



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

AGENDA Arts & History Commission

Wednesday, April 2nd, 2025
5:00-6:30 pm
Greenbelt Room, 3rd Floor, Boise City Hall
150 N Capitol Blvd, Boise ID 83702

Virtual and in-person attendance is offered.
Watch via Zoom Webinar: [Registration Link](#)

- I. **Call to Order** – Commission Chair, Kris Clegg
 - a. Land Acknowledgement – Commission Chair, Kris Clegg
- II. **Minutes Approval**
 - a. *ACTION REQUESTED:* Approve Minutes from December 4th, 2024 (**Exhibit A**)
- III. **Director's Update**
 - a. Human Resources
 - b. History Program Updates
 - c. Upcoming Programs and Events
 - d. Needs From Commissioners
- IV. **Presentations/Updates/Approvals** **Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-204(4), all agenda items are action items, and a vote may be taken on these items.*
 - a. Informational Item: 2025 Communications Plan, A&H Brand Marketing and Website Update – Jennifer Yribar and Makenzi Dunstan
 - b. Informational Item: Cultural Plan Survey Results – Tilley Bubb
- V. **Adjourn Meeting**



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

MEMO

TO: Arts & History Commissioners
FROM: Jennifer Stevens
CC: Mayor Lauren McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits
DATE: 3/27/2025
RE: Director's Update

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & OTHER NEWS

Human Resources

City Historian: Ashley O'Hara will begin on April 28.

Public Programming/Education: Christina Wilkens will begin in early April.

Collections Manager: We are currently recruiting and hope to have someone new in place by early May.

Two Tour Guides: Rahel Gebrehiwot and Megan Kittridge will begin on April 21.

Cultural Site Assistant/Hayman House: Currently recruiting and hope to have this filled by early May.

Intern: To be hired in early May.

Remodel

The Arts & History Department offices will be remodeled between April and June, and staff will be working in other locations. Please reach out to us via email or cell phone if you need to reach us.

HISTORY PROGRAMS

Depot Centennial

Please join us at various events from April 13-16. A new permanent Depot history exhibit will be installed and available to view during this weekend.

Grove Street Storywalk – Type 4 Agreement with CCDC

These signs will be installed by May 31 between 3rd Steet and 16th Street. The content includes subjects as far ranging as the history of Boise's indigenous population (written by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes) to modern urban renewal.

LOOKING FORWARD

City Steps

We will be hosting City Steps tours in two 8-week sessions this year and will charge a small fee for those able to pay. The first session will run from May to July and feature the same tours as last year. The second session will run from late August to early October and will feature two new tours – one on the history of Boise's Chinatown and one on the public art featured along Grove Street.

Arts & History Ambassador Team (AHAT)

We still intend to revive AHAT in 2025. This team will serve as ambassadors at department or department-sponsored events; serve on selection panels; serve as tour docents and potentially cultural site tour guides/visitor services aides.

America250

New dates: the Department of Arts & History will lead Boise's celebration of the America250 between January 1 and July 4, 2026. The plans are still very early stage.

A&H has already planned several programs and events to commemorate America 250. Those include:

1. Murals at Hayman/Library: This 5-artist series of complementary mural pairs – displayed at the corner of main Library and an exterior wall at the Erma Hayman House – is a 2 ½-year project inspired by the America 250 theme, **“We the People.”** New murals will be installed in fall 2025, spring and fall 2026, and spring 2027. Additionally, Library and A&H co-sponsor programming associated with each installation.
2. Boise Visual Chronicle Juried Competition: A call for art will go out in Spring 2025 that asks artists to reflect on the theme, **“The American Experiment.”** An exhibition of the submitted works will be on display at the Erma Hayman House from August 2025 – January 2026.
3. History of Women's Rights in Boise: Exhibition to be on display at the Erma Hayman House from February – November 2026 as an exploration of the theme, **“We the People.”**
4. History of Deaf Education in Boise and the United States: Exhibition to be on display at the James Castle House from May – December 2026 as an exploration of the theme, **“We the People.”**
5. History Exhibition: City Hall third floor exhibit will go on display in fall 2025 and will rotate through the libraries until July 2026. This will focus on **Unfinished Revolutions.**
6. New City Steps Tours: Newly developed tours will be offered during the fall 2025 and spring 2026 seasons, based on the theme **“Power of Place.”**



Additionally, and in partnership with other city departments, we hope to include the following between January and July, 2026:

1. Speaker Series: Working with partners, we propose a five-part series with one evening devoted to each of the five themes.
2. Grants: using 1/3 of the annual grant budget, A&H will put out a call for free or low-cost community arts, culture, and history programs related to the America 250 themes, to take place between April and July 2026.
3. Library Card: contract with an artist to design a new Boise's America 250 card.
4. Trivia Nights: partnering with Idaho State Museum, host trivia nights related to Idaho and Boise trivia throughout the winter season, June-May 2026.
5. Reading programming: Library
6. America 250 at the Zoo: dress in costume to obtain free admission to the zoo one afternoon/evening.
7. Place Names Podcast: Why is it called *that*? A history of names in Boise, in partnership with Boise State and other higher education institutions.
8. Art Exhibition at Boise City Hall, put on by a community partner, Treasure Valley Artists Alliance.
9. Product Branding by business partners
10. Student Essay Contest (and possibly a song contest!)

