



10.22.15 Minutes

Full Commission Meeting Minutes

10/22/2015

4:00 pm to 5:37 pm

DCCAH Large Conference Room

Attending Commissioners: Kay Kendall, CHAIR; Susan Clampitt; Antoinette Ford; Rhona Wolfe Friedman; Alma Gates; Barbara Jones; James E. Laws Jr.; MaryAnn Miller; José Alberto Uclés; Gretchen Wharton

Attending Staff Members: Lisa Richards Toney, INTERIM DIRECTOR; Victoria Murray Baatin; Ebony Brown; Curtis Foy; Tonya Jordan; Steven Mazzola; Regan Spurlock

The Full Commission meeting of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order on October 22, 2015 at 4:00 pm at 200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400, Washington, DC 20003

Public Comment Period

- Adele Robey, Anacostia Playhouse
 - Ms. Robey noted that DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities was her organizations main and only sources for funding.
 - Ms. Robey noted that the relationship is critical and should be viewed as a partnership.
 - Ms. Robey noted that her organizations lives up to its mission to the best of their ability and in turn the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities should recognize this by being engaged and funding her organization.
 - Ms. Robey noted that funding decisions should not be based on who writes the best essay as the stakes are too high.
 - Ms. Robey noted that applicants should be a part of the grants process and should be able to correct errors in their application and object to panelists that they feel they have a conflict of interest with their organization.
 - Ms. Robey noted that there should be a mechanism for the applicants to see the panelist comments before they go to the Commissioners.
 - Ms. Robey noted that the Virginia Arts Commission allows applicants to come in silently and observe the panel process.
 - Ms. Robey noted that there should be recognition for applicants who are committed to economic revitalization; she went on to note that that does not translate itself neatly to video or an essay.
 - Ms. Robey noted that Commissioners should come see there shows. There should be sight visits from Commissioners and phone calls to check on the well-being as they go through the year.
 - Ms. Robey noted that 3-5 minutes for in-person presentations in conjunction with the written application was not sufficient.
 - Ms. Robey noted that award and declination notices should be sent at the same time.
 - Ms. Robey noted that her organization received 10,000 visitors last year; she went on to note that to not be funded gives the impression that the District does not care about her part of the city.
- Victoria Reis, Transformer Gallery
 - Ms. Reis gave a thorough history of her organization.
 - Ms. Reis noted that her organization is the only non-profit visual arts organization in Logan Circle.
 - Ms. Reis noted that her organization is dedicated to emerging visual artist and contemporary arts leaders.
 - Ms. Reis noted that her organization does not charge artists to display their work and offers an honoraria and materials fee to artists.
 - Ms. Reis noted that her organization is recognized nationally and internationally.
 - Ms. Reis noted that her organization is consistently supported by the Warhol Foundation.

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- Ms. Reis noted that her organization's Grants-In-Aid support from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities has declined from \$24K in FY14; \$50K in FY15; and \$0 FY16.
- Ms. Reis noted that some of the panel comments were conflicting.
- Ms. Reis noted her distressed that the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities staff does not offer comments during the panel process.
- Ms. Reis noted her concern with regard to the panel make-up, noting that there was no representation from a smaller scale organization.
- Ms. Reis raised concerns that her Ward 2 neighborhood was being penalized because it has successfully grown.

Adoption of the Agenda

- Commissioner Barbara Jones motioned to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous

Adoption of the July 23rd Minutes

- Commissioner Rhona Wolfe Freidman motioned to adopt the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous

Chairperson's Report

- Chair Kay Kendall deferred to Interim Director Lisa Richards Toney for a substantial report regarding the upcoming agenda items and agency updates.

Interim Director's Report

- Interim Director Lisa Richards Toney reported that her last day with the agency is October 30, 2015.
- Interim Director Toney reported that the new strategic plan is now posted on the agency's website.
- Chair Kendall noted that there remains the opportunity for continued revision.
- Interim Director Toney reported that the strategic plan has been shared with the Office of Planning for consideration in the cultural plan.
- Interim Director Toney reported that for the first time, the grant award announcements were made on October 1st.
- Interim Director Toney reported that approximately 15% of applicants are now in compliance with the newly required forms.
- Interim Director Toney reported that there is no hard deadline on when applicants are to complete the newly required forms. She went on to note that the grants team is working with applicants to help navigate them through the new paper work.
- Interim Director Toney reported that the agency has a number of vacancies and it incumbent upon the next Director to fill the vacancies immediately as the staff is overstretched.
- Interim Director Toney reported that she and Arts Education Coordinator David Markey attended the White House creativity symposium entitled Justice and Opportunity: The Power of the Arts.
- Interim Director Toney reported that on Saturday, October 3, 2015 she sat on a panel at the Anacostia Museum on the role of the arts with regard to neighborhood change.
- Interim Director Toney reported that she will be speaking at the Music in Cities Convention on Monday, October 26, 2015 in Arlington, VA.

