

**Commission on the Arts and Humanities
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, February 20, 2020 | 4:00pm
200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400 (Conf. Room)
Washington, DC



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., Cicie Sattarnilasskorn*, Gretchen B. Wharton, Derek Younger
**By Telephone*

Commissioners Absent:

Josef Palermo, Maria Rooney, José Alberto Uclés

CAH Staff Present

Heran Sereke-Bhran (Acting Executive Director), Carl Wilson (Interim Deputy Director)
Brian Allende (Resource Allocation Analyst), Lauren Dugas Glover (Public Art Manager)
Jeffrey Scott, (Chief of External Affairs), Melvin Witten (Legislative and Community Affairs Advisor),
Patrick Realiza (Social Media Specialist)

Public Comment Period (3:30 pm)

Three minute remarks were given by the following members of the public:
Robert Bectel, *Rockin' 1000*; Emma G, *busker*; Will Carroll, *Fewer Cards, Inc.*

The regular monthly meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities (CAH) was held on February 20, 2020 at 4:00 pm at 200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400 Large Conference Room, Washington, DC; Kay Kendall, Chairperson, presiding.

Call to Order

Chair Kendall called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and determined that a quorum, being one-half of the active members of the Commission, was present with 14 members in attendance and 3 members absent.

Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted by unanimous consent

Approval of the January regular meeting minutes

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent

Approval of the January special meeting minutes

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent

Chairperson's Report

Chair Kendall:

- Stated that she would make a presentation under New Business in lieu of a report.

Executive Director's Report

Acting Executive Director Sereke-Bhran:

- Stated that the CAH Grants team has completed all of the FY20 Grant programs at this point. Lift-off (grants awarded to companies with budgets less than \$250,000) was the last one; the Commission voted on it and notifications have been sent to awardees.
- Stated that the General Operation Support (GOS) grant program is closing on February 21.
- Grants and Public Arts Committee members and staff are meeting and thinking about big picture issues for grants programs. Reflecting, tweaking and what can be made better for the next slate of grant programs launching in late April/early May.

- Noted that weekly department head and staff meetings are picking back up. This included a quick staff huddle over Valentine's Day to share some of the Performance Oversight Hearing prep.
- The Black History Month event was rescheduled until June and another event inserted in its place.
- Stated the Chinatown Archway MOU has been signed as of today; acknowledging Lauren's work.
- Attended the Mayor's 1st Quarter cabinet meeting which gives insight into what's going on broadly.
- Talked about a meeting with Ms. Barry and DGS staff to talk about renaming One Judiciary Square after former Mayor Marion Barry.
- We will be hosting a planning meeting lead Americans for the Arts next Friday on the organization's annual convention that CAH is co-hosting with the Cafritz Foundation in June.
- There was a meeting with the National Capital Arts Cohort (NCAC) about their experiences with their grant program since it is their first year. Also talked about the future as well as equity and funding for other organizations in DC.

Finance Update

Brian Allende, Resource Allocation Analyst:

- Started by responding to a question from Mr. Younger, in January, about the total number of grantees that were issued grants in FY20 and how many of those were new grantees. The "eInvoicing" system was explained.
- Showed a report on the non-personnel service budget.
- Was asked by Chair Kendall if he could explain the report columns in more detail. He did.
- Stated that CAH started the year with a \$28.5 Million grants budget.
- He read from the CAH establishment statute the budget allocation breakdown prescribed by the legislation.
- Also mentioned that there are some monies that were returned to CAH for various reasons. That money has been collected and proposals are being created on how to distribute that money.
- Continued by pointing out a part of the report that shows the actual number of grants that were authorized by the Commission and the number of purchase orders (disbursement method for grant funds) that have been created for those grants.

Events Update

MaryAnn Miller, Commissioner:

- Presented the DC Black History Month 2020 Guide to Events and an upcoming event at Busboys and Poets on February 27.
- Mentioned a presentation celebrating Black Broadway on U Street that will take place in June
- Poetry Out Loud competition will be held at Blind Whino on March 11.

Grants Update

Gretchen Wharton, Commissioner:

- Stated that approximately 80% of the 620-plus awards have been routed for payment.
- Discussion about pushing the payments out to the recipients of the grants.
- The Grants Committee met with the NCAC group and agreed to work together.
- Ten organizations received Lift-Off grants.

New and Unfinished Business

- Chair Kendall said that the regular meeting for August was traditionally cancelled in past years, and asked if there was any objection to cancelling the regular meeting scheduled for August 20, 2020.
 - *There being no objection, the regular meeting of the Commission scheduled for August 20, 2020 was cancelled (Unanimous Consent)*
- She mentioned that CAH is a member of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). She asked Jeffrey Scott, Chief of External Affairs to give a few highlights from that organization.
- Mr. Scott highlighted a few data points in NASAA's recently released State Arts Agencies Revenue Report:
 - DC is again number one out of all 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies in state government funding of the state arts agency (CAH), with a per capita spending of \$48.40 in legislative appropriations for FY20.

- Chair Kendall mentioned the recent legislation making Go-Go the official music of Washington, DC, and proposed a resolution for the Commission to form a special ad hoc committee chaired by Commissioner Hopkinson to research and develop ideas for how CAH can best support Go-Go, and opened the floor to discussion. After discussion, Chair Kendall asked if there was any objection to the proposed resolution.
 - *There being no objection, the resolution to form a special committee to research and develop ideas for how CAH can best support Go-Go was agreed to (Unanimous Consent)*
- Chair Kendall talked about the upcoming CAH Performance Oversight Hearing.
- There was discussion about the Center for Effective Philanthropy study around grant managers' portfolio numbers
- The Center for Excellence for Procurement, where vendors register themselves in the PASS system, was discussed as well as the completely changed 'Clean Hands' system. CAH has been proactive in this grants area.
- Commissioner Younger emphasized the importance of getting the grants aspect of CAH right. This is inclusive of personnel because, "this is really what we do as an agency." All present agreed.
- The discussion turned to the ramping up of personnel to handle the load of grants
- Acting Executive Director Sereke-Brhan talked about five priorities for CAH which included the design of a new agency website.
- Chair Kendall ended by formally welcoming the newest members of the Commission, Cora Masters Barry and Natalie Hopkinson.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chair Kendall adjourned the meeting at 5:24pm.

The next regular meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities is scheduled for March 19, 2020.

Approval

Minutes approved this 19th day of March, 2020