Celebrations during Independence Day weekend will begin on Thursday, July 2 and continue until July 4.

Thursday, July 2 (First Thursday):

- Art Performances and Readings on the Plaza
- America 250 three-day scavenger hunt announced
- Art Show or History Exhibition in the Lobby
- Coordinated programming with Downtown Boise Association at The Grove Plaza and businesses throughout downtown
- Exhibitions open at Stein Luminary, Wassmuth Center, Erma Hayman House, Boise City Hall, other

Friday, July 3:

- All Exhibitions open again: Wassmuth Center, Erma Hayman House, Stein Luminary, Boise City Hall
- America 250-themed tours given all day
- Boise River Parade OR Greenbelt Nighttime Parade

Saturday July 4:

- Musical performances by XXXX (possible partnership with C Moore Concerts to bring other live bands to the park)
- Costume contests in America 250 theme categories for different age groups, with prizes
- Sell booth opportunities
- Boise Phil Pops concert



- Fireworks and an artist who coordinates music with the pyrotechnics

COMMISSION REVISION UPDATES

No update at this time.

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Upcoming A&H Events

- Depot Centennial: Sunday April 13 through Wednesday April 16.
 - Tours will be given with updated information from Arts & History
 - New interpretive signage for artifacts
 - New permanent exhibit
- *Voices of River Street*: Be sure to bring students, colleagues, friends, and family to see the *Voices of River Street* exhibit at the Hayman House before it is taken down for a new exhibition in June.
- James Castle House Opening Exhibition: Support the upcoming new exhibition at the James Castle House, and bring friends, family, colleagues, etc. to see it. This exhibition has a strong history component as well as an artist component.
- Story Story Night: Please consider attended one evening of Story Story Night's Flagship season.

➤ *Desired Action*: Please join us for any and all of these events and share with your networks!

Selection Panels

- Annual Grants
 - ~ 60-hour time commitment reviewing applications and selecting awardees in June.
- Writer-in-Residence
 - ~ 10-hour time commitment reviewing applications and selecting awardees in August.

➤ *Desired Action*: Please join one of our selection panels.





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners

FROM: Stephanie Johnson, Public Art Program Manager

CC: Jennifer Stevens, Director

DATE: 3/27/2025

RE: Public Art Program Update

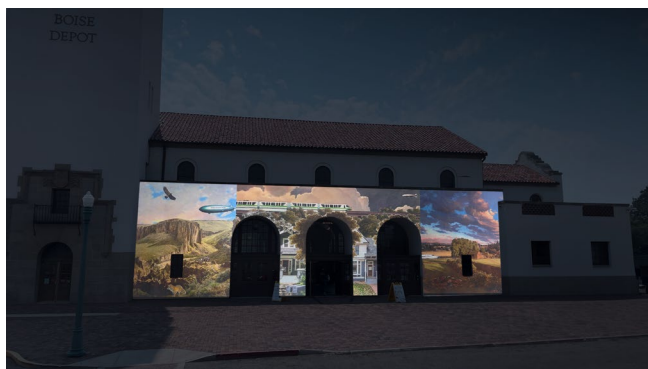
GENERAL FUND PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

Boise Visual Chronical 2025

\$20,000; Will take the form of an exhibition this year, opening in August 2025 and installed at the Erma Hayman House. This will include a jury that will award 1st, 2nd, and 3rd awards, as well as a purchase award. Each artist selected for the exhibition by the jury will receive a small stipend for framing/display and will be able to offer their works for sale during the exhibition.

Boise Depot 100 Anniversary Projection

\$50,000; Annika Kalac and Will Miller - Artist team selected for digital projection art for temporary display on the Boise Depot across 4 days. Selected artist will collaborate with a contracted projection professional and develop artwork for display that varies daily. The artist team collaborated with staff to facilitate an activity at the Open Streets event that will inform their final artwork. Artwork will be displayed during the Boise Depot Centennial celebration event from April 13, 2025 – April 16, 2025.



West Valley/Ustick NIP Public Art Project

\$160,000; James Peterson of Art + Contraptions – Artist is moving to fabrication. Project progression is on track for installation in May 2025, and a dedication on June 7th during Ustick in Bloom at Redwood Park.

Linen Fence 2025

\$5,000; Artist selected and contracted. Elizabeth Hilton will install in April 2025.

CCDC PROJECTS WITH TYPE 4 AGREEMENTS

Traffic Boxes 2025

16 artists selected for new traffic boxes to be wrapped in summer of 2025. Boxes are located within CCDC's Westside Urban Renewal District. Final designs due February 17th, 2025.

521 W Grove St. Public Space, Public Art

\$400,000; Artists contracted – Hua Design Studio

(<https://www.misstangq.com/installation>) (artist team Huameng Yu and Louis Chinn);

The artist team are collaborating with the site design team architects, structural engineer, electrical engineer, and construction manager to integrate their plans into the overall site and headed into the fabrication stage. Install to take place in July 2025. Below is a photo from the Groundbreaking Ceremony on January 22nd.



