

DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

+ + + + +

REGULAR MEETING

+ + + + +

MONDAY
MAY 16, 2022

+ + + + +

The Commission on the Arts and Humanities met at the MLK Memorial Library, Room 401-D, at 5:30 p.m. EDT, Reggie Van Lee, Chair, presiding.

PRESENT

REGGIE VAN LEE, Chair
MAGGIE FITZPATRICK, Vice Chair
HECTOR TORRES, Secretary
KYMBER MENKITI, Treasurer
STACIE LEE BANKS, Commissioner
CORA MASTERS BARRY, Commissioner
QUANICE FLOYD, Commissioner
NATALIE HOPKINSON, Commissioner
CICIE SATTARNILASSKORN, Commissioner
CARLA SIMS, Commissioner
GRETCHEN B. WHARTON, Commissioner
DEREK YOUNGER, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT

HERAN SEREKE-BRHAN, Executive Director
BRIAN ALLENDE, Resource Allocation Officer

C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

Item	Page
1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL	
Reggie Van Lee, Chair, presiding	3
2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT	
Recognizing the ancestral homelands of the Nacotchtank and Piscataway Peoples	7
3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.	7
4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES	7
5. WELCOME	
Reggie Van Lee, Chair.	8
6. PUBLIC COMMENT	
Yasmin Paraskevas Yas Media Communications Events.	9
James Williams Petworth Get Wise Coalition.11
7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT	
Heran Sereke-Brhan, Executive Director33
8. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT	
KyMBER Menkiti, Committee Chair.40
9. GRANTS COMMITTEE REPORT	
Gretchen Wharton, Committee Chair.44
10. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT	
Rhona Friedman, Committee Chair.64
11. NEW BUSINESS65
12. ADJOURNMENT	
Reggie Van Lee, Chair.74

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

5:35 p.m.

CHAIR VAN LEE: The meeting will come to order. The time is 5:35 p.m. on Monday, May 16, 2022.

This is a regular meeting of the District of Columbia Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

My name is Reggie Van Lee, chairperson of the commission. I'm an African-American man wearing a light gray shirt and a black and white suit today.

Notice of the meeting was posted on the commission's website, dcarts.dc.gov, on the DC Office of Open Government Central Meetings calendar, and in the District of Columbia Register.

I will now call the roll. When you hear your name, please answer present. Stacie?

COMMISSIONER LEE BANKS: Present.

CHAIR VAN LEE: Cora? Maggie? Quanice?

VICE CHAIR FITZPATRICK: Present.

1 Sorry.

2 CHAIR VAN LEE: That was Maggie?

3 (Simultaneous speaking.)

4 CHAIR VAN LEE: Was that Maggie?

5 VICE CHAIR FITZPATRICK: Yes, sir.

6 CHAIR VAN LEE: Great, thank you.

7 Quanice? Rhona? Natalie? Kymber? Kymber? MaryAnn?

8 Maria?

9 COMMISSIONER MENKITI: I --

10 CHAIR VAN LEE: I'm sorry, who is

11 that?

12 COMMISSIONER MENKITI: Kymber is here.

13 Present.

14 CHAIR VAN LEE: Great, thank you

15 Kymber, I thought I saw you. MaryAnn? Maria?

16 Cicie?

17 COMMISSIONER SATTARNILASSKORN:

18 Present.

19 CHAIR VAN LEE: Carla?

20 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Present.

21 CHAIR VAN LEE: Hector?

22 COMMISSIONER TORRES: Present.

1 CHAIR VAN LEE: Jose? Gretchen?

2 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Present.

3 CHAIR VAN LEE: Derek?

4 COMMISSIONER YOUNGER: Present.

5 CHAIR VAN LEE: Let me go back, we're
6 one short. Quanice, are you with us?

7 COMMISSIONER FLOYD: Yes, I'm here.

8 Hi.

9 CHAIR VAN LEE: Good, great. Has Cora
10 arrived yet? Rhona? Natalie? MaryAnn? Maria? Or
11 Jose? We do have a quorum so we will proceed, a
12 quorum is present.

13 This meeting is being conducted in
14 person and virtual at the Martin Luther King Jr.
15 Memorial Library in Washington, D.C. in person
16 and remotely using the Cisco Webex virtual
17 meeting platform.

18 The meeting is being livestreamed to
19 the commission's YouTube channel for public
20 viewing, and an electronic recording of the
21 meeting will be available for viewing online
22 following the conclusion of the meeting.

1 This meeting is governed by the Open
2 Meeting Act. Please address any questions or
3 complaints arising under this meeting to the
4 Office of Open Government at
5 opengovoffice@dc.gov.

6 I will now read the land
7 acknowledgment. Every community owes its
8 existence and vitality to generations from around
9 the world who contributed their hopes, dreams,
10 and energy to making the history that led to this
11 moment.

12 Some were brought here against their
13 will, some were drawn to leave their distant
14 homes in hope of a better life, and some have
15 lived on this land for more generations than can
16 be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are
17 critical to building mutual respect and
18 connection across all barriers of heritage and
19 difference.

20 We begin this effort to acknowledge
21 what has been buried by honoring the truth. We
22 stand on the ancestral lands of the Nacotchtank

1 and Piscataway people. We pay respect to the
2 elders, past and present.

3 Please take a moment to consider the
4 many legacies of violence, displacement,
5 migration and settlement that bring us together
6 here today, and please join us in uncovering such
7 truths at any and all public events, and to use
8 such truths to guide the legacy of this arts
9 commission.

10 The agenda for this meeting was
11 previously circulated. If there are no
12 objections to the agenda it will stand as
13 adopted. Is there any objection to the agenda?

14 Hearing no objection, the agenda
15 stands as adopted. Next is the approval of the
16 April 25, 2022 meeting 8minutes. Are there any
17 corrections to the minutes?

18 Hearing no corrections, the minutes
19 stand as approved. I'd like to welcome everyone.
20 This is our first in person meeting since the
21 pandemic.

22 And thanks to those who both braved

1 COVID to be with us and braved the thunderstorms
2 that were upon us minutes ago. It's clearing up
3 nicely now and I think we have a great agenda
4 ahead of us and a great meeting, so thank you for
5 being here.

6 I'm going to start with our public
7 comments. We have two speakers today. The first
8 is Yasmin Paraskevas. Ms. Paraskevas, are you
9 here?

10 Yes, we can't hear you. You're muted.
11 Now you're not muted, now you're not.

12 MS. PARASKEVAS: Yeah, sorry about
13 that.

14 CHAIR VAN LEE: No problem.

15 MS. PARASKEVAS: Thank you for having
16 me, Reggie Van Lee and friends and colleagues or
17 other community members.

18 I wanted to share with you this
19 evening an event that I'm organizing. I believe
20 it is of relevance since it deals with cultural
21 heritage, the arts, and humanities.

22 The name of the event that we are

1 hosting is called Spring Fashion Fete, and it's
2 an event that is being held this Thursday, May 19
3 at the Hotel Zena in Washington, D.C.

4 It's an event that I am presenting in
5 conjunction with the Asian-American Chamber of
6 Commerce. The event is made up of a pop-up shop
7 and fashion show, as well as a reception. There
8 you go, thank you for putting that on the screen.

9 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yes.

10 MS. PARASKEVAS: The focus of the
11 event, the mission is actually to celebrate AAPI
12 designers and small business owners in the D.C.
13 area.

14 We have about five or six local
15 women-owned, AAPI-owned businesses that are
16 participating, and have showed a lot of
17 enthusiasm in this event.

18 Through this event, the Spring Fashion
19 Fete creates awareness of the successes of the
20 AAPI community and celebrates local AAPI-owned
21 businesses who have been hard-hit by the
22 pandemic.

