

Full Commission Meeting Minutes

2:30pm to 5:30pm

September Business Meeting

Attending Commissioners: Kay Kendall, CHAIR; Stacie Banks, Susan Clampitt, Edmund Fleet, Haili Francis, Alma Gates, Darrin Glymph, Miles Gray, MaryAnn Miller, Elvi Moore, Cicie Sattarnilasskorn, Jose Ucles Gretchen Wharton; *Remote Attendance: Rhona Friedman, Lawrence Green, Josef Palermo, Maria Rooney*

Attending Staff Members: Arthur Espinoza, Jr., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; Michael Bigley; Heran Sereke-Brhan; Earica Busby; Lauren Glover; Dominique Marsalek; Jeffery Scott; Rhea Beckett; Regan Spurlock

The Full Commission meeting of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order on September 13, 2:50 pm at 200 I Street SE, Suite 1400 Washington, DC 20003.

Adoption of the September Agenda

- Chair Kendall brought forth the agenda as presented. Commissioner Gates moved to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fleet.
 - *The motion carried; Unanimous.*

Adoption of the August minutes

- Chair Kendall introduced the minutes of the August Full Commission meeting. Commissioner Wharton moved to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore
 - *The motion carried; Unanimous.*

Chairperson's Report

- Chair Kendall introduced the topic of grants voting and the importance of beginning the discussion on grants immediately.

Executive Director's Report

- American for the Arts (AFTA) released its study, *Arts and Economic Prosperity 5*, which provides a comprehensive survey on the impact of the arts and culture on local jurisdictions around the country. The report indicates the significance of the creative economy on the District, which generates \$2.91 billion in total economic activity.
- The Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's board meeting occurred earlier this afternoon to publically unveil the results of the AFTA study. Executive Director Espinoza served as the lead presenter, along with colleagues from Montgomery and Prince George's County in Maryland, and Arlington, Alexandria, and Fairfax County in Virginia.
- With the support of Mayor Bowser, CAH has been working with the DC Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs (OPLA), and other agencies, including the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), over the summer to draft a new bill to DC City Council that will permit CAH to pay grant adjudication panelists. It is planned that this bill will be introduced to Council in the fall legislative session.
- Another bill, the Go-go Preservation Act of 2017, has been drafted by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity (DMGEO). The legislation assigns CAH the responsibility of providing programming for students and Go-go artists in the District.
- In regards to the coming legislation, there may be updates and possible hearings in the future. The CAH Legislative Affairs Advisor will reach out to the Commission in the future with any updated information.
- Please see the written Executive Director's Report for further information and updates.
- Please see Conflict of Interest forms to be filled out and turned in for FY18.

Grants Committee Report

- Deputy Director Bigley directed Commissioners to the Arts Education funding proposals presented in the grants binder.
- Chair Kendall requested questions or a vote on the funding proposal presented.
- Commissioner Wharton motioned to vote on accepting the recommendations as presented.
- Commissioner Clampitt seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS.**

- *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Director Espinoza introduced the funding proposals for the Arts and Humanities Fellowship Program.
- Director Espinoza discussed how more funding in this area yields better results. The more funding provided, the more impactful the grant is on the work being carried out.
- Chair Kendall explained that there was a desire to continue funding past certain scores in order to make sure there was equitable funding in all eight wards, including ward 7 and 8.
- Commissioner Gray inquired into whether or not part of the grants system may be creating issues that impede equitable funding for all eight wards.
- Executive Director Espinoza responded by explaining that the Commission and staff are constantly seeking ways to address this concern.
- Chair Kendall requested further discussion or a vote from Commissioners.
- Commissioner Miller moved to accept the proposed funding recommendations as presented.
- Commissioner Ucles seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS.**
 - *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Deputy Director Bigley introduced the East of the River (EOR) grant funding proposals.
- Chair Kendall inquired into whether or not it is unusual for EOR to be fully funded.
- Director Espinoza explained that it is not unusual for EOR to be fully funded. When the Horizon and Heritage grant programs was created, a more competitive field was removed and the field has now narrowed.
- Commissioner Sattarnilasskorn inquired about scoring and funding for this cohort. For example, an organization presented had a proposed funding level covering 50 percent of necessary funding and yet the organization scored at 41. Why would there be such proportionally significant funding for low scores?
- Director Espinoza explained that the funding allocation recommended is a result of the nature of the EOR program. In taking the long view and in trying to ensure opportunity, the Commission also ensures that the overall grant programming aligns with the Commission's strategic goals. By launching this new program through EOR, CAH takes the "all boats rising" approach.
- Chair Kendall requested further questions or a vote on the funding proposals presented.
- Commissioner Wharton motioned to accept the funding proposals presented.
- Commissioner Moore seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS WITH THE FOLLOWING RECUSALS:**
 - *Comm. Green Recusal*
 - *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Deputy Director Bigley introduced the Facilities and Buildings grant funding proposals.
- Deputy Director Bigley explained that number 19 is not highlighted because, per Grants Committee recommendations, it did not adhere to the requirements of the award type.
- Commissioner Miller asked why number 19 was not disqualified at the very beginning.
- Director Espinoza explained that number 19 was not disqualified in the very beginning of the vetting process. It was ultimately disqualified by the grants committee upon review of applicant information.
- Chair Kendall asked if there were any further questions or a motion on the floor.
- Commissioner Wharton moved for a vote to accept the funding recommendations proposed.
- Commissioner Glymph seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS WITH THE FOLLOWING RECUSALS:**
 - *Comm. Banks, Clampitt, Friedman, and Sattarnilasskorn recusal*
 - *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Deputy Director Bigley introduced the Field Trip Experiences grant funding proposals.
- Commissioner Friedman inquired into why number 17 was disqualified.
- Director Espinoza explained that there have been updates to the incorporation status of number 17. The Commission has not been able to determine if number 17 is a District entity. Though the entity is operating in DC, there is no registration as a DC based entity.
- Chair Kendall called for further questions or a motion to vote on the proposal presented.