Erma Hayman House T4

\$100,000; Interpretive signage added lighting for artwork on wall and vinyl murals.

5 artists (Miguel Almeida, Gracieux Baraka, Mungo Ligoya, Hallie Maxwell, and Carrie Applegate) to design pairs of murals, one half to be displayed at the Erma Hayman House, the other half at Main Library. Miguel Almeida's artwork has been installed and staff are collaborating interdepartmentally to organize an artist event in conjunction with October First Thursday. Artwork will be displayed for a 6-month cycle during a 2.5-year timeframe. Programming at the Main library will include:

- Photography workshop with Gracieux in June
- 2 Archival scanning opportunities with Carrie in August (one taking place at the library, one at EHH)



Linen Blocks T4 ArtPort Installation

\$20,000 2nd art port to be installed on Grove St. between 11th and 12th streets. Partnership with sculpture class at BSU to select and display student artwork. Installation in May of 2025.

PUBLIC WORKS PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

Warm Springs Golf Course Asphalt Mural Invitational

\$32,000; Project in conjunction with the opening of the new Warm Springs Golf Course Clubhouse. Traffic calming asphalt mural at the intersecting pathways of the Greenbelt and Warm Springs golf cart pathway. Met with panel to select the top three artists to invite to submit proposals for the project. Installation set for mid-June 2025.

Water Node

\$330,000; Water conservation and resiliency public art project at the Foothills Leaning Center. Working with Byron Folwell on preconstruction including assessments and site design plan. Call set to release in March 2025. Installation Summer of 2026.



AIRPORT PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

ConRAC (Consolidated Rental Car Facility)

\$308,700; Vinyl banner mural installation on façade of building, first iteration of rotating installation every 3-5 years. Call opens March 2025, with installation to occur alongside opening of facility in Spring 2026.

Family Restroom Wall

\$70,400; Concourse B, large wall to host installation of potentially 2D sculpture/wall mounted artwork – Project launching in fiscal year 2025.

Survey on Public Art in the Boise Airport

Ran December through January, composed of 10 questions (3 multiple-choice, 7 short answer) focused on what travelers want to see regarding future public art projects in the Boise Airport. Responses will support artists on public art projects, not just the two upcoming projects but also to help guide the visual identity of public art throughout the Boise Airport as it undergoes expansion and upgrades over the next several years. Total survey respondents were 657!

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None this month





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners
FROM: Danielle Grundel, City Archivist
CC: Jennifer Stevens, Director
DATE: 3/27/2025
RE: Archives Program Update

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MONTH

Summary

The Archives program has continued working alongside the Department of the City Clerk to prepare for the merging of the city's records center and the city's archives into a single building. We are at the midway point, clearing out the entire first floor of the records center - approximately 4,500 boxes, and clearing out half of the archives building to accommodate 1,500 cu ft boxes for temporary storage.

At the records center, this involved the installation of additional shelving on the second floor, the physical move of 3,000 boxes to the second floor, and the palletizing of 1,500 boxes. At the archives, this involved the consolidation of collections and removal of static shelving units to accommodate the pallets from the records center in order to securely serve as a temporary location. The new mobile shelving units will be installed in April. This was a huge effort and accomplishment for the two depts.



Records center, first floor, clear out of boxes and shelving



City Archives, consolidation and clear out for temp storage

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None this month



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners
FROM: Alaggio Laurino, Cultural Assets Program Coordinator
CC: Jennifer Stevens, Director
DATE: 3/27/2025
RE: Cultural Assets Program Update

UPDATES

Retirement of Jamile Shirley

On March 6th, Jamile Shirley retired from her position as Cultural Assets Program Coordinator. Recruitment has begun for her position which has been retitled as *Public Art Collections Manager*. Moving forward, the *Cultural Assets* team will be referred to as *Collections Management* team as this more aptly describes their purview and duties.

Wind Translator

"Wind Translator" (2008) by Patrick Zentz continues to undergo repairs. The artist is currently fabricating new drumheads made of wood instead of leather. Reinstallation is anticipated at the WaterShed sometime in the April.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MONTH

"Walls to Walls" Portable Art Display Spaces

All five Library branches and the Fort Boise Community Center have been equipped with Arakawa art-hanging rail systems on walls of comparable square footage, designated exclusively for the display of the portable public art collection. Once a year in March/April, the artworks displayed on each wall will be rotated from one Library branch to another. The "Walls to Walls" project is intended to address multiple issues including: presenting the collection in a more elevated way; putting the rotation of the art on a reliable schedule; streamlining the physical movement of the art; eliminating patch and paint requests to FSO; and extending the display of the Linen Fence artworks while on loan.

Bicycle Trio Reinstall

"Bicycle Trio" (2013) an interactive piece by Michael Brown & David Cole, was temporarily deinstalled in 2023 in collaboration with CCDC as part of their *Rebuild Linen*

Blocks project. During streetscape construction, *Bicycle Trio* was kept in storage and repainted. With construction on the corner of 14th and Grove St now completed, the artists were flown to Boise to conduct internal repairs and reinstall the artwork on Thursday, March 27th.

