

## DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

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## REGULAR MEETING

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MONDAY  
MAY 16, 2022

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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

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

2 5:35 p.m.

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

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

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

13 Notice of the meeting was posted on  
14 the commission's website, [dcarts.dc.gov](http://dcarts.dc.gov), on the  
15 DC Office of Open Government Central Meetings  
16 calendar, and in the District of Columbia  
17 Register.

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

20 COMMISSIONER LEE BANKS: Present.

21 CHAIR VAN LEE: Cora? Maggie? Quanice?

22 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 Recreations, 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 Recreations, 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 yeses 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.



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Court Reporter

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*Minutes approved by the Commission this 27th day of June 2022.*