

03.5.15 Minutes



Full Commission Meeting Minutes

3/5/2015

4:00pm – 5:15pm

Due to two bouts of inclement weather, the February 26, 2015 meeting occurred via conference call on March 5, 2015

Dial In: 1.877.919.3206- Pass Code: 1848681#

Attending Commissioners: Edmund C. Fleet, CHAIR; Rhona Wolfe Friedman; Alma Gates; Darrin L. Glymph; James E. Laws; MaryAnn Miller; Jose Alberto Ucles; Gretchen Wharton

Attending Staff Members: Lionell Thomas, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Lisa Richards Toney, DEPUTY DIRECTOR; Moshe Adams; Victoria Murray Baatin; Brittany Dibble; David Markey; Steven Mazzola; JR Russ; Regan Spurlock

The Full Commission meeting of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order on March 5, 2015 at 4:13 pm via conference call.

Adoption of the Agenda

- Commissioner Gretchen Wharton motioned to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous

Adoption of the January 22nd Minutes

- Commissioner MaryAnn Miller motioned to amend the January 22nd minutes to include language regarding the development of assessment tools to evaluate the impact of the Celebration of the Creative Spark initiative on the participating youth. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous

Chairperson's Report

- Chair Edmund C. Fleet reported that Commissioner Rogelio Maxwell submitted his resignation later. He continued by stating that the Commission thanks him for his time and dedication.

Executive Director's Report

- Executive Director Lionell Thomas reported that Kay Kendall has been identified as the next possible Chair of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. He continued by stating Ms. Kendall is scheduled to testify before the Committee on Finance and Revenue on Friday, March 6, 2015.
- Executive Director Thomas reported that the Innovate DC grant initiative received 120 applications. He continued by stating four panels have been convened to vet and judge the applicants.
- Executive Director Thomas suggested the Commission consider approving another grant similar to Innovate DC to occur in FY16.
- Director of Grants Moshe Adams stated that the resumes of those individuals chosen to sit on the four panels will be distributed to the commissioners shortly.
- Executive Director Thomas reported that Mayor Bowser's administration requested the agency pause the strategic planning process to accommodate the new Chair.
- Executive Director Thomas reported on the official FY15 Grants Launch to be held at 10:00am on March 31, 2015 at the Historic Lincoln Theatre.
- Executive Director Thomas deferred to Arts Education Manager David Markey with regards to an update on the Celebration of the Creative Spark initiative.
- Arts Education Manager David Markey reported that a reception celebrating the launch of the initiative will occur on Wednesday, March 11, 2015. He continued by stating that 12 high schools are currently slated to participate.

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- Arts Education Manager Markey continued by notifying the commissioners that a formal invitation to the reception will be distributed to them shortly.
- Commissioner Wharton congratulated Arts Education Manager Markey and the Arts Education team for having the Celebration of the Creative Spark initiative mentioned in the Washington Post.
- Executive Director Thomas deferred to Deputy Director Lisa Richards Toney for an update on the strategic planning process.

Office of the Poet Laureate

- There was no report.

Strategic Plan Update

- Deputy Director Lisa Richards Toney reported that the strategic plan is on hold, per the request of Mayor Muriel Bowser, due to the pending appointment of the new Commission Chair Kay Kendall.
- Deputy Director Toney continued by stating that Mayor Bowser is interested in the agency taking time to acclimate Ms. Kendall into the process.
- Deputy Director Toney stated that she is proud of the fact that the strategic plan captures District of Columbia constituents' needs and desires.

