awareness and interest of this opportunity to be highlighted.

**d) County Community Calendar Funding\*** - Alpenglow Arts Alliance (AAA) submitted a proposal to the Ouray County Resort Association (OCRA) and Ridgway Chamber of Commerce requesting donations of \$750 each to establish a new community calendar. Their request was denied because the entities do not have funds in their 2020 budgets. AAA will make the same request for funding with the City of Ouray and Town of Ridgway. Ashley King will also pursue the possibility of getting private funding for a portion of the calendar cost. The CATs discussed how much to fund from the RCD budget. It was agreed via consensus to donate up to \$400, depending on donations received from the private sector.

**e) Heritage Park Improvements Update** – (Diedra reminded the group this is regarding the extended 2019 Colorado Main Street Mini-grant of \$5,000, with a match of \$1,250.) She reported the designated staging area has been leveled and graveled. A seating area with 4 picnic tables has been created. The Town and Chamber are looking into how to spend the remaining \$900, and how to provide pamphlets and other information to visitors. Diedra asked the CATs to let her know of any ideas on spending the remaining funds in that area south of the Visitor Center. Joan suggested a way to make brochures about the community and its assets available.

**f) Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) Advocacy Update** – Diedra shared an email from CCI and will forward the email containing other updates to the CATs. She said per CCI the community letters made a huge difference with State legislators. The letters helped the legislators who approve funds for the State budget to understand the impact CCI has on communities.

**g) Space to Create Update** – Diedra reported that Artspace, its contractors and subcontractors, and Town staff are now meeting weekly to further construction planning and financing for the project, the final phases of the predevelopment process. ArtSpace has put out a call for investors to purchase the Low Income Housing Tax Credits (a major source of cash for construction) and is working on gap funding as well. Groundbreaking is anticipated to occur either late 2020 or early 2021.

**6) New Business**

**a) Upgraded Town Website** – An upgraded version of the Town website can be found at: [www.townofridgway.colorado.gov](http://www.townofridgway.colorado.gov). You can still access the new website with the old address: [www.town.ridgway.co.us](http://www.town.ridgway.co.us). (Diedra said the RCD meeting minutes are easier to access on the new site.) She has been working on this upgrade for months.

**b) Mural Proposal** – Local artist Melissa McChristian, seeking feedback from the CATs, proposed her thoughts about coordinating an outdoor mural in Town. She hopes to collaborate with other artists and citizens to create this mural artistically and financially. She said town residents have shown their excitement in her conceptual discussions and suggested a very large mural with a positive, welcoming theme. Diedra has spoken with Melissa about the general process for putting a mural on public buildings and property, C.A.T. protocol when involved in community projects, and protocol for private property. The Group suggested several locations or several smaller murals around town. Melissa will return to C.A.T. for further discussion once something more tangible is ready to be proposed.

**7) Next RCD C.A.T. Meeting – Reschedule?:** Rescheduled to ***Tuesday, July 28, from 3:00-5:00pm.***

**8) Announcements** - There were no announcements.

**9) Reflection on Meeting, Tasks, and Next Agenda** –Diedra thanked the Team for providing good information, ideas, and support to Melissa McChristian.

**10) Adjourn** - @4:42 p.m.

Parking Lot

1. Representation to honor native heritage
2. Healing Arts Moonwalk
3. Ambassador to connect with schools