Gentle Breeze Turf Replacement

Due to improper installation, the rubber ground surrounding the interactive sculpture “Gentle Breeze” (2022) began to fail and create a tripping hazard. Because all grass at Cherie Buckner-Webb is slated to be replaced with artificial turf, it was decided to replace the rubber ground with a similar material. Cultural Assets contracted with Sonntag Recreation LLC (Regional Contractor: Rocky Mountain Turf LLC), and the turf was successfully installed on Wednesday, March 19th. This maintains the artist’s aesthetic and suitable playground safety standards.

UPCOMING MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

Grove Street Illuminated & Boise Canal Repairs

In collaboration with CCDC, as part of their Deferred Maintenance Type 4 Agreement with Cultural Assets, artist Amy Westover will be conducting repairs and improvements to her installation “Grove Street Illuminated & Boise Canal” (2003) located on the corner of 9th and Grove Street. Due to persistent in-ground lighting and material failures, the original acrylic/steel utility hole covers will be replaced with bronze. This, and other superficial improvements are expected to be completed by May 16th.

City Hall Lobby Track Lighting

In collaboration with FSO, three walls located on the 1st floor Lobby will be fitted with new track lighting. Replacing the current recessed 24" fluorescent tube lighting will reduce maintenance costs for FSO and increase the versatility to highlight and feature the artwork displayed in these locations.

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None this month.





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners
FROM: Matilda "Tilley" Bubba, Cultural Planner
CC: Jennifer Stevens, Director
DATE: 3/27/2025
RE: Cultural Planning Activity

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MONTH

2025-35 Cultural and Creative Industries Master Plan Update

- **Survey:** I will present survey analysis at the April commission meeting.
- **Listening Sessions:** We have scheduled nine listening sessions in April with the public, artists, and organizational leaders to deepen our understanding of current conditions.

General Fund Public Arts Master Plan

Public Art staff and I are finalizing the recommendations and overall text for the General Fund Public Arts Master Plan, which will guide the program moving forward.

Collections Management Policy

Staff representing public art and archives are working with me to revise and craft a comprehensive collections management policy. This is a year-long project that will carry us into the next decade of collections management processes.

Community Outreach:

I moderated the Erma Hayman House's Living Legacies panel for Women's History Month. I have had the privilege to be interviewed on two radio programs this past month.

- Gemma Gaudette, host with Idaho Matters on Boise State Public Radio, interviewed me and Leta Harris-Neustaedter about the Living Legacies panel, organized by Tenisha Eastman-Dodson of the Erma Hayman House.
- Dr. JoEllen Watson, host of Elementary Watson on Radio Boise, interviewed me and Sean Kiethly, Boise's economic development director, about Boise's creative economy as Treefort Music Festival kicks off.

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

No needs this month.



MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners

FROM: Kristen Hill, Cultural Sites Program Manager

CC: Jennifer Stevens, Director

DATE: 3/27/2025

RE: Cultural Sites Division Update

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Hallie Maxwell Residency

The James Castle House hosted local artist Hallie Maxwell for a 10-week residency from February 5th to April 16th. During her time, Hallie created a variety of new works taking inspiration from James Castle's materials and the space itself. She hosted three open studio events, one workshop, and will be doing a presentation and studio reception on Thursday, April 10th.



JCH Featured on KTVB

The James Castle House was featured on KTVB's Wake Up Idaho on March 27th. Monica Galvan was interviewed by Tyson White and shared the stories of James Castle, his

home and work, as well as the new exhibition *Where Art Begins: The People and Places of the Historic Artists' Homes and Studios Program*.

Ariana Martinez Residency

The James Castle House will welcome Summer 2025 resident Ariana Martinez for a 10-week residency from May 15th – July 23rd. Martinez works across print, sculpture, and time-based media to explore processes of sensory perception and spatial navigation. As an artist living with neurological and autoimmune illnesses, Martinez is interested in how physical and cultural environments either accommodate or resist non-normative bodies. Throughout their stay, Martinez will host three open studios, one workshop, and a presentation with studio reception.



Living Legacies and Changemakers: Boise Women Shaping Arts and Culture

March 13th, 5:30-8:00pm at Trailhead

The Erma Hayman House hosted our second annual Living Legacies and Changemakers event in honor of Women's History Month, and the event was a massive success with 86 people in attendance. This year's panel of women in the arts included Alex Davis (Director of the Alexa Rose Foundation), Kirsten Furlong (artist and professor at Boise State University), Leta Harris-Neustaedter (Arts Educator, Musician, creator of "The Lovely Afro" podcast) Natalie Disney (writer and professor at Boise State University) and Jessica Joy Harned (violinist, podcaster, producer). The inspiring panel discussion was moderated by A&H's own Tilley Bubbb.

Erma Hayman House Joins Boise Museum Association

The Erma Hayman House has been accepted to the Boise Museum Association! They will join the James Castle House along with other Boise museums such as the Idaho State Museum, Boise Art Museum, and Idaho Black History Museum. This organization provides members with the opportunity to network, learn from one another, and expand audiences across the Treasure Valley.



