



12.11.14 Minutes

Full Commission Meeting Minutes

12/11/2014

4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

DCCAH Large Conference Room

Dial In: 1.877.919.3206- Pass Code: 1848681#

Attending Commissioners: Edmund C. Fleet, CHAIR; Susan Clampitt (phone); Antoinette Ford; Rhona Wolfe Friedman; Alma Gates; Darrin L. Glymph; James E. Laws; Rogelio Maxwell; MaryAnn Miller (phone); José Alberto Uclés; Gretchen Wharton

Attending Staff Members: Lionell Thomas, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; Lisa Richards Toney DEPUTY DIRECTOR; Moshe Adams; Victoria Murray Baatin; Earica Busby; Elizabeth Carriger; Brittany Dibble; Tonya Jordan; David Markey; Keona Pearson; Jeffrey Scott

The Full Commission meeting of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order on December 11, 2014 at 4:03 pm at 200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400, Washington, DC 20003.

Adoption of the Agenda

- Commissioner Rhona Friedman motioned to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous

Adoption of the October 23rd Minutes

- Commissioner Friedman motioned to adopt the October 23rd minutes. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous.

Chairperson's Report

- Chairman Edmund C. Fleet opened the meeting by expressing his hope that everyone will continue to work together and move the business of the agency along in the midst of the mayoral administration transition.
 - Chairman Fleet reported that the agency received a letter from Joanne V. Gabbin, Executive Director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center located at James Madison University, thanking the Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick for her contributions to the Poetry Conference in September 2014.
 - Chairman Fleet continued by noting Executive Director Gabbin named Poet Laureate Kendrick Dean of the Poets Laureate of the United States.
 - Chairman Fleet reported that he received a resignation letter from Commissioner Christopher Cowan and then proceeded to thank him for his service to the agency.
 - Chairman Fleet deferred to Legislative and Community Affairs Director Victoria Murray Baatin for a report on the upcoming "Advancing Cultural Equity and Cultural Access in the District of Columbia" forum presented in partnership with Americans for the Arts (AFTA) to be held on January 14, 2015 at THEARC.
 - Legislative and Community Affairs Director Baatin reported that the January 14, 2015 forum begins at 6:00pm at THEARC and that all commissioners are invited to attend.
 - Legislative and Community Affairs Director Baatin reported that Ward 7 & 8 commissioners have been engaged in the planning process for the forum which will focus on advancing cultural equity and cultural access in communities east of the Anacostia River in Wards 7 & 8.
 - Chairman Fleet reported that he and Executive Director Lionell Thomas attended a productive meeting with Councilmember David Grosso regarding the state of the arts in the District of Columbia as well as the agency's direction.
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Executive Director's Report

- Executive Director Lionell Thomas commended Chairman Fleet for his appointment as Chair of the agency.
- Executive Director Thomas discussed the ongoing transition of the mayoral administration and District of Columbia government as a whole.
- Executive Director Thomas continued by reporting that Mayor-elect Muriel Bowser and her team have requested the agency file a transition report to aid those responsible for the transition.
- Executive Director Thomas reported on Mayor-elect Muriel Bowser's Arts and Creative Economy public engagement forum that occurred on December 10, 2014 at 4:00pm.
- Executive Director Thomas noted that he was pleased to hear that the wants and objectives of those who testified paralleled the goals and objectives of the agency's developing strategic plan.
- Commissioner Darrin Glymph requested a summary of the Arts and Creative Economy public engagement forum.
- The Cultural Planning Group consultant Martin Cohen offered to provide his notes from public engagement forum, further stating that he noticed many of those whom testified discussed such common themes as economic development, livability, space, arts education, and technology.
- Executive Director Thomas reported that the agency has been moving forward with expending agency funds quite efficiently.
- Executive Director Thomas deferred to Public Art Manager Tonya Jordan to discuss updates regarding the agency's application for the Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge grant.
- Public Art Manager Tonya reported that the application for the Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge grant had been submitted and that the agency would now await the decision on whether the District has been selected to submit a full application for further consideration.

Office of the Poet Laureate

- Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick reported on numerous appearances, invitations, and awards that she has received.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick discussed her interest in revitalizing a recent Poetry and Jazz program.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick discussed her pleasure at having been involved in a Poetry and Music event at the Heritage Center this past June 28, 2014.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick reported that the agency as well as her office will be co-sponsoring a reading with the Folger Shakespeare Library on March 25, 2015.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick reported that her new book "Rainbow On Fire" is due for release in 2015.

Strategic Plan Update

- Deputy Director Lisa Richards Toney reported that the agency is beyond the middle of the planning process.
- Deputy Director Toney reported that the agency is hoping to schedule meetings with the new mayoral administration in February to discuss their goals for the agency's strategic planning process.
- Martin Cohen, consultant for The Cultural Planning Group, discussed the "Curate Your Culture" portion of the planning process that occurred in October of 2014. He continued by noting this period was an intensive week of meeting with focus groups, individuals, and arts organizations who were identified as stakeholders for the agency.
- Consultant Cohen discussed some key themes that emerged from the previous meetings, including creating a more intentional leadership role for the agency, reshaping the agency's role in arts education policy, the creative economy, support for individual artists, and the role of the agency in neighborhoods and underserved populations.
- Consultant Cohen discussed some general issues that emerged from the focus groups, including discomfort with agency programming and competition, the belief that the humanities are under-supported, concerns with the grant panel process and grant timing, a lack of understanding of the agency's role in the Creative Economy, and marketing the District of Columbia is a national cultural resource instead of a local one.
- Consultant Cohen expressed interest in constructing a town hall in March of 2015 to provide stakeholders and the public an opportunity to provide feedback regarding future planning.

