



## DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

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#### FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – MAY 19, 2025

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The regular monthly meeting of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order at 5:32 PM, Monday, April 21, 2025. The meeting was held in a hybrid format in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, with participation both via Zoom and in person at the Commission's office.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Members Present:

Reggie Van Lee, *Chairperson*

Gretchen Wharton

Julianne Brienza

Demetrius Butler

Janice Kim

Hector Torres

Maggie O'Neill

Cora Masters Barry

Cecily Habimana

Carla Sim

David Steadman

Members Absent:

Kymber Menkiti

#### **QUORUM**

A quorum was established.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted by unanimous consent.

#### **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Chairperson Reggie Van Lee delivered the Land Acknowledgment.

## **ARTIST SPOTLIGHT**

Chamber Dance Project, Presented by Diane Coburn Bruning, Artistic Director.  
Ms. Bruning gave a presentation on the Chamber Dance Project's mission, community engagement, and innovative programming. She highlighted collaborations with local musicians, slam poets, and community groups. She offered a proposal to coordinate discounted tickets among grantees and thanked CAH for its support. Chair Van Lee praised the initiative and invited Ms. Bruning to assist in future planning.

## **SWEARING-IN CEREMONY**

Commissioners David Steadman, Julianne Brienza, Cecily Habimana, and Maggie O'Neill were officially sworn in by MOTA leadership, reaffirming their commitment to the Commission's work and the District of Columbia.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Charles Jean-Pierre (Stable Arts) submitted written public comments, which were entered into the record.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Aaron Myers**

- Key highlights:
  - o Welcomed new Commissioners and noted onboarding plans
  - o Budget planning days scheduled for May 29 and a TBD date in June
  - o CAH conducted outreach to NEA-impacted grantees
  - o 535 spring grant applications received
  - o Strategic plan development continues following OCP submission
- Upcoming events:
  - o "Behind the Uniform" closing reception: May 21
  - o "Queer Art Salon" opening: June 13
  - o "Art Bank as Community Healing" panel: May 29

## **FINANCE REPORT – Janice Kim & Brandon Saunders**

Budget execution delayed due to mayoral freeze in April  
17.86% of budget remains available  
Noted strong coordination among CAH staff and grantees  
Shared detailed breakdown of administrative and grant expenditures

## **GRANTS COMMITTEE REPORT - Terrell Johnson, Senior Grants Officer**

535 total applications for Spring FY26 grants, including 123 for new 2-year GOS  
Panel review to run through June 26; award announcements in early October  
Summer FY26 grants open May 21 and close June 24  
Virtual office hours for applicants start June 9

## **PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE REPORT – Carla Sims, Chair and Karyn Miller**

Highlighted the "Behind the Uniform" exhibition featuring 124 veteran artists  
Art Bank FY26 applications closed May 19  
Color the Curb murals to be completed over the summer  
Notable installation: *Song of Sons* (building wraps, projections, bus shelters)  
Collaborations with the EU delegation and DC agency offices via Art Bank loans

## **ARTS EDUCATION COMMITTEE – Hector Torres, Chair**

Celebrated student Nyla Dinkins, DC's Poetry Out Loud winner  
Encouraged greater Commissioner attendance at Poetry Out Loud events  
Highlighted program's collaboration with DC Public Schools and impact on youth

**IDEA Committee Report and Motion to Sunset – Cecily Habimana, IDEA Chair**

Reported completion of all 44 recommendations from the CAH Equity Task Force

Highlights: multilingual access, updated demographic/panelist surveys, and flexible support hours

**VOTE**

***Resolved, that the Commission sunset the IDEA Committee.***

Roll call vote:

*AYES: N i n e*

*NOES:*

*Abstain:*

*Absent: Two*

**Adopted, unanimous.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 PM. The next Full Commission Meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 16, 2025 at 5:30 PM.