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Historic Preservation Commission
c/o Gunnison County Administration
200 East Virginia Avenue
Gunnison, CO 81230

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Alicia, and I'm writing to you today to express my interest in being considered to fill the upcoming vacancy on the Historic Preservation Commission. As a Colorado native with a degree in and passion for history, I believe I am an ideal candidate to participate in this important Gunnison County commission.

My love of history started very early. Like many children, I was fascinated and inspired by Indiana Jones and his search for archaeological artifacts and the adventures he encountered along the way. As I grew up, I realized how unrealistic the movies were, but that did not quell my interest in archaeology and the pursuit of studying our past. When I was in 6th grade, I had the opportunity to spend a week at Crow Canyon Archaeological Center in Cortez. I actually got to learn about REAL archaeology and practice it in the labs there, and I knew then that I absolutely wanted to be an archaeologist when I grew up.

I attended Colorado State University for 2 years, fully intending to earn a degree and start a career in archaeology. Alas, life took me on another path, and it wasn't until several years later that I found myself enrolled at Colorado Mesa University where there was no archaeology program to speak of. I decided to pursue a degree in general history, but I was not disappointed. While I mostly had a passion for the "hard science" – the actual sites, excavation, and lab work – for which archaeology is known, I enjoyed learning about the unique histories of humans in every corner of the globe across the span of time.

After graduating, I found myself back at Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, this time as an employee. I worked for several years in the Development department, but often I was able to participate in the field and lab work that our archaeologists were doing. Education at Crow Canyon is special in that it teaches not only the facts about the past through "hard science," but also focuses on what the past can teach us about the human experience: who we are, where we've come from, and where we're going. I loved how it tied seemingly trivial pieces of pottery or stone to larger life lessons to which everyone can relate, and I realized that we can use the study of history as a way to learn about humanity and apply the lessons it teaches us to our current lives so that we can continue to progress and make ourselves better humans. I truly believe the study of history is critical to humanity, and the sites where history actually happened are extremely important and irreplaceable. Historic sites inspire people in ways that books, lectures, and other methods of study simply cannot; they create a tangible and meaningful connection to the past, and it is therefore worthwhile to protect and preserve historic sites to inspire future generations.

As I stated before, I am a Colorado native who has lived all over the state, but I very much prefer the Western Slope and when given the opportunity to move to Gunnison, I did not hesitate. While I've only been here a few months, I feel a strong connection to this special place, and I've been thinking of ways that I can get involved to invest myself as a member of this community. When I saw there was a vacancy on the Historic Preservation Commission, I knew this was the way I wanted to begin my involvement. I cannot think of a better way to marry my knowledge of and passion for history and my desire to be a "true" Gunnison local, and I am honored to apply for a seat on the Gunnison County Historic Preservation Commission. Thank you for your consideration.

Warmest regards,

Alicia Holt Corliss
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