- Commissioner Friedman requested a copy of the Consultant Cohen's presentation.
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Arts Education

- Commissioner James E. Laws reported that the Arts Education Committee met on Friday, December 5, 2014 to discuss March 2015 and its designation as National Arts Education Month.
 - Commissioner Laws reported that the current celebratory plans include involving the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) as well as DC arts organizations to focus on stimulating students' creativity and imagination, as well as strengthening the community of practice.
 - Commissioner Laws reported that three focus groups had met to discuss issues and concerns with regards to community arts education issues, as well as what can be done to celebrate National Arts Education Month in the District of Columbia.
 - Commissioner Laws reported that a working group is currently exploring celebrations to focus on grade levels pre-Kindergarten through 12.
 - Commissioner Wharton asked who is spearheading National Arts Education Month.
 - Arts Education Manager David Markey responded that it is a federal designation.
 - Deputy Director Toney further responded that the agency is exploring ways in which the District of Columbia can participate in the National Arts Education Month movement.
 - Arts Education Manager Markey presented a report on the Celebration of the Creative Spark Initiative that would aid in students' experiences of the creative process and producing a creative product.
 - Arts Education Manager Markey reported that the initiative would aid children in the exploration of "how" to think, not "what" to think.
 - Arts Education Manager Markey reported that the agency's responsibility would be to provide a framework for those arts organizations participating in the initiative. He further reported that the initiative is intended to guide a conversation without being prescriptive.
 - Arts Education Manager Markey reported that it is the initiative's intention to present creativity as a precursor to innovative thinking.
 - Arts Education Manager Markey stated that the agency is well-equipped to lead such an initiative for it has the purview that enables it to study the entire DC-arts and humanities landscape and identify those issues which need addressing.
 - Arts Education Manager Markey reported that the initiative is an opportunity to lead a program that individual organizations may not have the resources to produce. He continued by noting that the initiative will help arts advocates clarify their message with regards to why the arts are critical to a well-rounded education.
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Public Art Building Communities

- Commissioner Alma Gates introduced presentations regarding two public art projects being called for a vote: Chinatown Barnes Dance and Public Art Building Communities (PABC) murals.
- Public Art Manager Tonya Jordan discussed not only the aesthetic importance of the Chinatown Barnes Dance project, but safety.
- Commissioner Gates moved to support funding. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous.
- Keona Pearson presented on the PABC funding requests.
- Commissioner Friedman inquired as to what would happen to the Bill Warrell murals should the private property be sold to a new owner.
- Keona Pearson answered that the PABC grant funds both temporary and permanent public art. She continued by stating that the particular mural in question could be deemed temporary in the event of the property being sold to an owner that is not interested in keeping the mural.
- Commissioner Glymph requested the work be designated as temporary art.

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- Commissioner Gates moved to fund the PABC murals. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous.
- Commissioner Gates reported on the progress of the JBG underpass project.
- Commissioner Gates reported on an upcoming 5x5 Project event featuring A.M. Weaver's Ceremonies of Dark Men at the Lincoln Theatre on December 12, 2014 at 7:30pm.
- Public Art Manager Tonya Jordan reported on the status of the agency's Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge grant, noting that, should the agency be awarded the grant, it will look to request a \$500,000 commitment from the agency between FY15 and FY16.

Committee Reports

- Finance Committee
 - Commissioner Friedman reported that 98% of agency grants have been processed, with 95% having been paid.

Panel Recommendations

- There were no panel recommendations presented.

Unfinished Business

- There was no unfinished business discussed.

New Business and Announcements

- Executive Director Thomas, in the interest of time, expressed interest in the commissioners calling for a vote regarding the Celebration of the Creative Spark Initiative previously presented by Commissioner Laws and Arts Education Manager Markey.
- Executive Director Thomas stated that Arts Education Manager Markey cannot effectively move the initiative forward without a positive vote from the commissioners as soon as possible.
- Executive Director Thomas assured the commissioners that the process would be open and transparent and would involve more individuals and organizations than those listed in the commissioner's handout.
- Commissioner Friedman requested the commission be given a more detailed outline regarding the initiative programming and the agency's specific role before a vote.
- Arts Education Manager Markey reported that he has had multiple conversations with numerous potential partners, but he cannot progress the initiative any further without a commitment from the commission.
- Executive Director Thomas stated that the agency would serve as an umbrella facilitator to those organizations and individuals participating, similar to its role during the inaugural, city-wide 2014 *Art All Night*.
- Commissioner Ford stated that the agency would be a catalyst for such efforts, just as it always has been.
- Commissioner Ford stated that there is no harm in the agency moving forward with its process of instituting such initiatives while simultaneously honoring Commissioner Friedman's request for more information.
- Commissioner Laws requested the commission vote to move forward with the initiative with the understanding that it would honor Commissioner Friedman's request for more detail.
- Commissioner Gates requested more information with regards to the steps the agency will take to effectively move the creativity initiative off the paper and into classrooms.
- Commissioner Wharton requested information regarding how the agency will evaluate the success of the initiative.
- Executive Director Thomas suggested that the Arts Education team provide the commissioners with the requested additional information within a week providing that the commissioners attend a special meeting to vote on the initiative in two weeks' time.
- Commissioner Laws moved to have a special meeting via conference call to discuss and finalize the Celebration of the Creative Spark Initiative on Monday, December 22, 2014 at 4:00pm. The motion was seconded.

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The motion carried. Unanimous.

Adjournment

- With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:13 pm.