1 A lot of them don't have ways to
2 promote their work or funds to do so, so through
3 this collaboration we are creating opportunities
4 for these small-owned businesses during AAPI
5 Heritage Awareness Month.

6 Participating designers as I mentioned
7 are primarily women-owned, D.C.-based, and others
8 that are in the immediate DMV area.

9 After the pop-up shop and the fashion
10 show, which will be led by Mrs. Washington D.C.
11 for America, a native of Thailand, we will have
12 other speakers such as a woman from the Chinese-
13 American community who will talk about her
14 American dream, and her experience coming to the
15 United States.

16 There will be an emcee announcing each
17 design and the models that are wearing the
18 designs in the mini catwalk that we have.

19 After the fashion show portion of the
20 event, there will be a reception where attendees
21 will have the opportunity to meet participants,
22 enjoy refreshments and complimentary small bites

1 by the hosts.

2 The free portion of the event is the
3 pop-up portion of the event where we'll have
4 different vendors, and then the fashion show and
5 reception are ticketed.

6 A portion of the proceeds will go to
7 the Asian-American Chamber of Commerce
8 Foundation, which offers scholarships and
9 educational opportunities to the members of the
10 AAPI community. And that's all I have today.

11 CHAIR VAN LEE: Well, great. Thank
12 you very much, and I'm hoping that many people
13 are viewing and will be aware of this event and
14 will support you. Thank you so much.

15 MS. PARASKEVAS: Thank you.

16 CHAIR VAN LEE: Our next speaker is
17 James Williams. Mr. Williams?

18 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes. Can everyone hear
19 me clearly?

20 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yes.

21 MR. WILLIAMS: Okay, great. Thank
22 you, Chairman Lee. My name is James Williams and

1 I serve as the executive director for the
2 Environmental Technology Council here in
3 Washington, D.C.

4 However, I'm speaking before you today
5 in my role as one of the co-founders of the
6 Petworth Get Wise Coalition.

7 Before moving forward, I would like to
8 take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. Chair and
9 all of the other commissioners for the
10 opportunity to speak to you today.

11 I would also like to say a special
12 thanks to Mr. Patrick Realiza for all of his
13 assistance in helping me be prepared for today as
14 well.

15 Founded in 2010, the Petworth Get Wise
16 Coalition's mission is to utilize our platform to
17 keep community members abreast of issues before
18 the 4C Advisory Neighborhood Commission that may
19 impact their lives.

20 We also sponsor community mental
21 health, physical wellness, clean space, and
22 political events that are aimed at building

1 community inclusiveness, and bringing about
2 benefits to all community members, and not select
3 people.

4 Our events are often held in
5 collaboration with neighborhood churches, the DC
6 Department of Parks and Receptions, the National
7 Park Service to bring about camaraderie across
8 the broad representation of the District of
9 Columbia.

10 The coalition membership reflects a
11 diverse demographic of the ANC 4C citizens.

12 Our most recent community health
13 wellness fair took place on April 23 of this year
14 at the Petworth Recreation Center. Our partners
15 for our event included the National Association
16 for Hispanic Nursing, All of Us Research Program,
17 Breast Care for Washington, DC, DC Department of
18 Parks and Receptions, and Mary Center.

19 Many community residents attended,
20 along with ANC commissioners, and we were honored
21 to have Ward 4 councilwoman Janeese Lewis George
22 attend and provide remarks.

1 As a native of New Orleans, Louisiana,
2 I have a strong affinity to jazz and the culture
3 it embodies. Over the years, my wife and I, Dr.
4 Tamara Jackson, have traveled extensively to see
5 some of the best jazz musicians and vocalists of
6 our time.

7 As a resident of the Petworth
8 Community, I wish to bring a taste of this music
9 and culture to the community.

10 Unbeknownst to many, Petworth is the
11 home of a very well-known and respected jazz
12 drummer, Mr. Kenneth Dickerson, who has played
13 with the likes of Lorie Williams, Lalah Hathaway,
14 Phil Garry, Lee Ritenour, and the late great
15 Phyllis Hyman.

16 With the help of Mr. Dickerson, the
17 Petworth Get Wise Coalition would like to
18 continue bringing community cohesiveness and
19 bringing new and exciting events to the
20 community.

21 As such, the coalition would like to
22 have a three part summer sunset jazz and art

1 series where we bring three local jazz acts to
2 the community for three separate jazz concerts,
3 along with artists to display their artwork.

4 Each concert would be held at the
5 Petworth Recreational Center and would be open to
6 all D.C. residents. As such, the Petworth Get
7 Wise Coalition would like to work with the
8 commission to pay 10,000 and 11,000 to pay each
9 concert artist.

10 As of this meeting, we have already
11 received commitments from two of the three
12 performing bands.

13 They include Collaboration, which is
14 the official band of Mr. Dickerson I
15 aforementioned, and Crush Funk, a brass band
16 embodying the brass tones of New Orleans, with an
17 urban capital modern punk funk twist.

18 The third performer who we hope to
19 have is Mr. Herb Scott, executive director of the
20 Capitol Hill Jazz Foundation.

21 In closing, I would like to again
22 thank you, Chairman Lee, and all the

1 commissioners for the opportunity to speak to you
2 today, and I look forward to answering any
3 questions that the commission may have.

4 CHAIR VAN LEE: Well, thank you.
5 Thank you very much.

6 I was whispering with executive
7 director to make sure I directed to you correctly
8 for an opportunity like this, and we think this
9 fits in our PEF funds, our project and festivals
10 funds, and so please reach to us specifically so
11 we can work with you on how we might be able to
12 fund this and support you.

13 Okay, I understand from Patrick that
14 the grant season for this year has already
15 passed, so we may not necessarily be able to hold
16 these concerts this year, but this might be
17 something for next year, but he also mentioned
18 some opportunities where the commission actually
19 partners with the Petworth Get Wise Coalition,
20 that there may be some opportunities to move
21 forward this year.

22 So I just want to get a better

1 understanding, this is my first time before the
2 commission on how that works, and if we have to
3 wait until next year, what processes should I be
4 presenting at the board?

5 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Mr. Williams, if I
6 may, the dates on the poster said April 23. When
7 is the date of the event?

8 MR. WILLIAMS: No, no, no, the poster
9 that I sent was just an example of the most
10 recent event that we had held.

11 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Okay.

12 MR. WILLIAMS: What we're looking to
13 do this year was an event in the month of August,
14 September, and early October.

15 We hadn't set those date yet because
16 again, I was under the impression that the
17 timeframe for receiving funds may have passed
18 already, but if they have not, I can begin to
19 work with our contact at the DC Parks and
20 Recreation, particularly the Petworth
21 Recreational Center, to lock in some dates and to
22 let you know what we would like to proceed with

1 this year.

2 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Okay. So the
3 Projects, Events and Festivals Program is open
4 right now, and it closes on June 10. So, you
5 know, reach out offline and give you the grant
6 manager's names and email addresses to get you
7 started, but if you looked on our website, the
8 grant program is called Projects, Events and
9 Festivals, PEF.

10 That's a good place to start and we
11 can follow up with you.

12 CHAIR VAN LEE: So the good news is
13 that it's not too late.

14 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Correct.

15 CHAIR VAN LEE: For this year.

16 MR. WILLIAMS: For this year.

17 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Yes.

18 CHAIR VAN LEE: It's certainly not too
19 late for next year, but it's not too late for
20 this year either.

21 MR. WILLIAMS: All right, great.

22 Okay, thank you so much.

1 CHAIR VAN LEE: No, thank you for
2 coming to us. This is great. And now, it's my
3 understanding that I am to exit out and go to
4 YouTube. Is that -- what?

