



# 12.17.15 Minutes

## Full Commission Meeting Minutes

12/17/2015

4:00 pm to 6:07 pm

DCCA Large Conference Room

**Attending Commissioners:** Kay Kendall, CHAIR; Kim Alphonso; Stacie Lee Banks, Susan Clampitt; Rhona Wolfe Friedman; Alma Gates; Darrin Glymph; James E. Laws, Jr.; MaryAnn Miller; José Alberto Uclés; Gretchen Wharton; C. Brian Williams

**Attending Staff Members:** Arthur Espinoza, Jr., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; Victoria Murray Baatin; Erica Busby; Curtis Foy; Tonya Jordan; Dolores Kendrick; David Markey; Steven Mazzola; Regan Spurlock; Derek Younger

The Full Commission meeting of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order on December 17, 2015 at 4:00 pm at 200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400, Washington, DC 20003.

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### Adoption of the Agenda

- Commissioner José Alberto Uclés motioned to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded.  
*The motion carried. Unanimous*

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### Adoption of the November 17<sup>th</sup> Minutes

- Commissioner Rhona Wolfe Friedman motioned to adopt the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded.  
*The motion carried. Unanimous*

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### Chairperson's Report

- Chair Kay Kendall lauded Executive Director Arthur Espinoza, Jr. for his stamina over the past few weeks as he adjusted to work at the Agency.
- Chair Kendall thanked the Commissioners for their participation in the recent series of Committee meetings.
- Chair Kendall noted that she was looking forward to future Committee meetings.
- Chair Kendall reported that Commissioner Barbara Jones had severely injured her foot in a recent accident and was not able to attend the meeting.
- Chair Kendall noted that a holiday gift was on the table for each of the Commissioners.
- Chair Kendall reported that there was a possible partnership with the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Agency. She went on to note that there are a number of pieces in their collection for which the use of had not yet been determined.
- Chair Kendall reported that ArtsActionDC was scheduled to meet on Friday, December 18, 2016 and that Director Espinoza would address the network regarding the District's Cultural Plan.
- Chair Kendall differed to Chioma Oruh from the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments who addressed the Commissioners regarding their dcbc.dc.gov e-mail addresses.

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### Executive Director's Report

- Director Espinoza asked the staff to share what their experience has been thus far with regard to the shift in the organizational culture.
- Director Espinoza reported on the financials of the Agency.
- Commissioner MaryAnn Miller inquired as to what would be done with funds that had been returned to the Agency from grantees.

- Director Espinoza indicated that the dollar amount would be presented to the Grants Committee for a recommendation.
- Director Espinoza reported that he assessing staffing needs and that the Agency will make announcements on positions to be filled. He went on the note that this was an ongoing process and that the initial focus would be on the Grants department.
- Director Espinoza distributed his Vision2016 plan. He went on to note that the tenants were in line with the strategic plan and also incorporated a few new ideas.
- Director Espinoza noted that there was a special focus on I.D.E.A. (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) to ensure alignment with the City's goals.
- Director Espinoza noted that the Vision2016 plan will be the guide moving forward. He went on to share that it is a living document to be refined and redevelop as needed.
- Chair Kendall lauded Director Espinoza for the guiding document.
- Director Espinoza reported that he continues to meet with members of the City Council. He went on to thank Legislative and Community Affairs Director Victoria Murray Baatin for prepping and accompanying him on these visits.
- Director Espinoza thanked Special Assistant Derek Younger for helping to work out a new robust contract for the Lincoln Theatre which is in its final stages.
- Special Assistant Younger noted that as a part of the new contract the City has additional community days for programming.
- Director Espinoza reported that in support of the Mayor's response to homelessness, the Agency coordinated #HeartwarmingHolidays an effort that made free tickets to holiday performances available to homeless and displaced families.
- Director Espinoza thanked Legislative and Community Affairs Director Victoria Murray Baatin for coordinating the effort.
- Director Espinoza closed by noting that holiday cards from the staff were on the table for each of the Commissioners.

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## Office of the Poet Laureate

- Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick reported that she would be continuing her Poets in Progress (PIP) program at the Folger Theatre in February. She went on to note that the intent was to give exposure and an outlet to poets that have talent but do not yet have a following.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick shared that her book *The Women of Plums* was in its twenty-seventh year of publication. She went on to note that author Toni Morrison remarked that it was the book of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick reported that she was establishing a student poetry program at School Without Walls
- Poet Laureate Kendrick announced that she was working to bring poet A. Van Jordan to the District for a reading, on Friday, March 11, 2016.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick announced an upcoming youth program in 2016 – noting that poetry and music would be the theme and that she hoped to bring back one of the young poets from the South African delegation whom she had met earlier in the year.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick announced that her new book *Rainbow on Fire* had just been bound. She went on to note that this, a collection of new and old poems, would be her last book.

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## Nominations Committee

- Commissioner James Laws, Jr. distributed a written ballot to the Commissioners which nominated Commissioner Elvi Moore as Treasurer.  
*The ballot carried. Unanimous*

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## Committee Reports

- Grants
  - Commissioner Susan Clampitt reported that the staff has been working hard very hard on a new grant program. Commissioner Clampitt deferred to Director of Grants Steven Mazzola to present the program.
  - Grants Director Mazzola thanked the Commissioners on the Grants Committee for their support and outlined the grant programs in collaboration with the members of the Grants team.
  - Chair Kendall indicated that while the program was not up for a formal vote, that it was important that the Commissioners come together in acknowledgment and endorsement of the new program.
  - Chair Kendall noted that numerous hours of staff time and Commissioner time, from those on the Grants Committee, had gone into this new program and thanked everyone for their effort.
  - Commission Brian Williams raised a concern as to whether the proposed funding levels would make a sizable impact for applicants.
  - Grants Director Mazzola referenced the organizations that were consulted during the community vetting of the new program and that they indicated that it would.
  - Director Espinoza noted that the sheer volume of applications is prohibiting the Agency from developing rich relationships with grantees.
  - Director Espinoza noted that the new grant program provided an opportunity better engage with organizations and individual artists and humanities professionals.
  - Commissioner Gretchen Wharton noted that the Agency will always continue to refine the program and lauded the effort as a bold step in being responsive to the community.
  - Commissioner Laws noted that there will be an opportunity to adjust and assess down the road.
  - Director Espinoza noted that the new program aligns with Mayor's vision of job growth and economic growth.
  - Chair Kendall asked for a show of hands as an endorsement of the new grant program.
  - There was majority endorsement.
- Art All Night
  - Commissioner Wharton quickly noted that future iterations of Art All Night would be refined and focus on one or two neighborhood sites.

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## Panel Recommendations

- There were no panel recommendations presented.

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## New Business and Announcements

- There were no panel recommendations presented.

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## Unfinished Business

- There were no panel recommendations presented.

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## Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:04 pm.