



**DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES**

**DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025**

**Call to Order**

The regular monthly meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order at 5:30 pm, Thursday, February 20, 2025. The meeting was held in accordance with the Open Meetings' Act and hosted in a virtual format with members remotely on the Zoom platform.

Chairperson Reggie Van Lee presiding.

**Roll Call:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Reggie Van Lee, *Chairperson/Art Week DC Committee Chair*  
Gretchen Wharton, *Vice Chair/Grants Committee Chair*  
Julianne Brienza, *Secretary/Governance Committee Chair*  
Demetrius Butler  
Cecily Haberman, *I.D.E.A. Committee Chair*  
Janice Kim  
Carla Simms, *Public Art Committee Chair*  
Hector Torres, *Arts Education Committee Chair*  
Cora Masters Barry

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mattie O'Neil  
Kymber Menkiti, *Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair*

**STAFF ATTENDEES:**

Edward Danieles, *Events Coordinator*  
Terrell Johnson, *Senior Grants Officer*  
Karyn Miller, *Public Art Manager*  
Aaron Myers, *Executive Director*  
David Markey/*Deputy Director*  
Christopher Naoum, *Events Coordinator*  
Denise Tolliver, *Communications/Public Affairs*  
Martin Fernandez, *Resource Allocation*  
Grace Allen, *People Relations Specialist*  
vEnessa Acham, *Public Art*  
JR Russ, *Communications/Public Affairs*

**DC GOVERNMENT ATTENDEES**

None

**Quorum:**

A quorum was determined to be present.

**Land Acknowledgment:**

The Chairperson read the acknowledgment of the ancestral lands of the Nacotchtank and Piscataway Peoples.

**Adoption of the Agenda:**

The meeting's agenda was adopted by unanimous consent.

Reggie read a statement about the mission of CAH in light of all the Executive Orders. He wants to reassure constituents.  
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grantees and the public. Keep and partner with us and we will do our best for you. Reggie stated he wanted to recognize where we are currently and staying on course.

**Welcome:**

Chairperson Van Lee welcomed everyone to the meeting

**Public Comment Period:**

Philip Van Slooten – Philip made a proposal for a DC Artist convention.

Lenny Campello – Submitted written testimony also, he had recommendations for Art Week DC; has been a panelist and has done fairs all over the world. Talked about women artists in the DMV 9/25.

*Resolved*, that the Commission adopted the minutes from the January 23, 2025, Public Meeting.

*Resolved*, that the Commission adopted the minutes from the January 23, 2025, Public Meeting.

Roll call vote:

*AYES: nine*

*NOES:*

*Abstain:*

*Absent: two*

Adopted, unanimous.

**Grantee Artist Spotlight:**

Byron Gilliam-Cloyd (Visual Artist)/Did not show

**Director's Report:**

Aaron Myers, Executive Director. Staff update: Completed interviews for the Procurement Analyst. Telework policy and return to work plan discussed. Exercise with DCHR to help right size the agency, create tier structures, and to ensure pay is aligned with duties/grades/steps. All managers and ED assigned executive coaches.

The team has been examining new Grant Management Systems (GMS). At our February meeting we hope to report on the next steps and timelines for implementation. We have successfully piloted a new system testing GOS. Hope to choose program next month. If grantees still waiting for payment contact grant manager.

Oversight hearings have been tentatively scheduled, performance March 6<sup>th</sup> and budget April 10<sup>th</sup>. The agency has received the questions from the Council and are in the review process. Those wanting to testify contact [dccouncil.gov](http://dccouncil.gov) or contact Andrew Jacobson at CAH.

Thank Public Arts, Events, and Communications for their work on the Vagabond exhibition, Hope and Ha-Has will hold its closing reception Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, from 4:00pm to 6:00pm.