5 CHAIR VAN LEE: I think our boss
6 Patrick says yes, that's correct.

7 MR. WILLIAMS: Okay, thank you.

8 (Simultaneous speaking.)

9 CHAIR VAN LEE: Don't leave us, just
10 move. Don't leave us again. Thank you.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

12 CHAIR VAN LEE: So thank you to both
13 of our speakers, both Ms. Paraskevas for bringing
14 us this opportunity for tomorrow -- this
15 Saturday, rather.

16 MS. PARASKEVAS: Yes.

17 CHAIR VAN LEE: This Saturday, rather.
18 I'm moved to Friday already. And Mr. Williams
19 for this opportunity to fund this project.

20 MS. PARASKEVAS: Five 19.

21 CHAIR VAN LEE: Okay. As part of our
22 collective agenda, we thought it would be nice to

1 not forget why we are here and to bring our
2 humanity into this meeting as opposed to the
3 normal business of the commission.

4 Last month our inaugural experience
5 and bringing an artist into the meeting and it
6 got great feedback from our commissioners and
7 others, and I'm pleased to say that will continue
8 that tradition.

9 We have an artist with us today. Our
10 guest artist tonight is Khanh Le. Khanh Le is a
11 Vietnamese-American artist who continuously
12 probes his personal and familial histories in an
13 attempt to carve out a cultural identity for
14 himself.

15 He graduated with an MFA from Syracuse
16 University in 2008. His work has been exhibited
17 at the Hunterdon Art Museum in Clinton, New
18 Jersey, the Corcoran Gallery of Art in
19 Washington, D.C., Vox Populi in Philadelphia,
20 Pennsylvania, Honfleur Gallery in Washington,
21 D.C., Hillyer Art Space Washington D.C.,
22 Transformer Washington D.C., and Arlington Art

1 Center in Arlington, Virginia.

2 CAH awards him an Arts and Humanities
3 Fellowship Program grant -- awarded him rather,
4 an Art and Humanities Fellowship grant, a
5 Projects, Events and Festivals grant, and has
6 acquired his artwork as part of the District's
7 art collection. I give you Mr. Khanh Le.

8 MR. LE: Thank you, Chairman Lee and
9 good evening, commissioners. Thank you for
10 having me. I'm so grateful for this opportunity
11 to be here. And if we could go to the next slice
12 -- slide?

13 (Laughter.)

14 MR. LE: A little -- still a little
15 nervous.

16 CHAIR VAN LEE: It's all right. We're
17 friends.

18 MR. LE: First of all --

19 MR. LE: I would like to thank you so
20 much. I came here in 2008, been applying since
21 2010.

22 I worked from the ground up, going

1 through all the different organizations here in
2 D.C., and through your various grants,
3 fellowships, and projects I was able to make a
4 lot of the work that I make that I call now since
5 2008 that this is my home base.

6 And as a D.C. artist, you have been
7 tremendous in my own practice here. If you can
8 move to the next slide?

9 Most of my work come from the idea of
10 scrapbookings, the idea of collective image
11 gathered together. Next slide.

12 See, I grew up in the Midwest, and so
13 in the Midwest, a lot of our family, the only way
14 we sort of recollect story is based on
15 scrapbookings, and through that process I try to
16 combine it with the contemporary art of how do we
17 tell narrative and story? And you can go to the
18 next slide.

19 Rather than your traditional artist
20 going to your art store, I like to go to the
21 Michael craft store, the glitter, the art paste,
22 the stickers, the bedazzle. Texture become sort

1 of really important in sort of my art work. Next
2 slides, please.

3 As you can see, most of the time I
4 apply the bulk of jewels and just sort like these
5 things out, and as I sit them out I begin to work
6 with all these images of myself, my family, and
7 through the project grants I'm working with
8 Vietnamese-Americans of D.C. as well to try to
9 build a narrative that talk about the Vietnamese-
10 American sort of experience not only here in
11 D.C., but hopefully eventually talk about their
12 journey here as Americans. Next slide, please.

13 The good news is I want to start -- I
14 know that I don't have a lot of time so I
15 condensed down my talk to just one simple work
16 that is currently at the Smithsonian. I recently
17 was selected as the finalist for the portraiture
18 the triannual at the Smithsonian National
19 Portrait Gallery.

20 And so I thought what better way to
21 introduce my work and the way I work was through
22 this sort of piece. Next slide, please.

1 I am fortunate to sort of work in a
2 way where a lot of my image are coming from sort
3 of my family, and so a lot of these moments that
4 I'm trying to generate is through my work is
5 trying to remember our process as sort of, like,
6 American and how we came to sort of this culture.
7 All right, next slide.

8 You know, for me, the significant of
9 being in the Smithsonian is that over the year,
10 you know, I felt living sort of invisible as an
11 American, but now finally having sort of my work
12 in an institutions that, you know, like
13 oftentimes as a kid I go into big places and big
14 institutions but then ask, who are these people
15 otherwise related to, and I'm always constantly
16 asking, how can I be American?

17 And so oftentime, the image that are
18 around us doesn't inform of how can I fit into
19 that space, and so finally -- next space -- I'm
20 in that space, and my work is in that space.

21 And then finally, this is -- last year
22 I have a son for the first time, and to be able

1 to take him to the Smithsonian, the National
2 Portrait Gallery, was a tremendous event because
3 here I get to show him his great grandmother and
4 she's in this sort of space that exists, and be
5 able to tell the story.

6 But to tell the story oftentime it
7 require my narrative of how we got here to the
8 United States. Next slide.

9 See, oftentime I tell people that I
10 came from the Midwest, St. Louis, but our journey
11 to the Midwest was sort of like invisible. I
12 often found I remember coming to the United
13 States with three other families crammed into a
14 two bedroom apartment, and we lived for several
15 years, and oftentime we were invisible to other
16 people.

17 When we had to use foodstamp to go do
18 grocery and the way we had to take it out, we
19 became sort of very visible, but then we didn't
20 want to be visible at time when we want to be
21 invisible.

22 And then at time when I had to take my

1 family member using Medicare, we became more
2 visible when we want to be invisible.

3 And so the irony and duality is always
4 there, and I'm kind of asked, how can we tell a
5 more narrative that sort of honor us as American
6 here in the United States? So to tell about my
7 family, we have to go back to all the way to my
8 great grandfather.

9 Back after World War Two, French
10 trying to retake over Vietnam, we were rice
11 farmer in the countryside, so oftentime the
12 French soldiers would put mines in front of our
13 house as to prevent the guerilla fighters, the
14 Viet Minh, from come to sort of convert us or
15 prevent them from stealing food, to regather
16 their organize.

17 So they placed mines around our field,
18 and so one night my grandfather heard noises
19 outside his farm, he ran out, as he ran out, the
20 mine sort of blast him in the process, and at
21 that moment my grandmother became a widow with
22 three other children in our household, having to

1 raise acres of farmland by herself. Next slide,
2 please.

3 That led us to, after the Vietnam War,
4 as the end of the Vietnam War happens, people
5 oftentimes have to take desperate measurements.
6 At that moment, my grandmother's second daughter
7 had decided to flee Vietnam as boat people.

8 So this was the first exodus of
9 Vietnamese out of Vietnam, and so one of the
10 things that sort of marked this transition was
11 that a lot of my aunt and my uncle who were on
12 that boat were sort of robbed by Singapore
13 pirates that was around that area.

14 And so they were capture by pirates
15 and then rob of all their belonging, and then
16 left us to sort of die in the boat. And so, we
17 end up getting rescued by Europeans shipping
18 vessel that took our boat to sort of other
19 islands such as the Philippines that allow us.

