



## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Aaron Myers, Executive Director

June 26, 2023

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

### 1. Multi-City Music Census Cohort

Washington, DC, through CAH, will be joining a cohort of 25 cities across the country as part of a first of its kind music census. Other participating cities include Austin, Sacramento, Cleveland, Chattanooga, Greensboro, Charlotte, and Nashville. The census will run from June 2023 – June 2024. CAH has traditionally based its policies and programs on largely anecdotal data derived from our constituents. While anecdotal data does have its uses, it may not always present a complete picture. This census represents an opportunity for both this agency, and the city, to access localized arts data that is both measurable and actionable and gives us a more complete understanding of the District's arts ecosystem.

### 2. The Recording Academy (DC Chapter) Partnership

CAH will be partnering with the Washington, DC Chapter of the Recording Academy, producers of the GRAMMY Awards. Through the partnership, CAH intends to make educational and professional development opportunities available for our constituents, at the same time raising the agency's profile and visibility in the arts and cultural sector.

### 3. Folk Arts Partnership with Howard University

CAH has been in active conversation with Howard University and have revised and updated the MOU detailing the terms of the folk arts partnership. We anticipate full execution of the MOU by the end of July. *Background: the NEA now requires all State Arts Agencies (SAA) to utilize a portion of their annual federal partnership grant to support folk/traditional arts within their respective jurisdiction. This support can be provided in various ways, such as an agency staff position specializing in the field, a grant or other agency program or initiative, or partnering with a nonprofit or university to develop and run a folk arts program; CAH has opted to partner with Howard University.*

### 4. District of Pride

CAH has again partnered with the Mayor's Office of LGBTQ Affairs to produce the annual District of Pride event at the Lincoln Theatre on Thursday, June 29. The event showcases local LGBTQ artists and has been a collaboration between CAH and LGBTQA since its beginning in 2018. *Related: CAH tabled at Trans Pride and Capital Pride this year and was well-received at both events.*

## **5. Labor Day Weekend Music Festival**

CAH will again present its free Labor Day Weekend Music Festival for the first time since 2019. The four-night event, themed “50 Years of Hip Hop | 50 Years of Home Rule” will take place September 1 – 4 at the historic Lincoln Theatre. A lineup of participating artists will be presented at the July Commission meeting.

## **6. Agency Communications Plan**

The departments have compiled a master calendar of all agency events and activities for the coming year. This calendar will serve as the foundation for the agency’s communications plan going forward to ensure information is distributed in a timely and appropriate manner.

## **7. GWU Mental Health Services**

This morning I met with representatives from the George Washington University to discuss mental health services for artists. The Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment (OCTFME) currently offers a program for free or reduced cost mental health services for District creatives through GWU. CAH will be investigating ways in which we can join that program to ensure our constituents have access to those resources as well.

## **8. Mayor’s Office on Returning Citizen’s Affairs**

CAH is working with the Mayor’s Office on Returning Citizens Affairs (MORCA) regarding the intersection of the arts and criminal justice, as well as opportunities for collaborations. A partnership between CAH and MORCA is an opportunity and avenue to expose and transform lives in ways that many may not understand. MORCA Director Lamont Carey notes that the role of art is significant as it been the calm before, during and after the storm by providing opportunities for alternative paths to lessen incarceration, during incarceration to find a voice, and for reentry including lessening the cycle of recidivism. More to come over the coming months and into FY24.

## **9. FY 2024 Budget**

Key Points:

- Restricted growth of the agency’s annual budget through FY 2027 (a number of agencies with dedicated revenues had similar restrictions imposed in order to compensate for budget shortfalls post-pandemic)
- Adjusted agency budget allocations
- New large capital projects grant; CAH will issue rules to set forth eligibility and disbursement requirements in addition to Council requirements

- GOS awards to organizations with an annual operating budget exceeding \$115,000 may not exceed 50% of the organization's annual operating budget exclusive of District funds

#### **10. Commissioners**

On behalf of the staff, I'd like to extend our appreciation to outgoing Commissioners Maggie FitzPatrick, Quanice Floyd, Stacie Lee Banks, and Maria Rooney for your time, energy, and dedication in service to the District; you will be missed. The Council of the District of Columbia, Committee of the Whole, will hold a public roundtable on June 30 to receive testimony from the public as to the fitness of the new and returning Commission nominees for appointment. The roundtable will be conducted via Zoom and broadcast live on the DC Council's website beginning at 10 am. Additional information is included in this meeting's materials.