

9.8.16 Minutes



Full Commission Meeting Minutes

9/8/2016

3:30 pm to 4:00 pm-Public Comment Period

4:00 pm-6:00 pm-Deliberative Meeting

DCCAH Large Conference Room

Attending Commissioners: Kay Kendall, CHAIR; Stacie Lee Banks; Susan Clampitt; Edmund Fleet; Antoinette Ford; Rhona Wolfe Friedman; Darrin Glymph; Alma Gates; MaryAnn Miller (phone); Elvi Moore; Maria Hall Rooney; José Alberto Uclés; Gretchen Wharton

Attending Staff Members: Arthur Espinoza, Jr., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; Michael Bigley; Earica Busby; Tonya Jordan; Dolores Kendrick; Steven Mazzola; Patrick Realiza; Kyra Saffran; Jeffrey Scott; Regan Spurlock; J. Carl Wilson; Derek Younger

The Full Commission meeting of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities was called to order on September 8, 2016 at 4:00 pm at 200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400, Washington, DC 20003.

Adoption of the Agenda

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

Adoption of the July 21st Minutes

- Commissioner Gretchen Wharton motioned to adopt the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
- Chair Kay Kendall explained that the section titled Panel Recommendations may be removed from the format once the FY17 Bylaws are approved.

Chairperson's Report

- Chair Kay Kendall thanked General Clerk Travis Marcus for his work on the weekly Commissioner's Bulletin.
- Chair Kendall lauded Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick and DCCAH's Special Events team for their wonderful production of Women of Plums.
- Chair Kendall reminded Commissioners that the 202 Art and Music Festival will take place on Saturday, September 10. The Mayor commissioned this event and plans to attend around 5:30 pm.
- Chair Kendall congratulated Programs and Communications Officer Jeffrey Scott for his successful curation of Labor Day Weekend at the Lincoln Theatre.

Executive Director's Report

- Executive Director Arthur Espinoza, Jr. explained that his report was provided as a handout.
- Commissioner Darrin Glymph inquired who is paying for the Marion Barry Bronze Statue.
- Executive Director Espinoza addressed that in keeping with past practice with mayoral commissions, DCCAH will cover the cost, however, conversations are taking place with the Mayor's Office regarding additional funding. The money for the project will no longer be expended during FY16. The current plan is for the funds to come from the FY17 grants budget.
- Commissioner Glymph asked what the Commission's role in the project has been thus far.
- Chair Kendall explained that she served on the Barry Committee which met last year to discuss how Marion Barry could be honored, and that DCCAH is to serve as the executor of the artist selection process.
- Commissioner Alma Gates noted that the panel liked the proposals of two semi-finalists and inquired if they could collaborate. A phone conversation will take place shortly to discuss a potential collaboration.

Office of Poet Laureate

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- Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick stated she plans to recommend Special Events Manager Ebony Brown for the DC Hall of Fame for her creative mind.
- Poet Laureate Kendrick expressed desire to have another performance of Women of Plums.
- Poet Laureate explained plans to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the late Gwendolyn Brooks through a music and poetry event.
- Chair Kendall suggested that Poet Laureate Kendrick's updates be incorporated into the Commissioner's Bulletin.

Committee Reports

- Finance Committee:
 - Commissioner Elvi Moore stated that due to the transfer of Public Art grant funds to Grant Programs, \$133K still needs to be expended during FY16 and recommended using this money to fund partners.
 - Chair Kendall explained that the Finance Committee met and discussed how to divide the funds amongst the four partners, and decided that it would be best to give 30% each to the two partners that are DC service based and 20% each to the two partners that provide services in the DMV area.
 - Executive Director Espinoza noted that unlike some of the HGP and AFP grantees, partners did not receive enhancements this year which is why this additional funding was proposed for them. Funding will support their operating budgets.
 - Commissioner Glymph confirmed that DCCAHA specifies how the partners are allowed to spend the funds.
 - Commissioner Friedman questioned if the partners have been asked if they could spend the money by the end of this month.
 - Grants Director Steven Mazzola explained that the grant money will be used towards general operating and can go towards outstanding debts.
 - Commissioner Moore noted that the Commission's concern is that the money is spent by the end of FY16.
 - Executive Director Espinoza explained that the Grants Committee discussed that the requirements are not as stringent with Partner grants as with Projects and Facilities grants.
 - Commissioner Moore moved to close out the FY16 budget by allocating the spending of the remaining funds to the Partners. Commissioner Susan Clampitt seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
 - Executive Director Espinoza stated the District of Columbia has the highest per capita spending on the arts compared to other state arts agencies in the United States.
 - Commissioner Moore reviewed the proposed grant budget for FY17.
 - Chair Kendall expressed that a budget increase is something to be proud of as it is a reflection of doing good work.
 - Commissioner Friedman lauded the inclusion of an Art Field Trip grant and asked what organization would facilitate it.
 - Deputy Director Michael Bigley explained there will be a competitive process for this project.
 - Commissioner Maria Hall Rooney asked if there is any indication that the extra enhancements could be advocated for FY18 as well.
 - Executive Director Espinoza stated no, there is no indication for FY18 yet, and addressed that part of the FY17 enhancements were for specific, targeted funding and the other portion will go towards general grantmaking and an Art Field Trip grant.
 - Chair Kendall added that some money is proposed for EOR organizations that are underserved and may benefit from capacity building.
 - Chair Kendall explained that funds are allocated for special initiatives for projects, programs or events that arise during the year.
 - Commissioner Williams asked for an explanation of the Arts Field Trip grant.
 - Chair Kendall explained that DCCAHA met with DCPS this summer and discussed that first graders are the easiest age to introduce arts education to, beginning with dance. Third grade will be introduced to music and seventh grade to theater. Fifth grade will not be included because it already has a program with the Kennedy Center.
 - Deputy Director Bigley noted that plans for these field trips will also consist of pre and post-engagement sessions, workshops and professional development for teachers and students.

