

Commission on the Arts and Humanities Minutes of the October 2019 Regular Meeting

10/31/2019 From 4:00 pm – 5:49 pm
200 I Street, SE (Conference Room 5009)
Washington, DC 20003

Commissioners in Attendance: Kay Kendall (Chair), Stacie Lee Banks, Edmund Fleet, Rhona Friedman, Alma H. Gates, Mary Ann Miller, Josef Palermo, Cici Sattarnilasskorn, Jose Alberto Ucles, Gretchen B. Wharton, Derek Younger

Commissioners Not in Attendance: Haili Francis, Chinedu Osuchukwu, Jr., Maria Rooney, Kymber Menkiti

CAH Staff in Attendance:: Heran Sereke-Bhran (Interim Executive Director), Carl Wilson (Interim Deputy Director) Brian Allende (Resource Allocation Analyst), Lauren D. Glover (Public Art Manager), Jeffrey Scott, (Chief of External Affairs), Melvin Witten (Legislative and Community Affairs Advisor), Patrick Realiza (Social Media Specialist)

Members of the Public Present: Peggy McGlone (Washington Post)

Public Comment Session (3:30 pm): No public speakers

The October regular meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities (CAH) was called to order on October 31, 2019 at 4:00 pm at 200 I Street, SE, Conference Room 5009, Washington, DC 20003

Adoption of the October Agenda

- Chair Kendall called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm
- Chair Kendall thanked Interim Executive Director Sereke-Bhran for her work as well as the entire staff.
- Chair Kendall acknowledged distribution of the new business cards for commissioners
- Chair Kendall motioned to adopt the agenda as presented
- The motion was seconded by Commissioner Friedman
 - *The motion carried. Unanimous*

Approval of the September minutes

- Chair Kendall motioned to approve the meeting minutes of the September Commission meeting
 - Commissioner Friedman seconded the motion.
 - *The motion carried. Unanimous*
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Chairperson's Report

- Chair Kendall:
 - Chair Kendall talked about commissioner reappointment and not knowing anything yet on status of reappointments.
 - Chair Kendall also emphasized that the Commission is not meant to be a representative body and that commissioners serve all District residents and not just citizens from their particular Wards
 - The Executive Director search, with 100 applications and 17 referrals, has not produced a short-list of candidates to date
 - Chair Kendall talked about Art Bank and stated that she does not have any updates.
 - Chair Kendall turned the floor over to Interim Executive Director Sereke-Bhran.

Executive Director's Report

- Interim Executive Director Sereke-Bhran:
 - Thanked the Commission for the opportunity and acknowledged staff in attendance.
 - Acknowledged the hard work of the staff to get grants out.
 - Named staff members taking on new roles: Carl Wilson, David Markey, Brian Allende, and Jeffrey Scott.
 - Mentioned one-on-one as well as department head meetings reestablishing a rhythm.
 - Met with the DC CFO to discuss FY20 and FY21
 - Accepted invitations from EOM to participate on Commemorative Works and Commission on Fine Arts and Events Committees
 - Acknowledged former Deputy Director's "gift" for a study done on grantee perception of CAH processes by the Center for Effective Philanthropy which provided good data.
 - Responded to Commissioner Ucles question about a CAH special events team
 - Responded about the Larry Neal Award

- Chair Kendall called for Bylaws Committee report.

Bylaws Committee Report

- Commissioner Palermo, committee chair:
 - Explained that the bylaws were last updated in 2013 and the committee will be working on new bylaws reflective of the agency's independent status
 - CAH can continue to operate under the existing old 2013 bylaws until new ones are created and approved.
 - Commissioner Palermo asked for a history of contracts with vendors. The group talked about Statements of Work and the contract bidding process.

Finance Committee Report

- Commissioner Sattarnilasskorn, committee chair:
 - Acknowledged staff and Brian Allende as he passed out budget sheets/reports
 - He discussed: Budget Balance report; reprogramming request; Chinatown Archway and CH Houston; Pay-Go funds (non-lapsing); Budget Comparison report; Budget Mark; Enhancement request; flat funding;

Grants and Panels Committee Report

- Commissioner Wharton, committee chair:
 - Announced David Markey's new role as Interim Senior Grants Officer during the transition.
 - Update on grants status. Reiterated the Center for Effective Philanthropy survey results and opportunities.

Public Art Committee Updates

- Commissioner Gates, committee chair:
 - Mentioned the undertaking of Playable Art public art project
 - Lauren Glover mentioned the panel meeting dates of November 7 & 8 to review the proposals

Arts Education Committee Updates

- Commissioner Friedman
 - Mentioned testifying before the Committee on Education run by Councilmember Grosso. She talked about arts education statistics in the District

Events Committee Updates

- Jeffrey Scott, CAH Chief of External Affairs:
 - Mentioned plans to have a Black History Month event in FY20.

New and Unfinished Business

- Commissioner Palermo stated that he had new business:
 - Mentioned Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick's passing 2 years ago; the office is still vacant; no updates from the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments as to the status of the selection process.
 - Commissioner Palermo asked that the following email he received be entered into the record:

My dear Josef,

The poetry community has completely lost faith in the process. And while the word "sham" is being thrown around ad nauseum today, I severely lament having lent legitimacy to an insincere selection process from the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments which, to date, has not followed up with any of the final candidates we interviewed and ranked--not even to thank them or update them on the process.

Getting anyone of merit to serve in the position now will be very difficult.

Kyle G. Dargan
Asst. Director, MFA Program in Creative Writing
Associate Professor of Literature, American University

- Chair Kendall moved for the meeting to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, and performance evaluation of government appointees in accordance with subsection B of the Open Meetings Act, DC Official Code 5-575.
- Commissioner Ucles seconded the motion

October 2019 Minutes

- Chair Kendall put the motion to vote by roll call:
 - Commissioner Gates: Yes
 - Commissioner Palermo: Yes
 - Commissioner Sattarnilasskorn: Yes
 - Commissioner Floyd: Yes
 - Commissioner Ucles: Yes
 - Commissioner Friedman: Yes
 - Commissioner Younger: Yes
 - The motion carried; Chair Kendall asked Interim Director Sereke-Brhan and Dr. Scott to stay for the closed session.
 - Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 5:23 pm and resumed at 5:49 pm
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Adjournment

The meeting returned to open session at 5:49 pm

- Chair Kendall then adjourned the meeting at 5:49 pm
- The November regular meeting of the Commission will be November 21, 2019.

The minutes of the October regular meeting were read and approved at the November regular meeting on 11/21/2019.