



DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

**MINUTES**

**DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**MONDAY, APRIL 26, 2021**

**Call to Order**

A special meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order at 5:30 pm, Monday, April 26, 2021 in open session via the Cisco Webex virtual meeting platform, with Kay Kendall, Chairperson, presiding. The purpose of this special meeting was the presentation of the CAH Strategic Plan Executive Summary Draft.

**Roll Call**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Kay Kendall, *Chairperson*; Stacie Lee Banks, *Vice-Chairperson*; Cicie Sattarnilasskorn; Alma H. Gates; Gretchen B. Wharton; Cora Masters Barry; Rhona Wolfe Friedman; Maria Rooney; José Alberto Uclés; Natalie Hopkinson; MaryAnn Miller; Derek Younger; Maggie Fitzpatrick; Carla Sims; Hector Torres

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Quanice Floyd; Kymber Menkiti

**STAFF ATTENDEES:**

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

**Quorum**

A quorum was determined to be present.

**Land Acknowledgement**

Chairperson Kendall read the land acknowledgment recognizing the ancestral homelands of the Nacotchtank and Piscataway Peoples.

**Presentation of the CAH Strategic Plan Executive Summary Draft**

Consultants David Galligan, David Galligan Consulting, and Eve Moros Ortega, Lord Cultural Resources presented an overview of the agency's draft strategic plan with the attached slide deck. Following the presentation, the consultants took questions from the commissioners.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chair Kendall adjourned the meeting at 6:28 pm.

The next regular meeting of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities will be held Monday, May 17, 2021 at 5:30 pm.



The Wallin Mailman by Joe Pagac



Batala Washington photo by Office of LGBTQ Affairs



Aniekan Udofia photo by Jati Lindsay

# DC CAH Strategic Plan 2021-23 Executive Summary DRAFT

April 26, 2021



DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

DAVID GALLIGAN CONSULTING

Lord Cultural Resources

# Planning Consultants

## DAVID GALLIGAN CONSULTING

David Galligan is a DC resident with a national management consulting practice in the arts, culture and education sectors

[davidgalliganconsulting.com](http://davidgalliganconsulting.com)

## LORD CULTURAL RESOURCES

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# Planning process

1. February to April 2021
2. 50+ stakeholders interviewed confidentially
3. 2 public meetings conducted virtually

# Stakeholders interviewed

1. Commissioners
2. Agency ED and staff
3. IDEA Task Force Members
4. Grantees – individual artists, nonprofit arts and cultural organizations
5. District Government leaders
  - a. Mayor's Office
  - b. Councilmembers
  - c. Agency heads
6. Community development organizations – BIDs, others whose work intersects with CAH

# Plan research component

1. 2012-2020 CAH Strategic Plan
2. CAH enabling legislation
3. DC Cultural Plan
4. IDEA Task Force
  - a. Findings and Recommendations
  - b. Surveys
  - c. Verbatims
  - d. Benchmarking study

Research  
Robust stakeholder management  
Issues & opportunities  
identification

# Themes of the Plan

1. Embedding IDEA as a core value in Agency grantmaking, programs, governance and operations
2. Leading the post-pandemic recovery of the District's arts and culture sector; contributing to the broader social and economic recovery
3. Improving the Agency's alignment with the Executive and Legislative branches of District Government
4. Improving CAH governance and organizational culture

# Themes of the Plan

EQUITY is giving everyone what he or she needs to be successful. Equity is not the same as treating everyone the same. Equity is operating from the understanding that individuals arrive in a given situation from very different starting points. These starting points are determined by certain social hierarchies often involving race, class, gender, age, sexual identity, etc. An equitable framework centers on awareness of these hierarchies, and creates systems that are actively anti-racist, anti-classist, anti-sexist, anti-ageist, and anti-homophobic/transphobic/queerphobic, etc.



# Key Issues

1. How will CAH implement and measure the success of its recent IDEA initiative (Task Force Recommendations)?
2. How will CAH lead the recovery of the nonprofit arts and culture sector and position the arts as an important contributor to the District's broader economic and social recovery?
3. How will CAH improve communications and community connections to close the gap between internal and external stakeholders' perception of its work?
4. How will CAH better align with the Executive and Legislative branches of District Government?
5. How will CAH improve Commissioner and staff relationships and improve the CAH brand within District Government and in the broader community?

# Key Findings – Consistent stakeholder feedback

1. Priority of IDEA
2. Priority of arts sector pandemic recovery efforts
3. Urgent need for proactive communications strategies tied to diverse communities
4. CAH opportunity to expand its leadership role as an advocate for cultural development in the District
5. Despite recently becoming an independent agency, CAH is not truly independent and thus must build relationships with other sectors of District government
6. Need to change culture to improve relationships, morale, and sense of security for staff and community

## Key Finding: The Agency is not fully independent

1. Mayor appoints the Chair and all Commissioners
2. Commission budget (and sales tax %) is controlled by the Mayor and Council
3. Agency performance is evaluated by the Council
4. Commission now has direct authority to hire the Executive Director, with the consent of the Council

## Key Finding

It is critical to the success of the Agency to build relationships with other sectors and branches of District Government

“No man is an island”

# Key Findings

To benefit the arts and culture sector and broader post-pandemic social and economic recovery, stakeholders are eager to see CAH

1. Expand its leadership role as an advocate for cultural development
2. Take on a larger, visionary and more proactive leadership role
3. Fully utilize its leadership platform at the center of a web of relationships with other District agencies

# Key Finding

“While every agency has the responsibility to do the substantive work with which it is charged, every agency also has the responsibility to develop a diverse and committed constituency for its work among District residents and taxpayers.”

Comparisons were made to the Friends of the DC Public Library, a citizens advocacy organization with ties to every neighborhood library

# Key Findings

1. Organizational discord is a distraction from Agency work
2. Frequent turnover in the Executive Director position is destabilizing

Overcoming these challenges is essential to CAH success with every element of this plan

# Plan Goals

1. **IDEA** – Embedding IDEA as a core value driving every aspect of Agency programs, governance and operations
2. **Pandemic Recovery** – Leading the post-pandemic recovery of the arts and culture sector; playing an important role in broader economic and social recovery efforts
3. **Community Awareness and Connectedness** – Improving communications, raising awareness of CAH programs, strengthening and broadening community connectedness
4. **District Government Alignment** – Strengthening alignment with both the Executive and Legislative branches of District Government
5. **Governance and Organizational Culture** – Improving Commissioner and staff relationships; improving the CAH brand within DC Government and the community



**Appendix A – IDEA Task Force Recommendations**

**Appendix B – Stakeholders Interviewed**

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# Next steps

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| April 26      | Presentation of Executive Summary Draft to Commissioners                           |
| April 30      | Post draft for public comment  |
| May 29        | Public comment period ends   |
| May 31-June 7 | Consultants incorporate comments into final draft                                  |
| June 8        | Distribute final draft to CAH leadership* for final comments/technical corrections |
| June 21       | Commission Meeting   |
| July forward  | Implementation planning – staff driven   |

\*Chair, Vice-Chair, Commission Committee Chairs, Agency senior staff leadership

# THANK YOU!

CHAPTER  
ONE TITLE

Doug Aitken, Song 1, 2012, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

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