Exhibition Collaboration at Erma Hayman House

The Erma Hayman House is thrilled to partner with the Wassmuth Center and Boise State University's Albertsons Library to present *Speaking Volumes: Transforming Hate*. This traveling exhibition features powerful artworks by a wide range of nationally-recognized artists which have been made from repurposed white supremacist texts. It will be on view across the three partner sites from May 29th – August 8th.



Erma Hayman House Gift Shop

The Erma Hayman House is now offering a carefully curated selection of books and branded merchandise, for sale on-site or through the online store (accessed through the EHH website.) The online store can also accept donations!

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS – Upcoming Cultural Sites Events

APRIL

Saturday, 4/5, 11:00am – 1:00pm (Erma Hayman House and Downtown Library):

Between Two Murals

Join us to celebrate the vinyl artwork "Viva La Causa" by Boise-based Mexican American artist Miguel Almeida and preview Congolese American artist Gracieux Baraka's "Daughters of the Dust."

Thursday, 4/10, 5:30 – 8:00pm (James Castle House): *Hallie Maxwell Presentation and Studio Reception*

Hallie Maxwell will be rounding out her residency with a presentation to share the work she has made on site, and the experience she had while at the James Castle House. The presentation is from 6:00 – 7:00, followed by an informal studio reception where attendees can speak with Hallie and view her artworks in person.



Saturday, 4/26, 11:00am – 2:00pm (Erma Hayman House): Youth Day

The Erma Hayman House will host our first Youth Day this summer. Geared towards youth and families, this event will be filled with creative activities that tie back into the stories told at the site.

MAY

Saturday, 5/3, 11:00am – 1:00pm (James Castle House): Be A Maker

The James Castle House will offer an annual workshop series to inspire intergenerational audiences to connect and create. This year's partner, Amy Nack, will bring her extensive art and teaching background to a hands-on artmaking activity that can be enjoyed by the whole community.

Wednesday, 5/7, 2:00 – 7:00pm (Erma Hayman House): River Street Spring Resource Fair

This garden party event invites River Street Neighborhood residents to engage with local organizations, businesses, and service providers to learn about available resources, foster community connections, and to pick up informational materials about various resources and organizations present.

Friday, 5/9, 5:30 – 7:30pm (James Castle House): Where Art Begins Presentation with Byron Folwell and Andrea Merrell

Join James Castle House Architect Byron Folwell and James Castle Collection and Archive Collections Manager Andrea Merrell for an exploration of the James Castle House through Castle's artwork. In this event, guests will tour the site and see corresponding artworks from James Castle that informed the design decisions that went into the remodel.

Saturday, 5/10, 11:00am – 1:00pm (Collister Library): Be A Maker

The James Castle House is partnering with the Collister Library to offer a hands-on art activity taught by artist and educator Amy Nack.

Tuesday, 5/13, 6:00 – 8:00 pm (Erma Hayman House): Evenings at Erma's

Join us for the first session of our new event series, *Evenings at Erma's*. This series will feature public events hosted by our community partners. Our spring 2025 series partner, City of Good, will create monthly events from May – July.

Sunday, 5/18, 12:00 – 4:00pm (Birds of Prey Center): International Museum Day

The James Castle House and Erma Hayman House will be tabling alongside other Boise Museum Association member museums for this year's International Museum Day. Both sites will provide educational material and hands-on activities for visitors to enjoy.



Saturday, 5/24, 11:00am – 1:00pm (James Castle House): *Ariana Martinez Open Studio*

This will be the first opportunity for the Boise community to meet Summer 2025 resident Ariana Martinez and learn more about them and their work!

Thursday, 5/29, 4:00 – 7:00pm (Erma Hayman House): *Speaking Volumes: Transforming Hate Opening Reception*

The Erma Hayman House, along with partner sites Wassmuth Center and BSU Albertsons Library will host an opening reception to celebrate the new collaborative exhibition. The event will include a presentation from the exhibition curator, Katie Knight, a musical performance, and light refreshments.

- *Desired Action:* Please join us for any and all of our events and share with your networks!





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners

FROM: Jennifer Yribar, Communications Manager

CC: Jennifer Stevens, Director

DATE: 3/27/2025

RE: Communications, Grants, and Public Programs

TEAM UPDATE

We are thrilled to announce that Christina Wilkens, Curator of Education at Boise Art Museum, will be joining our team as Arts & History's Education and Public Programs Manager in April. In this role, Christina will collaborate with Arts & History staff to develop, coordinate, and implement public programs and learning opportunities that highlight Arts & History's resources. She will also liaise with school districts and manage volunteers, docents, and interns.

COMMUNICATIONS

Arts & History Brand Marketing

In December, we completed our scope of work with [Drake Cooper](#). Deliverables included a messaging deck, including by audience type (e.g. community builders, creative catalysts, cultural stewards) and service line (e.g., A&H, Archives, Erma Hayman House, Grants, James Castle House, History, Public Art), as well as tagline options and copy examples. We also received a media strategy and platform recommendations, again tailored by audience type. In collaboration with our staff, the Office of Community Engagement, and Information Technology Department, we are currently applying many of these recommendations in our messaging and across our outreach materials, including in our website upgrade and redesign project (planned for July).