20 So these were the first sort of
21 journey sort of traverse through the water from
22 Vietnam to here.

1 Now, during the Vietnam War, my
2 parents, my dad and my uncle were captured as
3 Southern soldiers and so, because of that a lot
4 of time they were placed in what's called
5 reeducation camp. Next slide, please.

6 During the reeducation camp, my dad
7 and my uncle were placed to sort of mine the
8 ground, to sort of sweep the ground for mines,
9 and not only that, what we had to endure was
10 probably a famine in the countryside in the
11 farmland because Vietnam was going through what's
12 called agriculture collectivisms where you have
13 to make whatever the state demanded of you, and
14 in exchange every month you get a small bag of
15 rice.

16 And my grandmother, in order to feed
17 all of us, she stirred the rice into porridge,
18 and so the children get to eat first, then the
19 oldest, the eldest, and then the women, and then
20 the men.

21 And so through that, after 13 years,
22 my uncle who served in sort of reeducation camp,

1 came out, he decided to take both my family and
2 my uncle family to flee Vietnam.

3 Now, this was the second exodus of
4 Vietnam leaving the Vietnam. Next slide, please.

5 In that we sort of fled to neighboring
6 countries. We ended up in Thailand, Bangkok, and
7 here I am for the first time with 540 other
8 families sort of gather inside an abandoned
9 warehouse for eight month until the UN could sort
10 of make paperwork for us to transition to the
11 United States because if you remember, my aunt
12 who were the boat people who left, she finally
13 ended up in the United States and having to help
14 sponsor us coming over. Next slide, please.

15 And as we came over, we began to sort
16 of build a family. The first generation, me the
17 second generation, and then finally we able to
18 brought my grandmother all the way back there to
19 over to us. Next slide, please.

20 And so this painting is capturing her
21 in the countryside almost as though she's waiting
22 and witnessing three separate exoduses from

1 Vietnam, three separate exoduses of people who
2 tried to flee to find security, to find safety.

3 And in her moment of this joy, not
4 know the irony in this sort of like happy space
5 with all these shiny glittering from the lake,
6 but then this moment that she lived with, having
7 no idea whether her children get to live or die
8 either at sea or transitional to the United
9 States.

10 So the piece, she waited for her
11 family from this point and place. Next slide,
12 please.

13 These are the moments that capture not
14 only my family but many other family, including
15 my wife who is also a refugee in Hong Kong for
16 eight years. She enter when she was two years
17 old and she left when she was ten years old.

18 And at that point, she was sort of
19 asked to sent back to Vietnam because at that
20 moment, there was no longer enough space or visa
21 that allow her family to come, and so there was a
22 force to send them back to Vietnam. Next slide,

1 please.

2 I think a lot of my work sort of stem
3 from moments in Syria, moment in the withdrawal
4 from Afghanistan, and probably now this moment
5 that I live with as I watch the Ukraine War.
6 These moments make remembrance of what is it
7 like, what fragment that is happening?

8 But here, I am many, 40, 50 years that
9 have passed, a war that has ended but yet still
10 remembered because of its name, but there are
11 many wars, many people.

12 And so in my work I'm just trying to
13 bring up issues, but even though it's a personal
14 issue, but it still is a global issue because it
15 never ended. It never ended because there's
16 still war, there's still immigrants, and there's
17 still refugees.

18 So most of my work based on these
19 images set of us, we're in refugee camps, a loss
20 -- but then with these textural, it invites you
21 to come, to take you to look closer so that
22 eventually I can tell you the story just as I

1 tell you here the story of my work.

2 And so, I because of time --

3 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yes.

4 MR. LE: I'm just going to fast-
5 forward. If you can go to the next slide?

6 CHAIR VAN LEE: You only have about a
7 minute more we can give you, sir.

8 MR. LE: But I just want to say thank
9 you for the opportunity. For me it was such a
10 tremendous opportunity. This work is now in your
11 collection, but it's very similar to work that is
12 in the Smithsonian.

13 It is the connections between the
14 works that I make that allow what you do and what
15 you provide for us as artists has allowed me to
16 grow here in D.C., and I can't thank you enough
17 for all the support over these 12 years since
18 2010, and so personally I wanted to thank you.

19 But you can also see my work on my
20 website. I was going to introduce you to my work
21 -- if you can fast-forward all the way to the end
22 of my students, and also a collection of other

1 work. We don't have to play the video. If you
2 can go back one slide?

3 I'm also a D.C. educator here in
4 Washington, D.C..

5 As an educator, I try to engage
6 students with the same sense of how do we look at
7 portraiture when we capture portraiture, how do
8 we tell a story, and how do we use art as a way
9 to narrate us to engage in a broader content so
10 that we all have a place at the table to talk
11 about who we are? Well, thank you.

12 CHAIR VAN LEE: Well, thank you. Well
13 done. While we get to enjoy the work of artists,
14 we seldom understand the context behind what they
15 create, so we thank you for that and we
16 appreciate your passion around it, so thank you
17 very much.

18 Let's move on to the executive's
19 director report.

20 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Okay, thank you,
21 Chairman Van Lee. Good evening, everyone.

22 Thank you Khanh Le, as well. That was

1 a really good meditation and reflection on
2 history and creativity that you provided. We're
3 so glad that we supported you over the years.

4 My report starts with a quick overview
5 of grant programs that are open, and so we have
6 about five grant programs that are open. They
7 opened on May 2. We have three grant programs
8 and two public art programs that are open at the
9 moment.

10 We also have ongoing public art
11 programs that are already open, and so they're
12 listed in my report, I'm not going to read
13 through everything.

14 The deadlines range, they vary from
15 May 23 to July 8, so all the folks who are
16 listening to us today, if you're interested in
17 applying to any of our 2023 grant programs,
18 please start with our website.

19 It will have a listing of staff
20 members, grant managers who can be of assistance
21 as you prepare your applications.

22 We also launched today the relief and

1 recovery grants for FY 2022. These are for new
2 people who have not applied to us before,
3 individuals and organizations, and that opens
4 today. It opens today. It has a short window,
5 it will close on June 6.

6 We also most folks attended the FY
7 2023 branch launch informational event or tele-
8 townhall last Friday. We had about 175 folks
9 show and participate. Thank you all for the good
10 questions and the engagement.

11 We have, you know, a lot of assistants
12 in place, a lot of staff members who are ready to
13 connect with you and help you through the
14 application process. And so please use those
15 resources you prepare your applications.

16 Our gallery space at the office has
17 been renovated, it looks amazing. The lighting,
18 everything is professional-grade, an exhibition
19 space that is really just really beautiful to be
20 in.

21 We have hosted a couple of exhibitions
22 there already. We had a new one that opened on

1 May 12 called Fragile Beauty. The theme is
2 environmental justice. We have about 33 D.C.
3 artists presenting work there.

4 This is a new program, a juried
5 exhibition that we've initiated through a juried
6 exhibition grant program so we have peers, visual
7 artists who served as juries for folks who are
8 interested in applying, and it comes together in
9 curated themes for exhibitions.

10 So please come through if you can.
11 The building is open during office hours,
12 government office hours, and the exhibition is
13 free and available for folks to come and visit
14 and walk through.

15 Our 2023 budget process, we've
16 received a number of policy-related
17 recommendations from council, from the committee
18 of the whole -- four recommendations that focus I
19 think primarily on communication and outreach to
20 artists, communicating our implementation of the
21 Equity Task Force recommendations, conducting
22 targeted outreach to artists and musicians in

1 otherwise marginalized communities that we
2 haven't reached before to extend our funding
3 opportunities.