- Commissioner Miller motioned to accept the funding recommendations proposed for Field Trip Experiences.
- Commissioner Glymph seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS WITH THE FOLLOWING RECUSALS:**
 - *Comm. Friedman and Green recusal*
 - *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Chair Kendall introduced grant funding proposals for the first Project, Events, and Festivals (PEF) cohort presented.
- Chair Kendall requested discussion or a motion for a vote on the proposed PEF funding recommendations.
- Commissioner Moore motioned for a vote to accept the funding recommendations provided.
- Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS.**
 - Chair Kendall abstained
- Chair Kendall introduced PEF funding proposals for cohort 2 in the presentation provided.
- Chair Kendall requested discussion or a motion for a vote on the proposed PEF funding recommendations.
- Commissioner Miller motioned for a vote to accept the funding recommendations as provided.
- Commissioner Fleet seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS WITH THE FOLLOWING RECUSALS:**
 - *Comm. Green recusal*
 - *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Deputy Director Bigley introduced the Public Art and Building and Communities (PABC) funding recommendations for cohort 1.
- Commissioner Gates conveyed that, despite the score reported, the panel found number 6 to be quite lacking in necessary substance for funding.
- Commissioner Miller inquired as to why number 2 was not disqualified at the very beginning of the application process.
- Commissioner Gates explained that numbers 2 and 4 on the report were deemed to be disqualified because upon deeper examination, it became clear that the project proposed would take at least two years for completion.
- Chair Kendall explained that some public art pieces have difficulty reaching completion in one year and so the Commission is implementing procedure that encourages greater diligence and focus on the timing of a project.
- Commissioner Glymph inquired into whether there is conversation about creating a grant award that would allow for projects which take more than a year to compete.
- Executive Director Espinoza responded that the Commission is aware of this issue and has spent time trying to problem solve as a result.
- Chair Kendall requested further discussion or a motion for a vote on the funding proposal presented.
- Commissioner Gates motioned to accept the funding recommendations as presented.
- Commissioner Ucles seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS WITH THE FOLLOWING RECUSALS:**
 - *Comm. Miller and Friedman recusal*
 - *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Deputy Director Bigley introduced the final grant funding recommendations for the Upstart program. These funding recommendations are specifically for capacity-building.
- Commissioner Sattamilasskorn asked how number 6 was decided because the selections looked random based on rankings from panels.
- Executive Director Espinoza responded by explaining that the Upstart program is different than other grant programs because it is designed exclusively to help small organizations grow. As a result, the rubric has been adjusted. The original criterion was counter intuitive because it was rewarding those already doing well rather than those who were aiming to do better. The Commission implemented a readiness conversation as part of the application process. Senior management and staff met with organizational leadership representing the applicants to inquire into their organizational readiness and internal structure. The Commission found that six had some financial concerns and five had difficulty with organizational leadership. The resulting scores are based on in-person interviews, in addition to panel recommendations.

- Commissioner Friedman inquired into whether applicants were informed that there would be an interview and a different scoring process for this program.
- Executive Director Espinoza responded in the affirmative. All applicants were informed that there would be a readiness conversation as part of the decision process.
- Executive Director Espinoza explained that the change was made to address issues reported frequently by the public. Additionally, applicants were informed that the process would include a readiness interview and that this was a change in procedure.
- Commissioner Friedman inquired into whether panelists knew that the interviews would happen and that the criteria for selection had shifted.
- Executive Director Espinoza noted that the interviews and determinations from the combined data collected during the application process occurred after the panels.
- Chair Kendall responded as a convener of the Upstart panel and noted that panelists were informed that there would be a readiness conversation with applicants following the panel convening.
- Commissioner Sattarnilasskorn inquired as to whether this grant program should be described explicitly as a needs-based grant.
- Commissioner Sattarnilasskorn requested that the process of the interviews be described.
- Executive Director Espinoza responded by stating interviews involved the executive director, as well as staff members from the grants team. The same sets of questions were used for each interview. There was no discussion of scores or ranking at any interview. However, some concerns described by panelists were addressed during the conversations. The conversations began with questions on intentionality of the programs. The applicants articulated their specific capacity needs. The information articulated was more than may have been included in the written narrative of the application and provided critical data. Follow-up questions were about the structure of the programs, including the details necessary to meet Upstart program requirements. Any large organizational change required further clarification.
- Commissioner Moore stated that part of the problem with processing these recommendations is that they are being compared to all the other grant programs the Commission facilitates. However, this is an entirely separate program and should be treated accordingly.
- Chair Kendall requested a motion to vote on the funding presented.
- Commissioner Wharton motioned to accept the funding proposal as presented.
- Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; 15 – 1**
 - *Commissioner Friedman – NAY*
 - *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Deputy Director Bigley introduced the public art updates.
- Chair Kendall requested a motion to vote on the proposal presented.
- Commissioner Banks motioned for a vote to accept the proposal presented.
- Commissioner Moore seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call Vote:**
 - **MOTION CARRIED; UNANIMOUS**
 - *Chair Kendall abstained*
- Chair Kendall motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:17 PM.