FY15 Grants Policy Recommendations

- Commissioner James E. Laws reported that the Grants Committee met on Thursday, February 19, 2015 to review recommendations with regards to the grants process. He then deferred to Director of Grants Adams for a more comprehensive report.
- Director of Grants Adams reported that the Grants team sifted through each and every recommendation from past grants panels.
- Director of Grants Adams reported that those recommendations listed but not before the Commission for a vote are more administrative and technical in nature and, thus, do not require a formal vote. He continued by stating those recommendations before the Commission for a vote are more salient and will affect procedure.
- Director of Grants Adams directed the Commission's attention to Line 1 of the FY15 Panel Recommendations: Regarding the Artist Fellowship Program, "the panel recommended implementation of a specific definition and separate criteria for evaluating emerging artists/the panel recommended that the agency create a tighter framework for each review criterion including a breakdown of bullets under Artistic Content."
- Director of Grants Adams stated that the recommendation would judge an applicant's work solely on artistic content.
- Commissioner Miller moved to accept the recommendation as presented in Line 1. The motion was seconded. *The motion carried. Unanimous.*
- Director of Grants Adams directed the Commission's attention to Line 2: Regarding the Artist Fellowship Program- Visual Arts, "the panel recommended considering limited number of grants per cluster of years, for example three grants in five years."
- Director of Grants Adams reported that the staff was not interested in adopting the recommendation as stated for an artist who consistently produces great work would be penalized.
- Director of Grants Adams reported that the staff suggested the agency increase the amount of funds budgeted towards the Artist Fellowship Program to account for the increase in quality applications. He continued by stating that this increase in funds would benefit those applicants who scored anywhere between the top and middle of the pool.
- Executive Director Thomas noted that, depending on the agency's approved annual budget, an increase in funds for the Artist Fellowship program may decrease funds allocated towards another item.
- Commissioner Wharton moved to accept the staff's recommendation of Line 2. The motion was seconded.

The motion carried. Unanimous.

- Director of Grants Adams directed the Commission’s attention to Line 3: Regarding the Cultural Facilities Projects, “the panel strongly recommended removing mortgage payments and/or reduction as a capital activity and eligible application to the Cultural Facilities Project.”
- Director of Grants Adams reported that staff recommends allowable expenditures exclude regular mortgage payments, which can be paid through the Grants In Aid award, while continuing to include final mortgage payments, which better aligns with the acquisitional aspect of the Cultural Facilities Projects program.
- Commissioner Miller moved to accept the staff’s recommendation of Line 3. The motion was seconded.

The motion carried. Unanimous.

- Director of Grants Adams directed the Commission’s attention to Line 1 of the FY15 Staff Recommendations: Regarding the East of the River program, “staff recommends the agency provide ‘priority’ to Ward 7 & 8 organizations by allotting a certain percentage of East of the River funds to organizations headquartered in Wards 7 & 8.”
- Director of Grants Adams continued by stating the staff recommends more research be conducted regarding the impact of the East of the River grant before voting on the recommendation.
- Director of Grants Adams suggested the agency table this suggestion until more research is attained.
- Commissioner Wharton moved to table Line 1 of the FY15 Staff Recommendations. The motion was seconded.

The motion carried. Unanimous.

- Director of Grants Adams directed the Commission’s attention to Line 2: Regarding All Programs, “staff recommended that all panelists receive a \$100 honorarium for their successful service/\$200 maximum per fiscal year (for two day panels such as East of the River).”
- Legislative and Community Affairs Director Victoria Murray Baatin reminded those present that Section 5, Article F of the agency’s bylaws states, “be empowered to appoint advisory panels in the various fields of the arts and humanities as the commission may deem necessary, the members of which shall serve, without compensation.”
- Commissioner Friedman stated that the agency should consider offering panelists honorariums if it wishes to attract top, expert individuals.
- Executive Director Thomas indicated that the agency would explore compensating panelists in light of the restrictions presented in the bylaws.
- Commissioner Miller suggested the agency research other commissions in the District of Columbia government that offer honorariums or other compensation.
- Commissioner Friedman moved to table Line 2 of the FY15 Staff Recommendations. The motion was seconded.

The motion passed. Unanimous.

Committee Reports

- There were no committee reports presented.

Panel Recommendations

- There were no panel recommendations presented.

Unfinished Business

- There was no unfinished business.

New Business and Announcements

- Executive Director Thomas reported that the agency is interested in recognizing Dolores Kendrick and the Office of the Poet Laureate.

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- Executive Director Thomas reported that staff recommended a ceremonial resolution to dedicate one of the conference rooms in her name and honor.
 - Commissioner Wharton moved to name one of the agency conference rooms after the Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous.
 - Legislative and Community Affairs Director Baatin reported on the upcoming Annual Performance Oversight Hearing before the Committee on Finance and Revenue on Wednesday, March 11, 2015. She continued by stating that the agency is ready to submit responses to 26 questions provided to them by the Committee.
 - Legislative and Community Affairs Director Baatin reported that the agency has scheduled a meeting with Councilmember Jack Evans on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 just prior to the oversight hearing. She continued by stating that Executive Director Thomas, Chair Fleet, Commissioner Wolfe Friedman, and herself will attend the meeting.
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Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:08pm.