Arts & History Website Upgrade & Design Refresh

We continue to work with the city's Office of Community Engagement and Information Technology Department on the A&H Website Upgrade & Design Refresh project

(boiseartsandhistory.org). This project aims to upgrade our content management system to a current version, remediate accessibility compliance to meet new federal requirements (compliant by April 2026), and enhance the website user experience while honoring the unique features of Arts & History's brand. Project timeline remains July 2025. The James Castle House (jamescastlehouse.org) and Erma Hayman House (ermahaymanhouse.org) websites will be upgraded starting in November 2025 through March 2026.

Press Releases

Published:

- **Feb. 3, 2025:** Media Advisory: Jerome Mapp to be Honored at Tuesday's City Council Meeting (issued by Boise City Council)
- **Feb. 11, 2025:** [Boise Artist Hallie Maxwell Explores Heritage and Identity in James Castle House Residency](#)
- **Feb. 28, 2025:** ["Where Art Begins" Exhibition Reveals the Creative Spaces of American Artists, Including James Castle](#)
- **March 11, 2025:** [Media Advisory: Living Legacies & Changemakers: Boise Women Shaping Arts & Culture](#)

Media Coverage

- ['Dream things and then ask why not': Boise spotlights legacy of first African American council member](#) [Idaho Press]
- [River Street's rich past preserved at Erma Hayman House in Boise](#) [KTVB Channel 7]
- ['Living Legacies and Changemakers: Boise Women Shaping Arts & Culture'](#) [Idaho Press/Boise Weekly]
- [New art exhibit at James Castle](#) [BoiseDev]
- [Meet the Idaho women who are shaping our community](#) [Boise State Public Radio, Idaho Matters]

2025 Communication Priorities

- Jan. - May: City of Boise Flag Design Contest
- Apr. 13-16: Boise Depot Centennial Celebration
- Jul. 28: Kaixo Corner (521 W Grove St.) Public Opening
- Sept. 18: Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History and 2026-2027 City of Boise Cultural Ambassador
- Jan. 2 – Jul. 4, 2026: America250

GRANTS AND OUTREACH



Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History and 2026-2027 Cultural Ambassador

We will be accepting nominations for the Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History as well as applications to be the next Cultural Ambassador April 1-30, 2025. Award recipients and the next Cultural Ambassador will be announced at the Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 5 p.m. at JUMP. Individual tickets and sponsoring opportunities will be available for purchase in early summer. [Learn more](#).

Story Story Night is the current City of Boise's [Cultural Ambassador](#) (2024-2025).

Upcoming event:

- 4/29: [Story Story Night: BiSHOP](#)

Arts & History Grants Program

The FY26 Arts & History Grant funding, totaling \$150,000, will be distributed through two opportunities:

- Annual Arts & History Grant: Opens May 1 – Closes June 16, 2025 for awards between \$1,000 and \$5,000 totaling \$120,000. This funding supports people in established and emerging cultural fields with projects designed to benefit the Boise residents.
- America250 Grant: Opens in January 2026 (dates TBA) for awards between \$1,000 and \$5,000 totaling \$30,000. This funding supports people in established and emerging cultural fields with projects designed to benefit Boise residents and to support the City of Boise's commemoration and celebration of America's 250th anniversary.

Boise City Writer-in-Residence

We announced the [City of Boise's 2025 Writers in Residence: Susan Bruns](#) (October 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025) and [Alan Heathcock](#) (April 1 – September 30, 2025).

Upcoming events:

- 4/19: Workshop with Boise City Writer-in-Residence Alan Heathcock
- 5/31: Workshop with Boise City Writer-in-Residence Alan Heathcock
- 6/21: Workshop with Boise City Writer-in-Residence Alan Heathcock



Outreach

Upcoming outreach events (**Note:** This is a *tentative* schedule. Additional opportunities may be added throughout the year. Dates and events are subject to change.):

- April: Cultural and Creative Industries Listening Sessions
- April 4: First Thursday on the Plaza: A Clean City for Everyone
- April 13-16: Boise Depot Centennial Celebration
- April 19: City of Boise Earth Day Celebration
- May/June: City Steps Guided Tours
- May 1: First Thursday on the Plaza: Movement for Everyone
- May 17: Summer Reading & Learning Celebration
- May 18: International Museum Day

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Public Programs

We continue to engage department-wide teams in monthly Public Programs Roundtable, Book Club discussions (optional), and individual meetings to develop shared language and best practices in public programming and community engagement. We met in February to review upcoming programs and events.

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Cultural Program Guide

The April-June Cultural Program Guide is here! Learn more by visiting our [Events Calendar](#).

- *Desired Action:* Pick up a copy at our offices or at any city facility. Please share widely!

Upcoming FY25 Grant Recipient Events

- 4/14: Pendulum Early Music feat. Jesus Nostri
- 4/17-20: Idaho Dance Theatre presents *Resonance*
- 5/3: Pendulum Early Music Concert
- 5/24: Boise Philharmonic presents Chamber Music feat. Ballet Idaho

Learn more by visiting our [Events Calendar](#).

