



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



## **Special Meeting Minutes**

**October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**C.A.T. Retreat at Top of the Pines**

**1:00 - 5:00pm**

**C.A.T. Members in Attendance:** Betsy Baier, Joan Chismire, Brenda Ratcliff, Amanda Gabrielson, Diane Thompson; Staff: Diedra Silbert (minutes)

**Vision:** The Ridgway Creative District uplifts and supports artists, artisans, and all Creatives so that they can sustainably live and work in Ridgway. (Feb. 2018)

**Mission:** The Ridgway Creative District advocates for Creatives to celebrate and sustain innovation in our community. (Feb. 2018)

As the Team gathered at Top of the Pines, Betsy and Brenda set out the food they had organized for everyone's enjoyment. The group dined and settled in, wishing the best for its missing members who could not attend, Andy and Kevin. Preston Neill, Town Manager, had also communicated that he would not be able to make it.

**Sanitizer Strategy and Possible Donation:** The group discussed how the Sanitizer Saturday event had gone on Sept. 26. At least 5 gallons of sanitizer remain for future distribution. Diedra reported that the Ouray County Soccer Club via Danika Gilbert had requested a donation of sanitizer prior to the event on 9/26, and Diedra asked if the Team was in favor of doing this. All agreed to a one-gallon donation for the youth group, and Diedra will contact Danika to arrange. The C.A.T.s also agreed that another give-away should take place late in the year, focused primarily on refilling the bottles of businesses. It was also mentioned that Nina Rea should be contacted to see if she'd like some sanitizer for the Art and Gift Sale in December, assuming it happens.

**2019 Retreat Notes Review:** Diedra led the group in a review and discussion about last year's retreat notes about what would be needed for the C.A.T. to thrive in 2020. The group had identified being more "inward-focused" in 2020, which happened in unexpected ways with the pandemic. Also due to the pandemic, it was a tough time to bring in new active members which had been an objective. All in all, 2020 has been much different, quite difficult, and unpredictable from what had been considered during last year's retreat.

**Appreciations:** As a way of recognizing each member of the Team, Diedra handed out cards identifying positive qualities related to the amazing honeycomb symbol which she saw in each person. Everyone read their cards aloud to the group and discussed those qualities with laughter and a few tears. Then Diedra gifted the group with necklaces representing honeycombs, and each person picked the necklace of her choice. (The missing members will receive a different honeycomb-type gift in November.)

**Thriving in 2021:** Diedra acknowledged that 2021 looks pretty uncertain too, as far as the C.A.T.'s ability to plan and to implement objectives with the challenges of the pandemic. She asked the group brainstorm what it might be able to make happen creatively, now that we've been in this situation for months. This list resulted:

- Workshops on inspiring topics, such as small business topics (link with Telluride Venture Accelerator, Small Business Resource Center, or instructors beyond our area since all is online these days—one idea was business licensing for artists)
- Find ways to help people cope with the uncertainties and challenges
- Work with or without PARC/Rick Weaver on a second plein air festival?
- Link with the women's painting group that's been meeting to exhibit their work virtually or otherwise

Diedra rephrased her question to the group and asked for more focus on the C.A.T.'s needs as a working group, and this list emerged:

- Consider a leadership team—Betsy and Brenda want to finish out their terms as chair and vice-chair this year and have others take on their leadership roles. They encouraged chair and vice-chair to consider working as a team as they have done, so it doesn't feel like the load is on one person.
- The group really enjoyed today's more personal approach and wants to do things at meetings to increase the personal connections between members. It was suggested to do something like the game, 2 Truths and a Lie, at November's meeting, hopefully in person outside again.
- New members who can bring new energy are definitely needed.
- Ways to incorporate new members during the pandemic were discussed, especially having one or two people "go out for a beer" with new C.A.T.s to get to know them more personally. Utilize an informal-type of "mentoring" to support new folks. (Some objection to actual mentoring was expressed.)
- Reach out to potential new members or volunteers based on their fit for the task (look at work plan for the objectives).
- Do personal outreach with people you think would be good members.
- Do public outreach (ad, listing on line) and utilize a group selection process with interested folks.
- Make the outreach creative (such as C.A.T.s in hats)

**Planning for 2021:** The C.A.T. reviewed the draft 2021 work plan and budget amounts requested with an eye toward community members who might be useful to bring in for different tasks. Each C.A.T. also signed on as a lead for a project or two.

Leads listed were: (Not all projects have a lead person at this time.)

First Fridays – Brenda, Betsy, and some local business representatives

Film Fest – Amanda, Joan

Geocaching – Amanda, Kevin? (idea-partner with RIGS or RiverFest for items)

Meet and Greet – Diane

Creative Corridor – Diedra, Brenda plus Hilary from the Chamber

Ridgway Old West Fest Support/Event – Amanda, Joan

Website Improvements – Kevin, Brenda, Diedra

Promotional Pieces – Joan, Diedra

C.A.T. Liaisons – all

The retreat ended after this discussion and clean-up at about 4:30p.