4 Another recommendation focuses on
5 revisions to our allocation formula and taking
6 into account small, medium, and large
7 organizations into view as we're preparing the
8 grant allocation formulas.

9 And then the last recommendation is
10 want to work with the Board of Ethics and
11 Government Accountability to formalize our
12 recusal policy for commissioners that might be
13 connected to potential grant awards.

14 So these four policy-based
15 recommendations have come through. We will begin
16 to prepare our work and our response to these
17 recommendations in the coming months.

18 My last piece has to do with community
19 engagement. We invited Mr. Le today as part of
20 our Asian-American Pacific Islander Heritage
21 Month celebration.

22 I was able to attend an event at the

1 Lincoln Theater with a couple of staff members to
2 support the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific
3 Islander affairs.

4 I was invited to speak and here was a
5 good community turnout there, and so that's a
6 really positive -- and we partnered with them
7 before but year to year we're sort of growing our
8 partnerships with most of the Community Affairs
9 offices, and we'll do that even more formally
10 through an MOU soon.

11 We've also secured the services of
12 Bane, LLC as a public relations firm that will
13 help with our strategic communications and
14 marketing plan.

15 And so this is one of the
16 recommendations of the Task Force as well, and so
17 we have secured the services of this firm, and I
18 know on the commissioners' side, as well as staff
19 will be continuing to work with them to map out
20 what our strategic plan looks like.

21 We've also conducted since January a
22 number of virtual public programs. Most recently

1 the themes have been centered on sustainable
2 fashion and grantee designers.

3 Thus far we've netted about 500
4 participants online. I've heard anecdotally from
5 people that this has provided a lot of access, so
6 I suspect even when we go back to in-person, that
7 we'll continue to conduct the virtual programs.

8 Our last item here is to welcome some
9 new staff members, Alexandre Jamon, Jean Hissel,
10 Krystle Siet, and Marcia Howard, who were with us
11 a few months ago and have come back to work with
12 us through the grant administration piece and
13 also managing grants.

14 And we also have a new staff member
15 who has filled the position of public appear
16 specialist by the name of JR Russ, who has a
17 background in arts administration and quite a lot
18 of experience with the commission.

19 So we say welcome to our new staff,
20 and that concludes my report. Thank you,
21 Chairman Lee.

22 CHAIR VAN LEE: Great, thank you. Any

1 questions?

2 We'll go to the committee report, and
3 I'll just inform you that two days from now the
4 Executive Committee will meet for the first time,
5 so at our next meeting, I will be able to report
6 on behalf of the Executive Committee. But let's
7 start with the Finance Committee. Kymber and/or
8 Brian?

9 COMMISSIONER MENKITI: Hi.

10 CHAIR VAN LEE: Greetings.

11 COMMISSIONER MENKITI: Good afternoon,
12 good evening. It's exciting to see the committee
13 back together in person, I look forward to
14 joining you guys the next time we're together.

15 So, I will just provide a quick
16 update, Brian, and then I'll turn it over to you
17 if there's additional details to share. Brian I
18 think is sharing the update on the screen right
19 now so folks can see it.

20 I think the big piece is that we have
21 4.8 million still outstanding that are still to
22 be loaded in by the OCFO but that should be

1 happening in the next couple weeks, and so that
2 will bring us just up above 9,000,000 for
3 additional dollars outside of our budget.

4 So if you think about where we are in
5 the year, you know, we are up 22 percent over the
6 budgeted amount in terms of additional funds. I
7 think a lot of that coming in from the delinquent
8 debt fund, and so knowing that that won't
9 necessarily be an additional increase that we see
10 every year, but really being able to report it as
11 an opportunity to use it thoughtfully and
12 equitably this year to have a big impact in the
13 broader D.C. community, so.

14 So Brian, anything you want to add on
15 to that in terms of next steps and where things
16 are as the committees begin to submit details or
17 continue to do that?

18 MR. ALLENDE: Thank you, Kymber. My
19 name's Brian Allende, I am the resource
20 allocation officer. I'm appearing tonight in an
21 olive suit with a blue shirt. I'm an Afro-Latino
22 male.

1 And what I'd like to say is that yes,
2 we have loaded the 9,100,000, which is the
3 initial portion of the enhancement package.

4 Subsequently since we were looking
5 through the budget, we found an additional
6 \$4,800,000 which will be loaded subsequently as
7 Kymber just stated, but right now, we are at
8 \$45,000,000 folks from starting the year at
9 \$38,000,000, so that is quite a bit of money and
10 more to come. So --

11 CHAIR VAN LEE: The only warning to
12 that is we can't guarantee that there'll be that
13 much going forward, but as we get extra money --

14 COMMISSIONER MENKITI: That's right.

15 CHAIR VAN LEE: We have a list of
16 things we want to support, that's in support of
17 the strategy, the Task Force plans, et cetera, so
18 we're doing that.

19 MR. ALLENDE: And thank you, Reggie.

20 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yeah, I just wanted to
21 clarify. Just wanted to clarify.

22 COMMISSIONER MENKITI: That's right.

1 MR. ALLENDE: I always tell Reggie
2 that, so yeah, thank you Reggie so much.

3 CHAIR VAN LEE: I'm just repeating
4 what he normally says to me.

5 MR. ALLENDE: But this is truly a
6 testament to this commission, its hard work and
7 directive, the division to combined vision that
8 they have with putting out as much money as they
9 can possibly do at a time.

10 We will do a yeoman's job making sure
11 that the money gets out, and I think that's
12 pretty much it with regards to the funding, the
13 budget.

14 I do want to make one last comment and
15 that's regarding existing grantees. Please
16 contact your grant management specialist if
17 you're uncertain of the status of your grant, if
18 you're uncertain of the status of any paintings.

19 I would rather have that conversation
20 as opposed to it be a circumstance where you're
21 unaware and the funding inadvertently gets
22 deobligated at the end of the year. And with

1 that I'll just pass it back to Reggie.

2 CHAIR VAN LEE: Good. Any questions
3 from anyone?

4 Grant committee, in the spirit of we
5 got some extra money. Grant committee, what are
6 you going to do with it?

7 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yep. And the
8 Grant Committee is going to spend every dime we
9 have. Hi everybody, I'm Gretchen Wharton, I'm a
10 black female with platinum hair and black
11 glasses. Everybody laughs when I say platinum
12 hair.

13 But I feel a little lonely sitting
14 here because I don't have David and Terrell with
15 me, and the grants managers, and we usually kind
16 of spin off of each other, so please don't get
17 tired of talking to me, I'll try not to take
18 forever.

19 The first update is for the capacity
20 building update initiative. We have 90, nine
21 zero, organizations that have submitted interest
22 in being part of the summer's capacity building

1 program. I hope that some of you had the chance
2 to attend the call that that program was
3 explained.

4 We had a lot of people come attend,
5 questions were asked, we tried to answer them
6 all, but there were 90 organizations out of that
7 that submitted interest in being part of the
8 summer's capacity program.

9 From that, we're going to have five
10 different communities, creating an organizational
11 access, inclusion plan, building an
12 organizational framework for idea, developing a
13 marketing strategy plan, structuring a
14 fundraising strategy plan, developing a
15 leadership succession plan.

16 Twelve of these organizations have
17 applied to be organizational leads to shepherd
18 each of these communities. Can everyone hear me
19 okay? Sorry.

20 CHAIR VAN LEE: Let's ask the people
21 on the phone. Can you all Gretchen hear okay?
22 Anyone? Okay, great. Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Okay, great,
2 thank you. Twelve of these organizations have
3 applied to be an organizational lead to shepherd
4 each community of practice through the entire
5 working process and the facilitation, and the
6 results of the program should help inform the
7 scope of the new capacity building grant schedule
8 to launch in the fall.