- *Desired Action:* Please consider attending.





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

EXHIBIT A

Minutes Arts & History Commission

Wednesday, December 4th, 2024
5:00-6:30 pm
Greenbelt Room, 3rd Floor, Boise City Hall
150 N Capitol Blvd, Boise ID 83702

Virtual and in-person attendance is offered.

Watch via Zoom Webinar: [Registration Link](#)

Commissioners Present: Kris Clegg (Chair), Gaby Thomason (virtual), Camryn Lafrenz, Amanda Ashley (virtual), Rachel Miller, Melissa Thom (virtual), Trish Walker

Commissioners Absent:

Council Liaison: Luci Willits

Staff Present: Jennifer Stevens, Jillian Whitehill, Christine Evangelides Dodd

Public:

- I. **Call to Order** – Commission Chair, Kris Clegg called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.
 - a. Land Acknowledgement – Commission Chair Kris Clegg
- II. **Minutes Approval**
 - a. **ACTION REQUESTED:** Approve Minutes from August 7th, 2024 (**Exhibit A**)
 - i. Move to approve by Thom at 5:03 p.m., seconded by Ashley at 5:03 p.m.
All in favor. Motion approved.
- III. **Director's Update**
 - a. Commission Revision Updates. Working with leadership to finalize. Will include:
 - i. Commission as advisory;
 - ii. Provide an annual schedule of opportunities to serve;
 - iii. Clearly outline commissioner role;
 - iv. Commission size will remain the same or +1;
 - v. Director's report & staff memos for action items;

- vi. Re-establish the Arts & History Advocacy Team (AHAT) starting in Spring.
Will support Amerca250 planning. Offering engagement for community;
 - 1. Clegg: Notes that the AHAT committee provides experience for future Arts & History Commissioners.
- vii. TBD: project approvals.
- viii. For now, hold bi-monthly meetings and provide informational memos.
 - 1. Thom: Asks what help the department needs from the Arts & History Commission to establish AHAT?
 - 2. Stevens: Replies that no responsibility is needed from the Arts & History Commission. The new Public Programs & Education Manager will recruit for and manage all volunteers and interns which will include AHAT.
 - 3. Thom: Asks if there will be any communications about AHAT opening that the A&H commissioner can share with their networks.
 - 4. Stevens: Shares that the department will start by contacting the prior members of AHAT to see if there is interest in re-joining. Then the department will put a call out and would welcome the A&H commission sharing this call.
 - 5. Clegg: Notes that she has the orientation materials from when she joined AHAT and would be willing to share these if they are helpful.

b. Hiring

- i. Program coordinator at Erma Hayman House (two-year position funded by a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, African American Action Fund). Supporting programming and building relationships with the community.
- ii. City Historian. Initial search failed so have updated the job description and will open hiring in early 2025.
- iii. Public Programs and Education Manager. This position will manage our volunteer core.
 - 1. Ashley: Asks who wrote the grant for the Erma Hayman House position?
 - 2. Stevens: Explains that she did.



3. Ashely: Congratulates the work and shares gratitude for the Cultural Sites team and all of the community members that have helped to lift up the Erma Hayman House.
 4. Willits: Asks if the Public Programs and Education Manager will be an additional FTE or reorganizing of current FTEs.
 5. Stevens: Confirms that is reorganizing the responsibilities of two current roles. Moving forward it will be Grants and Outreach Manager and the Public Programming and Education Manager.
 6. Willits: Ask for clarification on the term Advocacy in the AHAT.
 7. Stevens: Explains that members will attend A&H grant funded events on behalf of the Arts & History team and will help to promote department events.
 8. Willits: Expressed worry that Advocacy might imply lobbying and suggested Ambassador as an alternative word.
 9. Stevens: Appreciates the suggestion.
 10. Walker: Asks where to send a recommendation letter for a candidate for the Erma Hayman House Coordinator position.
 11. Stevens: Suggests sending this to the Cultural Sites Manager.
- c. America250 commemoration running from July 4th, 2025 to July 4th, 2026.
- i. Department of Arts & History taking lead on organizing this for the City but will be working extensively with the community to create programming.
 - ii. National themes include: Doing History, We the People, Power of Place, Unfinished Revolutions, American Experiment.
 - iii. Possible local themes: Resilience, Belonging, Renewal, Representation.
 - iv. Forming America250-Boise committee January/February and hope that at least one commissioner will want to join.
 1. Willits: Asks if the State of Idaho has picked their official themes?
 2. Stevens: Explains that they have not officially declared these.
 3. Willits: Offers to help with this.
- d. Needs from Commissioners
- i. Join our upcoming Public Art selection panel
 1. ConRAC mural and Family Restroom Wall Installation at the Boise Airport