Office of the Poet Laureate

- There was no report given.
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Pepco Waterfront Substation Proposal

- Representatives Chris Taylor and Vandy Gyandhar from Pepco presented their proposal for the Waterfront Substation to the Commission board.
- Chair Kendall called for a motion to approve \$175,000 to fund the public art project in conjunction with PEPCO.
- Commissioner Gates moved to approve \$175,000 to fund the public art project in conjunction with PEPCO. The motion was seconded.
- Chair Kendall inquired as to when the funds would be expended.
- Public Art Manager Tonya Jordan indicated that all funds would be expended in FY16.
- Commissioner MaryAnn Miller asked who would be responsible for care and upkeep of the sculpture.
- Public Art Manager Jordan indicated that the details of the maintenance would be worked out in a maintenance agreement later in the process.
- Commissioner Miller noted her opinion that Pepco, the owner if the property, should take on the maintenance.
- Chair Kendall asked for a modification of the motion to reflect that Pepco should be responsible maintenance.
- Commissioner Antoinette Ford inquired as to if there was a desire to cap the funds and not give anymore.
- Chair Kendall noted that was not in the best interest of the Commission as later in the process a component that might be related to the art could come up for consideration and we want to ensure the highest quality.
- Commissioner Miller noted the upcoming merger of Pepco and Exxelon and inquired if that absorption would adversely affect the proposal.
- Tonya Jordan noted that at this juncture, the merger does not affect the proposal. She went on to note that specifics will be addressed in the memorandum of understanding.
- Chair Kendal called for a vote.
The motion passed. One abstention.

Public Art Committee

- Commissioner Gates turned the Commission's attention to the candidates for the Public Art Committee.
- Commissioner Gates reviewed the candidates for the Public Art Committee.
- Commissioner Gates moved that the Commission accept the candidate as presented. The motion was seconded.
- Chair Kendall called for conversation.
- Chair Kendall noted that candidate Eden Rafshoon had previously done work for her. She went on to note that she did not think that there was a conflict of interest as there is no financial compensation for service on the Public Art Committee.
- Interim Deputy Director (and agency ethics officer) Victoria Murray Baatin concurred that the previous relationship did not constitute a conflict of interest as there is no financial compensation for service on the Public Art Committee.
- Chair Kendal called for a vote.
The motion passed. One abstention.

Committee Reports

- Public Art
 - Commissioner Gates reported that the Commissioners had received the results from the Public Art Building Communities (PABC) grant panel.
 - Commissioner Gates reported on the successful launch of the North Capital Urban Farm project on Saturday, September 26, 2015.
 - Commissioner Gates reported on the successful completion of the Aurelius Battaglia mural restoration at Mount Pleasant Library.

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- Commissioner Gates reported that the Commission has been asked by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development to lead the Public Art efforts as part of the McMillian Park development. The first project will be to create a fence wrap on the exterior of the McMillian campus.
- Commissioner Gates noted that the Commission would also address way finding, the silos and the regulator houses which have an historic mandate.
- Public Art Manager Jordan reported that the Duke Ellington mural installed on the True Reformer building had been removed some time ago due to decay. She went on to note that the agency is working with the original artist to refabricate the mural with more sustainable materials.
- Public Art Manager Jordan reported that the goal is to have the new mural installed by April in conjunction with Jazz appreciation month and Duke Ellington's birthday.
- Mayor' Arts Awards
 - Commissioner José Alberto Uclés acknowledged the Special Events team Ebony Brown and JaKenna Martin for their hard work and dedication on the Mayor's Arts Awards.
 - Commissioner Uclés noted that RSVPs for the event had reached capacity of the venue, but that the agency would continue to accept RSVPs as there would be natural attrition for a free event.
 - Commissioner Uclés distributed the event invitation to Commissioners and noted the valet parking voucher inside.
 - Commissioner Uclés reviewed the overview of the evening with Commissioners.

Panel Recommendations

- There were no panel recommendations presented.

New Business and Announcements

- There was no new business.

Unfinished Business

- Commissioner Gretchen Wharton noted that she would like to give a full report on Art All Night at the next Commission meeting.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 pm.