9 We're using this as kind of a trial to
10 make sure we're doing it the right way. We don't
11 always do everything the right way but we're
12 trying really hard and we want everybody's input
13 to help us do it the right way.

14 The second update is on the relief and
15 recovery fund for individuals and organizations.
16 We had to put this fund in place over the last
17 couple of years because of COVID and all of the
18 things that were happening around us, the
19 businesses, the individual artists, organizations
20 were really suffering.

21 So we're going to continue it. Two
22 new relief and recovery grants are scheduled to

1 launch on Monday, May 16. Both grants will be
2 open until June 6 and we'll have a series of
3 workshops to assist applicants in submitting
4 these applications.

5 The grant for individuals will be
6 similar to the one that we funded last summer.
7 The grant for organizations will be open to non-
8 profit arts and humanities organizations that
9 are new applicants to CAH.

10 This is new, everybody so let me try
11 that one more time. The grant for organizations
12 will be open to non-profit arts and humanities
13 organizations that are new applicants to CAH, and
14 ones that are not currently funded in the FY22
15 cycle. That's exciting everyone.

16 CHAIR VAN LEE: Let me punctuate that
17 because part of the work of the task force is to
18 recognize the perception about the reality, that
19 we constantly gave money to the people we already
20 gave money to.

21 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Right.

22 CHAIR VAN LEE: That we were not

1 giving money to new people. And so this is
2 explicitly to deal with either the perception or
3 the reality.

4 So we now have created a category of
5 a decent amount of money to go to brand new
6 organizations, artists, et cetera. And this is
7 us fulfilling our mission around equity and
8 inclusion.

9 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Absolutely.
10 Okay, budget update. The additional nine -- not
11 just nine, 9.1, 9,100,000 has been loaded to the
12 FY 22 budget. Brian's shaking his head yes.

13 An additional 4,800,000 from the
14 agency's fund balance has yet to be loaded to the
15 budget. We just heard from Reggie about that,
16 but we're going to hope it gets there and we're
17 going to spend every dime of it that we can.

18 CAH's resource allocation office is
19 working on OCFO -- that's the office of the chief
20 financial officer -- to have it loaded by June,
21 and the additional monies will further enhance
22 each of legislative programs, the general

1 operating support, humanities DC, facilities and
2 buildings, and the two relief programs in the
3 arts and humanities portion of the budget.

4 Okay, just the draft budget
5 allocations for FY23. Kind of blow up there.

6 Just take note that we have a 51
7 percent increase in AHEP, 41 percent -- I do not
8 want to read everything that you can see there,
9 but for those who can't I'm going to kind of skim
10 through it.

11 EOR, East of the River, we're now
12 changing the name of that to East Arts. And 42
13 percent increase. A -3% -- ah, there wasn't
14 anything there in 21 percent, so in '21, so it
15 went down. PEF for individuals and PEF for
16 organizations, you can see the percent increase
17 for each of those.

18 So we're really, really pleased they
19 were able to give out more money in each of those
20 specific categories.

21 For FY23 GOS recommendations, there
22 are 161 organizations, nine panels, and the

1 funding recommendations are to be presented at
2 our next meeting. We have actually conducted
3 these nine panels for the 161 organizations, so
4 I feel really, really good that we've
5 accomplished that much.

6 FY23 project-based and fellowship
7 grants, May 2 we're going to have three grants
8 launched, and June the 6 another three grants
9 launched.

10 For those of you on the phone please
11 look at our website and please try to tune in
12 when we have the information presented to you
13 about the grants because if you have specific
14 questions that's the time.

15 It's not just a listening, you'll be
16 able to ask questions and get some answers right
17 on this call so please, please dial in to those
18 calls, and they will be listed on the -- are they
19 already listed on the site?

20 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Yes.

21 (Simultaneous speaking.)

22 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Those dates are

1 already listed on our site, perfect. Okay.

2 A couple of changes in some of our
3 programs that we wanted to highlight. The arts
4 and humanities fellowship grant, the changes are
5 to provide a level of stability and funding so
6 that artists can remain in the city, continue to
7 increase the total number of artists funded, and
8 engage deeply with the community to assess their
9 needs and help, and form the shape and focus of
10 the program moving forward. The closing date on
11 that is July 8.

12 For East Arts -- as I said, it's
13 formerly east of the river -- to expand the
14 geographic reach beyond Wards 7 and 8, rebrand as
15 East Arts with the majority focus east of north
16 and south of the capitol.

17 Remember because of the recent
18 reconfiguration of the city, Ward 7 and 8 have
19 changed, so now it's not -- across the river's
20 now joined, so the original 5 and 6 are now part
21 of 7 and 8. So let's think of east of -- as East
22 Arts. Okay.

1 Prioritize small organizations under
2 \$500,000 and organizations that identify as BIPOC
3 organizations, increase CAH personnel commitment
4 so that the scope includes grant-making and
5 capacity building.

6 Now we had over the last couple of
7 years in facilities and buildings -- I just want
8 everybody to know, it was CAH, the commissioners
9 and the staff who actually pushed for the
10 addition and amendment to the FAB legislation to
11 include rent, and that actually expires in '22.

12 So what I want to do now is look over
13 the resolution and ask for a vote from the full
14 commissioners so that we can extend the rent
15 provision into FY23, because it does usually stop
16 at the end of FY22.

17 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: What do
18 you mean?

19 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: So that we'll
20 be able to provide rent --

21 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yeah, stop. So, in
22 other words -- excuse me, I'm just asking a

1 question.

2 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Okay.

3 CHAIR VAN LEE: So, if we don't do
4 that then there are people who need support for
5 their rent or their mortgage?

6 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yeah.

7 CHAIR VAN LEE: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yeah.

9 CHAIR VAN LEE: And we won't
10 necessarily be able to support them because it's
11 not approved?

12 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Right, because
13 it's part of the council's legislation and this
14 component was added to it because we fought for
15 it, and we don't want it to go away. So we're
16 now proposing that they extend it through FY23.
17 So if everybody --

18 COMMISSIONER HOPKINSON: So we're
19 asking the council to --

20 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Because it's
21 part of their legislation.

22 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Okay.

1 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yeah, it's
2 part of the written legislation for facilities
3 and buildings. Originally it wasn't there, there
4 was no written provision at all. We had it added
5 two years ago, but it ends in two years, which is
6 now, FY22.

7 So we want to keep being able to
8 support people with rent issues and help them pay
9 their rent and mortgage, so by passing this
10 resolution it will extend it into FY23.

11 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Is there
12 any way that it could become a standing thing
13 that we do?

14 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: We can --
15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Huh?

17 MR. ALLENDE: If I may? I'm sorry.

18 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Go ahead.

19 MR. ALLENDE: So what we do is we
20 request council to enact language that would
21 suggest that it be in perpetuity for FAB, as part
22 of the FAB cohort. That's where the funding has

1 been established for the language.

2 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Right.

3 MR. ALLENDE: It should be noted that
4 the congression submission is generally in June,
5 and so we would need to make this request pretty
6 soon.

7 CHAIR VAN LEE: Right now.

8 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: The reason this
9 is here now is just because what Brian said,
10 first of all the council's already had one vote
11 and they have two more.

12 At least if we get this voted on
13 through FY23 with -- I'm sure it'll be a yes
14 because nobody's going to go through it in detail
15 into something that's an extension -- I think
16 we'll be fine. And then my recommendation was
17 that we do the long-term piece. But at least
18 let's get this through now with the vote now so
19 we don't have to stop it --

20 (Simultaneous speaking.)