- a. Need to know by January. Panel runs February-April. 3-5 meetings, 1.5-3 hours each, plus independent scoring of applicants. 10–15 hour total time commitment
 - 2. Water Node, outside Foothills Learning Center. Will be located on the berm between 8th st. and parking lot. Will be using feedback from community survey.
 - 3. Asphalt Art (by invitation). Near Greenbelt at Warm Springs Golf Course.
- ii. Pick up a copy of our January-March Cultural Program Guide and share widely!
- iii. Support & attend A&H and grantee events
- iv. Have awareness of upcoming campaigns

e. Upcoming Events

- i. 12/6-15 – Ballet Idaho Presents The Nutcracker
- ii. 12/7 – Opera Idaho Children's Choruses Holiday Concert
- iii. 12/11: Returning To Our Senses: A Writing Workshop with Boise City Writer-in-Residence Susan Bruns
- iv. 12/14 – Backyard Artists presents Paper Plane Press Volume I Launch Party
- v. 12/17 – Story Story Late-Night presents THE END
- vi. 12/26 – Story Story Night presents KiNG

IV. Presentations/Updates/Approvals **Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-204(4), all agenda items are action items, and a vote may be taken on these items.*

- a. Boise Arts & History Annual Report – Jennifer Stevens
 - i. Department goals
 - 1. Align department's work and public programming with the city's vision
 - 2. Create predictable services and public programming
 - 3. Update department's vision/mission/values to reflect the city's diverse populations to enhance connection to place and encourage civic engagement
 - 4. Build and strengthen relationships with city departments and community partners
 - 5. Focus on department's long-term sustainability



- ii. Throughlines today
 - 1. Boise resident opportunities
 - a. Involvement in City work
 - b. Attendance at cultural events
 - 2. Partnerships
 - 3. Accessibility
 - 4. Resident engagement
- iii. Predictable, repeatable, programming:
 - 1. CORE: City Steps, Cultural Ambassador, Annual Grants, Level Up, Writers in Resident, Artists in Resident
 - 2. Initiative programming
- iv. Department Identity and Collaboration
 - 1. Mission: Cultivate a distinct sense of place which reflects Boise's rich past, diverse communities, and unique natural setting.
 - 2. Departmental Reorganization: professional development and leadership growth opportunities
 - 3. Interdepartmental Collaboration: Parks, Library, Public Works, Airport
 - 4. Predictable, repeatable programing
 - 5. CORE: City Steps, Level Up, Artist in Residence, Writer in Residence, Cultural Ambassador, Annual Grant Program
 - 6. Other: Initiative-based, opportunistic
 - 7. Predictable, repeatable programming schedules
- v. Increase in art installations both large scale and small creating opportunities for various artists. Including Bronze medallions in Old Boise Blocks, 199 traffic box wraps, photographs added to our Boise Visual Chronical collection, working with BSU to create art for art ports (artwork that can be rotated out every 2 years).
 - 1. Thom: Shares experience from selection panel and appreciated the partnership element with BSU professors who offered to support the artist selected.
 - 2. Ashley: Notes value in mentorship opportunities to work with artists who either create larger scale projects or murals, etc.
 - 3. Stevens: Asks if commissioners who sat on this panel have any feedback that she can share with her staff.



4. Thom: Recommends starting out the next selection panel by highlighting this one as an example of success and sharing it as an opportunity of growth for the student artist.
5. Ashely: Reiterates gratitude for the opportunity.
6. Miller: Asks if these calls ever have a two-step process? Concept proposal first then more in-depth proposal second. Notes value in creating an opportunity for professional development.
7. Stevens: Considers the opportunity and acknowledges that professional development is something the A&H department is trying to offer and would like to work with the A&H Commissioners to identifying the best path forward.

vi. Cultural Sites:

1. Family Museum Day: Creating and hosting more intergenerational programming
2. Hosted an event by Story Story Night: Focused on stories from African Americans. What to create programming that invites
 - a. Thom: Suggestion bringing this back for America250
3. Would like to boost memberships at both sites. Are looking for ideas and help with encouraging folks to attend both sites. Still looking at identity at both places.
 - a. Lafrenz: Notes that for youth, verbally promoting events is more successful than posting flyers.
 - b. Clegg: Notes the opportunity for commissioners to support in this capacity.
 - c. Stevens: Shares that the department is in the process of mobilizing a youth advisory committee.
 - d. Thomason: Highlights limited parking as an accessibility issue, particularly for the Erma Hayman House. Are there opportunities to create parking for the Erma Hayman House?
 - e. Stevens: Agrees and explains that she is currently trying to work on this and will keep the commission updated.



- vii. Merging of the Boise Archives with the City Records. With the goal of having a public facing space for citizens to complete research in. Will help to create transparency.
- viii. Partnering with the Library to rotate history exhibitions and create relevant programming.
- ix. Opportunities and programming have increased in the last year. At the same time our applicants for opportunities have also increased. We are unable to meet the demand and are trying to find ways to accommodate.
- x. Deaccessioned a few pieces in the last year.
- xi. Ended the Fettuccine Forum due to steady decline in attendance but are hoping the new City Historian can create a new program in its place.
- xii. Will be expanding upon youth programming.
 - 1. Miller: Shares idea of creating an exhibit from the art created by students the department visits.

V. Adjourn Meeting

- a. Commission Chair Clegg asks commissioners to offer a motion to adjourn.
 - i. Miller motions to adjourn, Thomason seconds; all in favor. Moved at 6:17 p.m.

