



DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

## MINUTES

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

SPECIAL MEETING

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2020

### Call to Order

A special meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order at 4:00 pm, Thursday, August 13, 2020 in open session via the WebEx virtual meeting platform, with Kay Kendall, Chairperson, presiding.

### Roll Call

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kay Kendall, Chairperson; Stacie Lee Banks, Vice-Chair; Cora Masters Barry; Quanice Floyd; Rhona Wolfe Friedman; Alma H. Gates; MaryAnn Miller; Cicie Sattarnilasskorn; José Alberto Uclés; Gretchen B. Wharton; Derek Younger

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

Kymber Menkiti; Maria Hall Rooney

#### STAFF ATTENDEES:

Heran Sereke-Brhan, Acting Director; David Markey, Deputy Director; Lauren Dugas Glover, Public Art Manager; Brian Allende, Resource Allocation Analyst; Jeffrey Scott, Chief of External Affairs; Patrick Realiza, Social Media Specialist

### Quorum

A quorum was present.

### Land Acknowledgment

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

### Agency Strategic Plan Extension

Acting Director Sereke-Brhan presented on the agency's strategic plan, stating that the current plan was set to expire at the end of September 2020. As part of the state arts agency partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, CAH is required to have an active strategic plan; however, the impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency have delayed the timeline for developing a new strategic plan. Acting Director Sereke-Brhan said that after consulting with the NEA, the recommendation was to extend the following elements from the current strategic plan in order to allow for the development and delivery of the new strategic plan:

- a. Update grantmaking procedures with the goals of increasing the efficiency of program delivery; streamlining the application process for applicants; strengthening knowledge for internal analysis on the efficacy and impact of grant programs.
- b. Invest in development of a public art master plan with a horizon of five years or less that will establish the overall approach to public art development, guide decision-making and focus resource allocation.
- c. Create an interagency liaison function within CAH, to identify critical arts and cultural development issues and to develop policy initiatives across departmental and agency lines.
- d. Actively address ongoing equity and access issues through capacity building and creative economy investments in addition to East of the River grants. Focus on equity initiatives throughout the District responding to clear stakeholder and constituent feedback and aligning with the Mayor's priorities of transparency.

These elements shall serve as the agency's strategic plan, effective beginning September 21, 2020 and expiring June 30, 2021 or upon the adoption of a new strategic plan, whichever occurs first.

*Commissioner Wharton moved the adoption of the proposed temporary/partial extension of the current strategic plan.*

*After discussion:*

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

*Ayes: Banks, Barry, Floyd, Friedman, Miller, Sattarnilasskorn, Wharton, Younger*

*Noes: none*

**Adopted, 8-0**

### **Finance and Revenue Update**

Commissioner Sattarnilasskorn reported that there appeared to be available funds in the FY20 budget from field trips and staff salaries. Acting Director Sereke-Brhan added that there may be additional unspent funds being returned to the agency in the coming weeks, but final confirmed numbers were still pending.

### **Grants Committee Report**

Commissioner Wharton gave the Grants Committee report, noting that the apparent available funds in the FY20 budget could be used for emergency relief grants to individual artists.

*Commissioner Wharton moved adoption of the following on behalf of the Committee:*

*RESOLVED, That the Commission award emergency relief grants of \$2,500 each to the eligible individual applicants to the FY20 NEA-CAH CARES Act grant program that did not previously receive a grant under this program. Grants will be made utilizing CAH funds as available in the order in which applications were originally received, and will continue until either all applicants are funded or available CAH funding is depleted, whichever occurs first. Grantees will be expected to comply with all requirements presented in the original Request for Applications.*

*After discussion:*

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

*Noes: none*

**Adopted, 9-0**

*Ayes: Banks, Barry, Floyd, Friedman, Gates, Miller, Sattarnilasskorn, Uclés, Wharton, Younger*

Commissioner Wharton then introduced the FY21 General Operating Support grant recommendations from the Grants Committee. Deputy Director Markey said that one of the primary goals of GOS is to provide stability to the arts and humanities community, and that usually GOS intent-to-fund notifications are issued in late-April to allow unsuccessful applicants time to apply for project grants in May/June; however, that timeline had been delayed due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and a delayed budget process for the District government. The Committee recognized that this situation created a missed opportunity for organizations to apply for project grants. Additionally, the Committee recognized that due to the ongoing COVID-19 state of emergency, the arts and cultural sector would continue to endure significant financial losses.

*Commissioner Wharton then moved adoption of the following on behalf of the Committee:*

*RESOLVED, That the Commission award funding to each of the 111 eligible applicants to the FY21 General Operating Support grant program in accordance with the proposed award amounts attached to the Committee's report, for a combined total of \$5,707,603.*

*Commissioner Floyd moved to amend the proposed award amounts for service organizations with budgets under \$373,000/year be funded at the 10% variance, and those service organizations with budgets over \$373,000/year by funded at the 20% variance.*

*After discussion:*

*ROLL CALL VOTE*

*Noes: none*

*Adopted as amended, 10-0*

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chair Kendall adjourned the meeting at 4:53 pm.

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*Minutes approved this 24<sup>th</sup> day of September 2020.*