21 CHAIR VAN LEE: In the spirit of full
22 disclosure, some of us are concerned if right now

1 if we ask for it in perpetuity, it would prompt a
2 discussion and that sort of stuff.

3 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Exactly.

4 CHAIR VAN LEE: So since we're so
5 close to the deadline let's just get it in for
6 '23 and then take the time to position it for
7 perpetuity.

8 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Right.

9 MR. ALLENDE: So we can actually do
10 this part of the formulation for '24.

11 CHAIR VAN LEE: Exactly.

12 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Exactly.

13 MR. ALLENDE: And that'll be in
14 October.

15 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Right, so it's
16 not that far away.

17 MR. ALLENDE: Right.

18 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yeah. So if
19 everyone can turn to the page that says the draft
20 resolution. I don't know if people had a chance
21 to review it when Jeff sent everything out ahead
22 of time.

1 But basically it says expressing the
2 sense of the commission on the arts and
3 humanities that in Fiscal Year 2023 a portion of
4 the agency's grant-making budget continue to be
5 available for grants to pay rent or mortgage
6 expenses for the operation of a grant recipient's
7 space in the District used to produce or publicly
8 present arts and humanities related work, whereas
9 the District of Columbia arts and cultural
10 production account for over 11,800,000 and 8.2
11 percent of our local economy contributing over
12 53,000 jobs, whereas the COVID-19 pandemic forced
13 99 percent of arts producing and presenting
14 organizations to cancel events and programs,
15 whereas the non-profit art sector has endured
16 tremendous losses of earned revenue due to COVID-
17 19 closures, whereas audiences in many instances
18 have been slow to return in full numbers after
19 the reopening of the city, further limiting
20 organizational revenues, whereas the commission's
21 facilities and buildings rent and mortgage grant
22 relief program saw a 43 percent increase in

1 applications this year from 87 applications in
2 FY21 to 125 applications in FY22.

3 Now therefore be it resolved that it
4 is the sense of the commission on the arts and
5 humanities that many non-profit arts producing
6 and presenting organizations will face a funding
7 gap in the coming year.

8 That in order to address this funding
9 gap, DC Official Code 39-205C1-2A be amended to
10 allow the commission to award grants in fiscal
11 year 2023 -- and that starts October 1 -- to pay
12 rent or mortgage expenses for the operation of a
13 grant recipient's space in the District used to
14 produce or publicly present arts or humanities
15 related work.

16 CHAIR VAN LEE: So do I hear a motion
17 to approve this?

18 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Second.

19 CHAIR VAN LEE: Any discussion?

20 If not I will call the roll and you
21 can go yea or nay, or abstain. Stacie?

22 COMMISSIONER LEE BANKS: Yes.

1 CHAIR VAN LEE: Cora?

2 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Present.

3 CHAIR VAN LEE: So that's abstain?

4 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Yeah, I
5 have too many questions.

6 CHAIR VAN LEE: Maggie?

7 Quanice?

8 COMMISSIONER FLOYD: Yes.

9 CHAIR VAN LEE: Rhona?

10 Natalie?

11 COMMISSIONER HOPKINSON: Yes.

12 CHAIR VAN LEE: Kymber?

13 COMMISSIONER MENKITI: Yes.

14 CHAIR VAN LEE: MaryAnn?

15 Maria?

16 Cicie?

17 COMMISSIONER SATTARNILASSKORN: Yes.

18 CHAIR VAN LEE: Carla?

19 Carla, you still with us?

20 COMMISSIONER SIMS: I am here, I'm
21 sorry. I missed the button.

22 CHAIR VAN LEE: No problem. Are you

1 voting yea or nay or abstain?

2 Carla?

3 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Yes I'm here, hold
4 on one second. I'm going to abstain on this one.

5 CHAIR VAN LEE: Okay. Hector?

6 COMMISSIONER TORRES: Yes.

7 CHAIR VAN LEE: Jose?

8 Gretchen?

9 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yes.

10 CHAIR VAN LEE: Derek?

11 COMMISSIONER YOUNGER: Yes.

12 CHAIR VAN LEE: Good. The ayes have
13 it. We have one, two, three, four, five, six,
14 seven, eight yeases and two abstains. Two
15 abstentions.

16 VICE CHAIR FITZPATRICK: Mr. Chairman?

17 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yes?

18 VICE CHAIR FITZPATRICK: It's Maggie,
19 I was voting yes as well.

20 CHAIR VAN LEE: Oh, I'm sorry.

21 VICE CHAIR FITZPATRICK: I don't think
22 you got it, I just kind of want to --

1 CHAIR VAN LEE: So that's one, two,
2 three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine yeases
3 and Two abstentions. So it passes, thank you.
4 Thank you very much.

5 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: And that
6 concludes the grants committee report.

7 CHAIR VAN LEE: Good, thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: May I ask
9 a question?

10 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: I know
12 that you're trying to look for a replacement of
13 east of the river. We understand why that needs
14 to be happening, but why are we giving it any
15 kind of designation?

16 Is there a west, is there a north, is
17 there a south, is there an east?

18 Because what it really implies to me
19 on the history of this organization meaning the
20 arts commission, that there are you know a lot of
21 a lot of minority and small business that needed
22 special attention, but I think that it is a

1 condition all over the city, that there are many
2 minorities and small businesses all over the city
3 that need attention, and I know that you probably
4 think there's more of a proliferation on it, but
5 I think that still that designation puts it in a
6 category..

7 So if you want to do a category that
8 gets special attention to minorities and equity
9 and all of that, then make that a category, but
10 it doesn't necessarily be a designation of East.

11 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Right.

12 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Because
13 to me it's a stereotype, and when that problem
14 exists all over this city of minority groups,
15 small businesses who need help from us and
16 understanding and to be supported. That's just
17 how I see it.

18 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: No, I
19 understand completely and right now it's just a
20 name. It's not a permanent name. The grant's
21 manager's the one that developed this piece of
22 it. We can certainly talk about it in the next

1 grants meeting, not a problem.

2 CHAIR VAN LEE: We should have a full
3 discussion.

4 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yeah,
5 absolutely.

6 CHAIR VAN LEE: Because I mean, I
7 could actually argue they both are the concern --

8 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: I can too.

9 CHAIR VAN LEE: That if you don't
10 identify East, then you'll find -- you'll pick
11 and choose in other parts of the city and then
12 you won't get the gravity there. That's people
13 who are on the east saying that, right?

14 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yeah.

15 CHAIR VAN LEE: But I think both
16 arguments are valid. I think we have to talk
17 through it and solve the problem.

18 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: I agree, so we
19 can absolutely put it on the agenda for the
20 grants committee.

21 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Okay.

22 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Okay.

1 CHAIR VAN LEE: Any other discussions
2 for the grant committee?

3 So the next committee would be
4 governance.

5 Rhona did not respond, she told me she
6 may not be able to make this meeting, so she
7 asked me on behalf as an ex officio member of the
8 governance committee to do an abbreviated report,
9 and the main point she wanted to make is as we
10 continue to evolve and enhance the governance of
11 the commission, the governance committee now want
12 to start working on a commissioner manual,
13 including many of the comments people have made
14 ways that we can enhance how we are orchestrated
15 as a commission.

16 This includes onboarding and
17 commission responsibilities, we could add a
18 section to the manual about communications in
19 several areas such as meeting notices, staff
20 commissioners working on projects, et cetera. So
21 the goal is there are many people that observe,
22 they join as a commission, there was no

1 onboarding, you had to kind of figure it out,
2 right?