Reminding the commissioners and those watching, that Poetry Out Loud is scheduled for Saturday, March 15, 2025. There are 13 schools confirmed, including Duke Ellington and HD Woodson. Shout out to Andrea Brown for her hard work. The Planet Word location has been confirmed and anyone interested should contact the agency's Learning Coordinator Andrea Brown at [andrea.brown3@dc.gov](mailto:andrea.brown3@dc.gov).

Interviews by OCP have begun for the procurement of a company to conduct our strategic plan reviews have begun. The committee has been formed and finalized and will be a consensus meeting on Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>. We anticipate the award recommendation will be finalized and the vendors will be notified the week of March 10<sup>th</sup>. Vendors will be notified.

**Finance Update:**

Martin Fernandez, *Resource Allocation* presented at this evening's meeting. Nothing drastic from month to month. Last month 39% left in grant line, now at 30%. Showed slide with administrative cost, not huge shift in spending from the previous month. Last slide was spending on the grant programs. Now below 20% on grant funding, grants for GOS and Neighborhood Arts, moving faster.

Julianne - called for a round of applause for the team.

Janice Kim - when will facilities will begin for this cycle. Are there any grant recipients allocated for this fund?  
Terrell Johnson - Capitol Small Grants already awarded; completing vetting and awards letters have been sent out.

**Grants:**

Terrell - FY26 GOS, East Arts, Projects, Events, and Festivals open on Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> and close Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, will have workshops throughout that period

New call for panelists. Seeking passionate individuals for panelists. Explains the job of panelists, must be experienced in the arts and humanities, and gallery professionals. They will review 25 – 30 applications and a payment of \$250 gift card. Apply at the website, [dcarts@dc.gov](mailto:dcarts@dc.gov). Contact Kayla Williams.

FY25 grant update: 87% executive, established 928 purchase orders (25 more since current number). Appreciate patience and working diligently to get to 100%. Reach out to grant manager for assistance to secure documents.

**Public Arts Committee Report:**

Carla – The Public Arts Committee had Karyn Miller, Public Arts Manager, to provide an update. Committee met February 12<sup>th</sup>. PA is creating SOPs, and working on plans for collaborations for Art Bank work. Establishing additional public programs, a recent Business of the Arts program. FY25 curatorial grant (Vagabond exhibition), first of its kind in the DMV. Of those receiving the FY25 Art Bank program grant, more than half are paid. Looking to launch FY26 in mid-April. Color the Curb has 18 applications submitted and the panel review on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Welcome Commissioners  
Collections management - there are 25 open requests for Art Bank Program, this includes agency loan requests, installations, cataloging FY25 Art Bank. Business of the Arts event held, Kerry Kennedy served as moderator.

**Art Education:**

Hector Torres – The Art Education Committee met on Tuesday. Commissioner Torres invited participation from other commissioners. Complemented Andrea Brown for her work with the Creative Spark program for those age 50+ and DC students. 20 applicants confirmed and several deferred until 2026 due to lack of funds. Art Education is working on Poetry Out Loud, the national contest that invites high school students to compete. Nine teaching artists have been selected for coaching. Internships were announced, and we received a total of 75 applicants. The internships will begin in May & June and conclude in August.

Cora – supported Blacks and Wax for 19 years at the Kennedy Center. This year the organization has declined scheduled Kennedy Center date this year. Stated that morally difficult use that venue. They have chosen to hold the event at the Duke Ellington School. They are sending out the information and invited everyone to come. The program consists of sound, music, and dance. The date at the Arch is March 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 and 6:00, at the Duke Ellington date is March 15 at 4:30.

**Art Week DC:**

Reggie Art Week DC, Still collecting feedback on the consultant report, look to launching in 2026 needs a full year of planning.

Reggie’s statement of current events - We are on course to do the right thing for the right people in Washington, DC, we will continue the improvement how we serve our constituents.

Adjournment

Next meeting will be held Monday, March 17, 2025.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chairman Van Lee adjourned the meeting at 6:17 pm

