



**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
COMMISSION ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES**

**SPECIAL MEETING  
MINUTES**

January 31, 2020 | 3:00 pm  
Via Teleconference

A special meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities was held at 3:00 pm, Friday, January 31, 2020, via teleconference. Kay Kendall, Chair, presiding.

**Commissioners Present**

Chair Kay Kendall, Stacie Lee Banks, Edmund C. Fleet, Rhona Friedman, Alma H. Gates, Natalie Hopkinson, Kymber Menkiti, MaryAnn Miller, Maria Rooney, Cici Sattarnilasskorn, José Alberto Uclés, Gretchen B. Wharton, Derek Younger

**Commissioners Absent**

Quanice Floyd, Chinedu Felix Osuchukwu, Josef Palermo

**CAH Staff**

Heran Sereke-Bhran Acting Executive Director David Markey Interim Senior Grants Officer Khalid Randolph Grants Programs Manager Jeffrey Scott, Chief of External Affairs

**Call to Order**

Chair Kendall called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm and stated the purpose of this special meeting was to consider and vote on the recommendations for FY20 LiftOff grant awards presented by the Grants Committee. She noted that the teleconference number for this meeting had been posted publicly on the agency’s website for members of the public to be able to attend, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

**Quorum Call**

Chair Kendall called the roll and determined that a quorum, being one-half of the active members of the Commission, was present with 14 members attending the teleconference and 3 members absent.

**Grants Committee Report and Recommendations**

Commissioner Wharton, Grants Committee Chair speaking on behalf of the committee, moved that the committee’s reported recommendation of 10 FY20 LiftOff grant award recipients for a combined total of \$175,000 in grant funding be agreed to, and asked Grants Programs Manager Randolph to provide background on the grant award.

Mr. Randolph explained that this was the third year for the LiftOff grant, and that it is a capacity-building grant for nonprofit arts and humanities organizations with budgets of less than \$250,000 annually. In addition to funding, grantees receive professional development and consulting services aimed at strengthening their organizational infrastructure in areas such as fundraising and marketing, board development, and technology.

Mr Randolph stated that in FY18, CAH awarded 18 LiftOff grants for a total amount of \$320,000. In FY19, CAH awarded 20 LiftOff grants for a total amount of \$300,000. Application numbers for the LiftOff grant were lower this year for FY20 than in previous years, possibly because the LiftOff Request for Applications (RFA) was released at a different time than in previous years. Mr. Randolph also noted another possible reason for lower application numbers was application fatigue on the part of the organizations: the staff of these organizations juggle multiple responsibilities and may not have time to

complete and submit multiple grant applications each year.

Commissioner Wharton also noted that applicants were required to have previously received a CAH grant in order to be eligible for the LiftOff program.

Commissioner Masters Barry stated that she had a sense of the process and procedure, but would have preferred to been given a new member orientation prior to the meeting.

Chair Kendall agreed and noted that the new members would receive an orientation in the coming weeks, and that this special meeting had been scheduled several months ago before the confirmation and swearing-in dates of the new members had been known.

***Chair Kendall called for a vote by roll call on the motion to agree to the Grants Committee's recommendation of 10 FY20 LiftOff grant award recipients for a combined total of \$175,000 in grant funding.***

*Ayes: Fleet, Friedman, Gates, Lee Banks, Masters Barry, Menkiti, Miller, Rooney, Sattarnilasskorn, Uclés, Wharton, Younger, Kendall (13)*

*Noes: (0)*

*Abstain: Hopkinson (1)*

**The motion carried, 13-0**

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chair Kendall adjourned the meeting at 3:31 pm.

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### **Approval**

Minutes approved this 20th day of February, 2020

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Kay Kendall, Chair