3 And the good news is we don't have any
4 new commissioners at this moment but we may have
5 to do a an orientation for all existing
6 commissioners because we're not at the same level
7 of understanding.

8 So as opposed to just doing the
9 onboarding, a manual that would perhaps have
10 pictures in it, you know, headshots, et cetera,
11 more about the staff, et cetera.

12 So the governance committee wants to
13 take that as their effort to continue to advance
14 the governance. So that's the main thing from
15 governance.

16 Any questions, any members of the
17 governance committee that want to offer anything
18 that I may have missed that governance is working
19 on now?

20 If not I'll move to new business and
21 again, I'll speak on behalf of Rhona for the
22 proposed bylaw amendment that is part of the new

1 business.

2 When we revised the bylaws, we granted
3 certain mandate to the executive committee that a
4 limited capacity can act on behalf of the entire
5 commission, but that was sent to Vacant.

6 Vacant said by virtue of even in
7 limited situations for the executive committee to
8 operate on behalf of the entire commission, those
9 meetings have to become open meetings because it
10 is something the public should be aware of.

11 We've had some conversation around
12 that and basically we said we're happy for
13 executive meetings to be open meetings, but we
14 now need to revise the bylaws to reflect that,
15 and notice went out because we have to go through
16 the process of notices in advance, et cetera --
17 posted now publicly on our website that we would
18 be having this meeting to discuss the revisions
19 to the bylaws.

20 So it's something you got already that
21 I wanted to make it clear in this meeting that we
22 are moving to have that commission meeting to

1 vote on that specific revision to the bylaws.
2 Any questions about that? Questions or comments,
3 concerns?

4 Well, I think I've come to the end of
5 the agenda.

6 COMMISSIONER SATTARNILASSKORN:
7 Reggie, this is Cicie, I have a quick question.

8 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yes?

9 COMMISSIONER SATTARNILASSKORN: In
10 Gretchen's report about the increase in the
11 percentages there was no public art. Does that
12 mean there's no report at this time or is that
13 there's no change in what the budget amount is
14 going to be?

15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 CHAIR VAN LEE: Somebody needs to mute
17 their line because we can hear it in the
18 background.

19 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Is that baby
20 Cora on the phone? I think, yeah, that would be
21 up to the public art committee, Cicie, would that
22 normally be in the grants committee report?

1 CHAIR VAN LEE: So not to put you on
2 the spot, Maggie, but do you have a reaction or
3 comment to Cicie's question?

4 VICE CHAIR FITZPATRICK: No I don't,
5 I would have to come back with her for an update
6 for any changes, I'm not aware of any at the
7 moment.

8 CHAIR VAN LEE: Brian, let's --

9 MR. ALLENDE: I can just talk about
10 historically what we've done when we talk about
11 additional funding or how we come up with the
12 budget for the next fiscal year.

13 It is a portion that is already
14 designated or decided by the executive director
15 and the deputy, in terms of the amount, and then
16 from there any further portion.

17 So although that information may not
18 have been there in terms of the actual dollar
19 amount is, I think that chart that we had on the
20 screen only spoke to the percentage of what was
21 actually allocated for grants as opposed to
22 public art.

1 So there is a portion that is
2 allocated for public art, and I would imagine
3 that it's going to be discussed at the next
4 meeting.

5 CHAIR VAN LEE: Okay. Cicie, does
6 that answer your question?

7 COMMISSIONER SATTARNILASSKORN: Sure.
8 Thanks.

9 CHAIR VAN LEE: Good. I guess I
10 should ask is there any other new business?

11 If not, I thank you all again, those
12 who braved COVID concerns and bad weather --

13 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: I have a
14 question.

15 CHAIR VAN LEE: I'm sorry, yes?

16 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Okay, so
17 we're having the first open meeting -- I mean,
18 this is my second meeting ever seeing people in
19 person, and probably in your case your first --
20 or no, your second.

21 CHAIR VAN LEE: My first.

22 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Yeah, but

1 we've been here longer than you all.

2 (Laughter.)

3 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: So are we
4 going to be doing this here?

5 CHAIR VAN LEE: Oh, I meant to say
6 that, yes.

7 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Oh, stay tuned,
8 Cora. We are weighing out our options for where,
9 this seems a good room. We have to make sure
10 it's available and everything is ready to go.

11 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: What is
12 different? I mean --

13 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Sorry?

14 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Is this
15 so much bigger than the room at the commission?

16 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: It's got the
17 technology.

18 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: It has
19 better technology.

20 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Streaming services.

21 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: But a
22 smaller table. We need a larger area.

1 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: But we
2 didn't have technology in the other place?

3 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: So before we
4 weren't streaming on YouTube, but this was before
5 COVID.

6 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Yeah,
7 this is post COVID stuff, right?

8 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: That's it, yeah.
9 Right now, yeah.

10 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Okay.

11 (Simultaneous speaking.)

12 MR. ALLENDE: And if I also may add,
13 we are addressing some IT issues as it pertains
14 to broadcasting. Sometimes the internet is kind
15 of spotty, as you might notice during regular
16 meetings, the see staff features go in and out.

17 So we're addressing that now, so as we
18 get those matters resolved, in addition too, Ron
19 is looking into the renovation of the conference
20 room.

21 So hopefully this is a temporary
22 solution, maybe a month or two, and then maybe we

1 can go back to -- but it might be --

2 (Simultaneous speaking.)

3 CHAIR VAN LEE: But it's likely that
4 the next meeting will be here again. I mean, I
5 kind of like the --

6 (Simultaneous speaking.)

7 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: I mean,
8 I love this, but I just needed more information.
9 I didn't know where it was or what floor. Is
10 there other parking? So if we're going to be
11 doing that, help us navigate this next time.

12 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: And I would
13 suggest getting a larger -- if all of the
14 commissioners were here, we would not have enough
15 space here.

16 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Yes, we'll work on
17 that.

18 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: The other thing
19 too is don't forget we have the Octo Room.

20 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: You mean in the
21 building where we are?

22 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Yeah.

1 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: It's all
2 COVID-related, they're not doing outside people
3 coming into their space.

4 COMMISSIONER WHARTON: Oh okay.
5 Because they have a beautiful one, yeah.

6 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Right now, so.
7 Yeah, we'll work it out --

8 (Simultaneous speaking.)

9 COMMISSIONER MASTERS BARRY: Oh.

10 (Simultaneous speaking.)

11 CHAIR VAN LEE: One last thing I'll
12 bring up since many people have brought it to my
13 attention. Oftentimes in our commission meetings,
14 the staff faces are not visible on the calls. It
15 is my understanding it is the bandwidth issue in
16 the office, it's if we want to hear them we can't
17 see them.

18 So once again as we fix these
19 problems, because we all want to see each other,
20 you have to look at me, I want to look at you as
21 well, so we'll fix that problem.

22 Anything else? Since we have a little

1 time.

2 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Reggie?

3 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yes?

4 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: May I just say
5 thank you to the people who made this work this
6 time around?

7 CHAIR VAN LEE: Yes.

8 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Patrick, Calenthia,
9 a lot of people pulled together to --

10 CHAIR VAN LEE: Thank you.

11 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Yeah. Thank you
12 very, very much.

13 CHAIR VAN LEE: Thank you. Thank you.

14 MS. SEREKE-BRHAN: Thank you very
15 much, yeah.

16 CHAIR VAN LEE: So the next regular
17 meeting of the commission will be held Monday,
18 June 27, 2022. The time is now 6:44. This
19 meeting is adjourned.

20 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
21 went off the record at 6:44 p.m.)

22

C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Board Meeting

Before: DC CAH

Date: 05-16-22

Place: teleconference

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Neal R Gross

Court Reporter

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701