



DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Aaron L. Myers II, Executive Director

February 28, 2024

The following is a summary of the agency's activities and operations.

1. Staff Updates

CAH has hired Brian Allende's replacement. Brandon Saunders started his position as the CAH Resource Allocation Officer this week and comes to us with a wealth of experience working with the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement. I want to welcome Brandon to the team.

We will soon bring on a new grants manager who is scheduled to begin in April.

Finally, our Public Arts Manager Lauren Dugas Glover has transitioned out of the agency and CAH is currently revamping the position description. Once that is complete, with the approval of DCHR the agency will begin the search for a replacement.

2. Performance Oversight Hearing:

The Commission will appear before the Council of the District of Columbia for our annual Performance Oversight hearing on Thursday, February 29, 2024. Anyone wishing to testify should sign up at the Council's "Committee of the Whole" website.

3. Music Census:

The Commission has teamed up with Sound Music Cities to launch a DC Area Music Census. The launch announcement for the census is scheduled for March 6th with the first public community meeting happening March 12th. This census is a part of a larger cohort of 16 cities across the country, including Baltimore. Our goal is to use the data derived from this census to create a method that assists the agency to help the city shore up the infrastructure needed to support this industry. This census is the first of many the commission will participate across multiple disciplines. Once completed, the commission will next begin the process of creating a census for other artists including theater and dance.

4. Space Update:

We are working now with our partners at the Department of General Services (DGS) to expand our offices into the space formerly occupied by the Office of Cable Television, Film and Entertainment (OCTFME) at the front of our building. We plan to move our Grants team to the new office space, creating a greater opportunity for community access. This move also provides for additional expansion as we add more staff to the agency.

5. Space Survey:

The Commission hastened the call and the community answered. We have been informed about their desire for more available creative space in the District. Therefore, the Commission is launching a space survey. This Survey is designed to provide data that helps the District create an environment where artists and organizations are able to sustain and grow. The organizations benefiting from the survey results provide a service to the community that no one agency (or collection of agencies) could currently provide. These organizations serve as a lure for tourists both regionally and nationally, and act to sustain DC as a cultural hub. This further aligns with the city's desire to revitalize both Downtown and every neighborhood corridor. We've coordinated with the Council of BIDS, Mainstreet's, DMPED, and DSLBD, to ensure that once completed, we have a taskforce ready and able to utilize the data and to activate spaces across the city.

6. Public Arts will be closing out its popular "Legacy: Civil Rights at 60" exhibition this Friday evening with a short reception and panel. Deidre for the Public Arts team will have more on that plus announce the next exciting exhibit they have coming to the CAH gallery in her report.

7. Grant DIFS Training

The Grants Department is holding training for both current and prospective grantees who are struggling with navigating DIFS every Tuesday at 1:30pm through March 26, 2024.

8. Teleworking:

The agency is currently reviewing its telework policy. As an independent agency, we are not required to make any immediate changes to our current teleworking policy. However, we are working internally to understand what policies we may implement that would strengthen both the output of the agency and team cohesiveness. The Commission, along with other District agencies has undertaken the task of being an active participant in revitalization of DC. As our new policy becomes effective, we will keep our grantees and partners informed. Please note, there are people working in the agency daily. Anyone interested in scheduling an in-person meeting with agency staff should contact the office to arrange a time.