

Commission on the Arts and Humanities
Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 21, 2020 | 4:00pm
Via Webex virtual meeting platform



Commissioners in Attendance

Kay Kendall (Chairperson), Stacie Lee Banks, Cora Masters Barry, Edmund Fleet, Quanice Floyd, Rhona Friedman, Alma H. Gates, Natalie Hopkinson, Kymber Menkiti, MaryAnn Miller, Chinedu Osuchukwu, Jr., Josef Palermo, Maria Hall Rooney, Cicie Sattarnilasskorn, José Alberto Uclés, Gretchen B. Wharton, Derek Younger

Commissioners Absent

None

CAH Staff Present

Heran Sereke-Bhran (Acting Executive Director), Carl Wilson (Interim Deputy Director)
Brian Allende (Resource Allocation Analyst), Jeffrey Scott, (Chief of External Affairs),

The regular monthly meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities (CAH) was held on May 21, 2020 at 4:00 pm via Webex virtual meeting platform; Kay Kendall, Chairperson, presiding.

Call to Order

Chair Kendall called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and determined that a quorum was present

Adoption of the Agenda

Chair Kendall asked if there were any objections to the meeting's agenda. Commissioner Wharton moved that the Finance Report come after the Committee Reports in the order of business for the day to allow more time for consideration of Committee Recommendations.

Motion Carried, Unanimous, the agenda was adopted as amended.

Approval of the May regular meeting minutes

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent

Public Comment

-JR Russ, local artist/advocate, spoke on the need for unrestricted grant funds to best assist the arts sector impacted by COVID-19 financial losses.

Executive Director's Report

Acting Executive Director Sereke-Bhran gave the Director's Report. Applications for the CAH-NEA CARES Act relief grants were now closed; 501 submissions from individuals and 59 submissions from organizations received. CAH was scheduled to have its hearing on the agency's proposed FY21 budget before the DC Council's Committee of the Whole on Friday, May 29, via Zoom.

Public Art Committee Report

Commissioner Gates gave the Public Art Committee Report, which moved adoption of the following recommendations:

RESOLVED, That the public art programs and their respective budget allocations for fiscal year 2021 shall be as follows:

ART BANK, funded at 1.1% of total Dedicated Tax Fund: Arts and Humanities grants budget, with a maximum award limit of \$10,000 per piece and per applicant

ART EXHIBITION GRANT, funded at 0.2% of total Dedicated Tax Fund: Arts and Humanities grants budget, with the option for funded exhibitions to be either onsite at CAH's gallery, offsite, or virtual

PUBLIC ART BUILDING COMMUNITIES, funded at 2.1% of total Dedicated Tax Fund: Arts and Humanities grants budget, with the maximum award amount for Business Improvement Districts reduced to \$150,000, and an optional one-to-one financial match for all organizational grantees

ART CONSERVATION, funded at 0.2% of total Dedicated Tax Fund: Arts and Humanities grants budget

CIVIC COMMISSION PROGRAM, funded at 0.2% of total Dedicated Tax Fund: Arts and Humanities grants budget

After discussion, Chair Kendall put the question:

Ayes: Banks, Barry, Fleet, Friedman, Gates, Hopkinson, Menkiti, Miller, Osuchukwu, Rooney, Uclés, Wharton, Younger

Noes: none

NV: Floyd, Palermo, Sattarnilasskorn

Motion carries, 13-0-3; recommendations adopted as read

Grants Committee Report

Commissioner Wharton gave the Grants Committee Report, which moved adoption of the following recommendations:

RESOLVED, That the grant programs and their respective budget allocations for fiscal year 2021 shall be as follows:

1. ARTS AND HUMANITIES EDUCATION PROJECTS, funded at the current level (1.2% of total grants budget), and without a financial matching requirement
2. ARTS AND HUMANITIES FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM, with raised minimum award amount and funded at a to be determined increase from its current level (6.2% of total grants budget)
3. EAST OF THE RIVER, funded at the current level (2.3% of total grants budget), and limit eligibility to East of the River based organizations only
4. PROJECTS, EVENTS, AND FESTIVALS FOR INDIVIDUALS, funded at 1% of total grants budget (a 25% decrease from the current level)
5. PROJECTS, EVENTS, AND FESTIVALS FOR ORGANIZATIONS, funded at 1% of total grants budget (a 40% decrease from the current level), and without a financial matching requirement
6. UPSTART, funded at 0.6% of total grants budget (a 50% decrease from the current level)
7. GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT, funded at the current level (21.7% of total grants budget), and without a financial matching requirement
8. CULTURAL RELIEF FUND, funded at 12% of total grants budget

And that the following grant programs shall be paused for fiscal year 2021, and may resume in fiscal year 2022, or a subsequent fiscal year, when possible and practical:

1. LIFTOFF
2. SISTER CITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS
3. SISTER CITIES FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Commissioner Floyd moved to postpone the question to a later date. After debate, the motion was lost.

Ayes: Barry, Floyd, Hopkinson, Palermo

Noes: Banks, Fleet, Friedman, Gates, Menkiti, Miller, Osuchukwu, Rooney, Uclés, Wharton, Younger

NV: Sattarnilasskorn

Motion fails, 4-11-1

Commissioner Floyd moved the following amendment:

Grantees can use project-specific funding with flexibility if there is another crisis or if there's a resurgence in the pandemic.

After debate, the resolution was adopted as amended.

Ayes: Banks, Barry, Fleet, Floyd, Friedman, Gates, Hopkinson, Menkiti, Miller, Osuchukwu, Palermo, Uclés, Wharton,

Noes: none

NV: Rooney, Sattarnilasskorn, Younger

Motion carries, 12-0-3

Finance Report

Commissioner Sattarnilasskorn gave the Finance Report, and made the following motion:

Any unallocated overages of grants fund categories will be used for relief purposes, as allowed by law and regulations.

After debate, the motion was agreed to.

Ayes: Banks, Barry, Fleet, Floyd, Hopkinson, Osuchukwu, Palermo,

Noes: Friedman, Gates, Miller, Rooney, Uclés, Wharton, Younger

NV: Menkiti

Motion carries, 8-7-1

New Business

Commissioner Floyd moved adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That the following be adopted as Standing Rule 1:

The Commission on the Arts and Humanities shall incorporate the Land Acknowledgement below as part of the Order of Business following the Call to Order and Establishment of a Quorum and before the Adoption of the Agenda for all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities to recognize the indigenous Nacotchtank and Piscataway peoples who were the First Residents of what would become the District of Columbia. The Land Acknowledgement shall be read by the Presiding Officer or their designee as follows:

“Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference. We begin this effort to acknowledge what has been buried by honoring the truth. We stand on the ancestral lands of the Nacotchtank and the Piscataway People. We pay respects to their elders past and present. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today. And please join us in uncovering such truths at any and all public events and to use such truths to guide the legacy of this Arts Commission.”

After discussion, the resolution was adopted as read.

Ayes: Banks, Barry, Fleet, Floyd, Friedman, Hopkinson, Menkiti, Miller, Osuchukwu, Palermo, Sattarnilasskorn, Uclés, Wharton, Kendall

Noes: none

NV: Rooney

Motion carries, 12-0-3

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chair Kendall adjourned the meeting at 6:45 pm.

Approval

Minutes approved by unanimous consent this 18th day of June, 2020.