



DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

MINUTES

DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES REGULAR MEETING MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2021

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order at 5:30 pm, Monday, April 19, 2021 in open session via the Cisco Webex virtual meeting platform, with Chairperson Kay Kendall presiding.

Roll Call

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kay Kendall, *Chairperson*; Stacie Lee Banks, *Vice Chairperson*; Cicie Sattarnilasskorn, *Treasurer*; Alma H. Gates, *Public Art Chair*; Gretchen B. Wharton, *Grants Chair*; Cora Masters Barry; Maggie Fitzpatrick; Quanice Floyd; Rhona Wolfe Friedman; Kymber Menkiti; MaryAnn Miller; Maria Rooney; Carla Sims; Hector Torres; José Alberto Uclés; Derek Younger

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Natalie Hopkinson

STAFF ATTENDEES:

Heran Sereke-Brhan, *Executive Director*; David Markey, *Deputy Director*; J. Carl Wilson, *General Counsel*; Lauren Dugas Glover, *Public Art Manager*; Brian Allende, *Resource Allocation Officer*; Jeffrey Scott, *Chief of Staff*; Patrick Realiza, *Social Media Specialist*

Quorum

A quorum was determined to be present.

Land Acknowledgment

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

Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting's agenda was adopted by unanimous consent.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the March 15, 2021 regular meeting were approved as corrected by unanimous consent.

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair commended Executive Director Sereke-Brhan for representing the agency well at the recent performance oversight hearing before the Committee of the Whole. The Chair also complimented the many online workshops CAH had presented. The Chair announced Commissioner Floyd would chair the recently established I.D.E.A. Committee. The Chair announced that there would be a special meeting of the full commission board next Monday, April 26, 2021, with the purpose of the special meeting being the presentation of the CAH Strategic Plan Executive Summary Draft.

Director's Report

Executive Director Sereke-Brhan gave the Director's Report, which had been circulated to all Members in advance of the meeting. The Director highlighted that agency staff were continuing in a series of organizational development courses presented by DCHR, with the intent of fostering greater collaboration at the agency, and managers were undertaking an additional 360-degree evaluation facilitated by National Arts Strategies, with the intent to enhance their skills as leaders. The Director noted that the online programs

mentioned by Chairperson Kendall had over 1,800 total attendees to date. The Director closed by noting that drafts of both the Public Art Master Plan Update and the agency strategic plan would be posted online in the coming weeks for comment and feedback from the public.

Finance Update

Treasurer Sattarnilasskorn asked Brian Allende, Resource Allocation Officer, to give the finance update. Officer Allende noted that of the 727 grant awards currently approved by the Commissioners, 623 had established purchase orders, with others still in process. Officer Allende also noted that the FY22 budget planning cycle had been pushed back by several months.

Public Art Report

Commissioner Gates, Public Art Committee Chair, introduced Todd Bressi, lead consultant for the Public Art Master Plan Update. Consultant Bressi introduced his colleagues from Via Partnership, and presented an overview of the agency's Public Art Master Plan Update.

Grants Report

Commissioner Wharton, Grants Committee Chair, along with Deputy Director Markey, announced that the OCFO had lifted spending restrictions on the agency, with approximately \$5M in funds now available for grant awards. A proposed spending plan for these funds was presented and the following actions were taken:

Category I. Relief grants for individuals (\$2M). Commissioner Wharton moved that the Commission choose between the two following options for relief grants for individuals: Option 1.) Fund all eligible applicants equally; or, Option 2.) Fund all eligible applicants provided awards are not below \$5,000 each.

Roll call vote after discussion:

Option 1.): Fitzpatrick, Gates, Menkiti, Miller, Torres, Uclés, Wharton, Younger (8 votes)

Option 2.): Banks, Barry, Floyd, Friedman, Rooney, Sattarnilasskorn (6 votes)

Option 1.) was adopted, 8 – 6.

Category II. Relief for Organizations (\$2.5M). Commissioner Wharton moved the following:

- a. Issue 174 enhancements to current organizational grantees in the FY21 AHEP, EOR, FAB-T, FAB-R, GOS (non-NCAC), and PEF(o) programs.
- b. Organizations with multiple grants will receive an enhancement based on a % of their highest award.
- c. enhancements are based on organizational size i.e. smaller organizations that tend to receive smaller awards, will receive a larger % of enhancement dollars.
- d. Enhancements would be issued with second FY21 payments in May/June.
- e. The scenario assumes CAH monies would fund the cohort entirely in the amount of \$2.5m.
- f. Should additional NEA relief fund monies become available to the agency, those funds would be used to supplant CAH funding to the extent possible, contingent upon NEA guidelines. The supplanted CAH monies would be shifted towards relief grants for individuals and increase the amount of funding available in that category.

Roll call vote after discussion:

AYES: Banks, Barry, Fitzpatrick, Floyd, Friedman, Gates, Menkiti, Miller, Sattarnilasskorn, Torres, Uclés, Wharton, Younger

NOES: none

Motion was adopted, 13-0

Category III. Collective Impact Property Purchase Initiative for BIPOC Organizations (~\$700K).

Commissioner Wharton moved that the remaining \$700K in newly unrestricted funds be rolled over to FY22, with a determination being made in FY22 on whether or not a collective impact property purchase initiative for BIPOC organizations was feasible.

Roll call vote after discussion:

AYES: Fitzpatrick, Floyd, Friedman, Gates, Menkiti, Miller, Rooney, Torres, Uclés, Wharton

NOES: none

Motion was adopted, 10-0

New Business

The Chair moved the following resolution expressing the sense of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities that the National Capital Arts Cohort should be dissolved as a legislatively mandated grants category and replaced with a more equitable and competitive general operating support grants category.

Whereas, The National Capital Arts Cohort is a group of twenty-one arts organizations that receive 28% of the Commission's annual grants budget in accordance with current legislation (D.C. Official Code §§ 39-202(9); 39-205(c-1));

Whereas, The National Capital Arts Cohort grant funding amounts are determined by a legislatively prescribed formula rather than by the merits of a grant application reviewed and scored through a competitive panel process (D.C. Official Code § 39-205(c-1));

Whereas, The Commission's establishment statutes state that the Commission shall issue grants, "provided, that such grants be awarded competitively to individuals and organizations based in and primarily serving the District" (D.C. Official Code § 39-204.(3));

Whereas, It has been and continues to be the Commission's practice to review grant applications in cohorts made of organizations of similar budget sizes;

Whereas, General operating support funding is the most flexible and therefore most desirable type of grant funding for organizations;

Whereas, An expanded budget allocation for general operating support would allow grants to be made to more organizations;

Whereas, The National Capital Arts Cohort grantee organizations are supportive of a more equitable and fair approach to grantmaking based on competition and merit; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities that the National Capital Arts Cohort should be dissolved as a legislatively mandated grants category and replaced with a more equitable and competitive general operating support grants category;

2. That 54% of the grants budget be allocated by legislation to this general operating support grants category in order to accommodate funding grant awards to all eligible and qualified applicant organizations;

3. That the general operating support grant shall be competitive, with applicant organizations reviewed in cohorts with other applicant organizations of similar budget size, and with grant award amounts tiered in relation to the grantee organizations budget size.

Roll call vote after discussion :

AYES: Floyd, Friedman, Gates, Menkiti, Miller, Rooney, Torres, Uclés, Wharton

NOES:

NV: Fitzpatrick

Adopted, 9-0

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chair Kendall adjourned the meeting at 7:46 pm.

Minutes approved this 21st day of June, 2021