

**Government of the District of Columbia
Commission on the Arts and Humanities
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, January 16, 2020 | 4:00 pm
200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400 (Conf. Room) Washington, DC



Commissioners in Attendance

Kay Kendall (Chair), Stacie Lee Banks, Edmund Fleet, Quanice Floyd, Kymber Menkiti, Maria Rooney, Gretchen B. Wharton, Chinedu Osuchukwu, Jr., Josef Palermo

Commissioners Absent

N/A

CAH Staff Present

Heran Sereke-Bhran, Interim Executive Director; David Markey, Interim Senior Grants Officer; Brian Allende, Resource Allocation Analyst; Lauren Dugas Glover, Public Art Manager; Jeffrey Scott, Chief of External Affairs; Patrick Realiza, Social Media Specialist

Public Comment Period (3:30 pm)

Three minute remarks were given by the following members of the public:

Barton Rubenstein, *Mother Earth Project*; John Pomper, *musician*; Charles Lancaster, *Urban Power Arts Commission*; and Nabeeh Bilal, *CreativeJunkFood LLC*

The regular monthly meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities (CAH) was held on January 16, 2020 at 4:00 pm at 200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400 Large Conference Room, Washington, DC; Kay Kendall, Chair, presiding.

Call to Order

Chair Kendall called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm with a quorum present

Adoption of the January Agenda

The agenda was adopted by unanimous consent

Approval of the November minutes

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent

Chairperson's Report

Chair Kendall:

- The Mayor renominated five previous commissioners and nominated two new individuals to be commissioners. All seven have had their confirmation hearing before the Committee of the Whole of the DC Council. Council must now vote to confirm or deny each individual's appointment to the Commission, and each confirmed appointee must take the oath of office in order to become active members of the Commission.

Executive Director's Report

Interim Executive Director Sereke-Bhran:

- Regular daily business ongoing, including staff and department head meetings through December/January.
- CAH also participated with the DC Child and Family Services Agency and collected gifts for a family for Christmas.
- Congratulated Keona Pearson, CAH Public Art staff, on 10 years of service to the Commission on the occasion of her departure to pursue new professional opportunities.
- CAH successfully submitted final reports on the agency's state partnership grant to the NEA and National Assembly for State Arts Agencies (NASAA).
- Met with the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) to discuss CAH

- support for the 2020 Art All Night festival
- Attended the Mayor’s Cabinet meeting with the Interim Deputy Director. She indicated that the Mayor is planning to visit CAH as she visits the DC independent agencies.
- Talked about conversations with the Mayor’s Office on African Affairs; the Black History month celebration with a project that highlights Black Broadway.
- Talked about CAH as the co-host of the Americans for the Arts Annual Convention June 25-28. The Interim Executive Director was asked if Commissioners could participate in the Convention. She said yes.
- Acknowledged and passed around a book of dance photographs by a grantee – Shawn Short

Finance Department Update

Brian Allende, Resource Allocation Analyst:

- Recapped his report process from the last meeting and directed everyone’s attention to the budget report that showed how CAH ended fiscal year 2019.
- Pointed out that there was a more significant surplus than anticipated. Part of the surplus was redirected to shore up costs needed for the Chinatown Archway Restoration project.
- Also noted that CAH was able to ensure that there was a funding source that would not lapse for the Charles Hamilton Houston project.
- Talked about the balance, salary lapses, and 5 vacant FTE’s.
- Stated that legislatively our funds are “non-reverting” and “non-lapsing” but CAH wants to utilize funds in the year of appropriation as much as possible. A quarterly analysis is being done to let everyone know where we stand.
- Reported on funds associated with contracts. He reported that everything in grants was used as well as an enhancement of approximately \$2 Million at the end of the year.
- In FY20, CAH is financially established based on the statutes; with thresholds of the CAH budget for administrative costs at 23 percent.
- Talked about funding for 6 FTE’s in FY20 and how that funding will be allocated. Talked about non-personnel fund allocation as well.
- Finished his report with an analysis of the status of the CAH grants.
- He answered questions from Commissioners, including a question about the 2020 “Art All Night” project.
- Chair Kendall commented on the system being used to process the grants. Conversation followed in the context of aspects of the “centralized” system used in DC Government.

Grants Department Update

David Markey, Interim Senior Grants Officer:

- Acknowledged/confirmed Mr. Allende’s Finance Committee report stating that they issued 606 awards in the beginning of October; with “Liftoff” bringing the total close to 620 awards in 2020.
- Stated that the grant award process is on par with last year, but “we can do better.”
- The FY21 grant launch is next week with the General Operating Support Grant (GOS). Workshops to assist applicants in the application process as well as a weekly live-chat are available. 272 of the 606+ grants are being awarded to individual artists.
- Poetry Out Loud is set for Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at the Southwest arts center, Blind Whino.
- Addressed capacity questions, comments and responses.

Public Art Committee Report

Lauren Dugas Glover, Public Art Manager:

- Gave an update about the 200 I Street gallery ceiling repairs and CAH’s conversations with DGS.
- Charles Hamilton Houston and Chinatown Arch public art projects are both still progressing through planning stages.
- The Public Art Committee recommended 64 artworks by 42 artists representing all 8 wards of the District as well as Maryland and Virginia for acquisition into the Art Bank.
 - *Chair Kendall moved approval of the Committee’s recommendation of 64 artworks to be acquired for a total amount of \$283,855.*
 - *The motion carried. Unanimous.*

New and Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

Chair Kendall moved to adjourn the meeting from open session and meet in closed session for the remainder of the time pursuant to subsection B (10) of the Open Meetings Act, D.C. Official Code section 2-575, for the following purpose: to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, performance evaluation, compensation, discipline, demotion, removal, or resignation of government employees or officials.

- *Roll Call Vote*

- *Ayes: Lee Banks, Fleet, Floyd, Menkiti, Osuchukwu, Rooney, Wharton, Younger, Kendall*
- *Noes: Palermo*
- *The motion carried, 9-1.*

Chair Kendall adjourned the open session at 4:43 pm

(Whereupon, the above entitled matter went off the record at 4:43 pm and resumed at 5:47 pm)

Chair Kendall reported that during the closed session, the commissioners nominated Dr. Heran Sereke-Brhan for the position of Executive Director for CAH, by unanimous roll call vote.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chair Kendall adjourned the meeting at 5:48 pm

The next regular meeting of the Commission is scheduled for February 20, 2020.

Approval

Minutes approved this 20th day of February, 2020