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- Commissioner Williams clarified that this is essentially a pilot grant program.
 - Chair Kendall mentioned that if this program can find success amongst the three grades, it will hopefully be something that can progress in the future.
 - Poet Laureate Dolores Kendrick spoke to the importance of the Sister Cities grant, and shared hopes that DCCAH will continue to sustain it.
 - Grants Director Mazzola explained that the Sister Cities program has merged with the Project, Events and Festivals grant.
 - Executive Director Espinoza pointed out that there are two new areas of funding: 1) Art Conservation Projects to allow for original artists to restore their artwork and 2) Art Exhibitions to allow artists and guest curators to participate in DCCAH exhibitions.
 - Executive Director Espinoza noted that DCCAH will continue to fund Art All Night through a grant to DSLBD for its Main Street program.
 - Commissioner Williams asked for an explanation of enhancement grants.
 - Executive Director Espinoza explained that Council passed new legislation in support of new competitive grants as part of the Budget Support Act.
 - Chair Kendall added that this legislation was directed to be included in DCCAH's budget, but that the Grants Committee will address how it is to be executed.
 - Commissioner Glymph inquired if the budget can be changed after a vote is passed.
 - Executive Director Espinoza stated yes, the budget can be.
 - Commissioner Rooney asked if it is normal that enhancements are given with a directive.
 - Commissioner Wharton responded yes.
 - Commissioner Wharton motioned to vote to approve the FY17 budget. Commissioner Uclés seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
- Grants Committee:
 - Commissioner Clampitt congratulated the Grants team and Commissioners who participated in panels for their time and hard work.
 - Grants Director Mazzola started the review of FY17 funding suggestions with Arts Education (AEP) recommendations that were created by Commissioner Rhona Wolfe Friedman and Arts Education Coordinator David Markey.
 - Commissioner Friedman explained that the average scores were taken from two Arts Education panels, as one panel tended to score higher than the other.
 - Commissioner Friedman stated that she is unsure if curving is the fairest method to reach a final score.
 - Commissioner Gretchen Wharton agreed that curving is not the best methodology, and that she and Grants Manager Regan Spurlock will experiment with other methods moving forward.
 - Commissioner Antoinette Ford suggested determining panelists' bias beforehand to try and prevent them from affecting scores.
 - Commissioner Glymph asked if DCCAH has demographic information on all panelists.
 - Commissioner Wharton responded that yes, DCCAH does have a lot of background information on all panelists, such as their ethnicity, gender, occupation etc.
 - Commissioner José Alberto Uclés lauded Staff for selecting diverse panel members, with representation from all Wards.
 - Commissioner MaryAnn Miller reassured Commissioner Glymph that the panelists who served on panels she convened were knowledgeable and provided thorough feedback.
 - Commissioner Clampitt asked that Commissioners with conflicts of interest with any FY17 AEP grantees to leave the room.
 - Chair Kendall recused herself.
 - Commissioner Friedman motioned to vote. Commissioner Wharton seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
 - Grants Director Mazzola reviewed 179 recommended Arts and Humanities Fellowship Program (AHFP) grantees totaling close to \$1M.
 - Commissioner Clampitt mentioned that the amount of first-time grantees is impressive.

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- Commissioner Ford added that only 11 proposed grantees are from Wards 7 and 8.
- Grants Director Mazzola stated that since the grants team is fully staffed, they will be able to do more outreach in Wards 7 and 8 to encourage applications for FY18.
- Commissioner Clampitt asked that Commissioners with conflicts of interest with any FY17 AHFP grantees to leave the room.
- Commissioner Friedman motioned to vote. Commissioner Uclés seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
- Grants Director Mazzola mentioned that the East of the River (EOR) applicants had the option of participating in a panel rehearsal two days prior to the panel.
- Commissioner Antoinette Ford stated that the EOR panelists were very knowledgeable and valuable.
- Grants Director Mazzola explained that the Agency had previously adopted a policy that no more than 35% of the budget could be used for operating funds and requested that it be relaxed for EOR grantees.
- Commissioner Brian Williams stated that relaxing the 35% policy is a good idea, but can be a downside for the longevity of an organization, and suggested offering capacity building programs.
- Executive Director Espinoza added that this speaks to DCCA's mission of inclusion and diversity.
- Commissioner Clampitt asked that Commissioners with conflicts of interest with any FY17 EOR grantees to leave the room.
- Chair Kendall and Commissioners Clampitt, Ford and Friedman recused themselves.
- Commissioner Wharton motioned to vote. Commissioner Stacie Lee Banks seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
- Commissioner Convener Alma Gates expressed that she was pleased with the scores from the Facilities and Buildings (FAB) panel.
- Grants Director Mazzola stated that no first-time recipients were included in the recommendations.
- Commissioner Williams asked why the first-time applicants did not make the slate of recommendations.
- Grants Director Mazzola explained that the purpose of FAB is for the actual structure, rather than a grant based on artistic or humanistic merit.
- Executive Director Espinoza explained the investment is in the building itself, not the organization.
- Commissioner Gylmph asked why the scores appear to be top heavy.
- Commissioner Wharton added that while some organizations do great work, if their application is not well written, the panel will question their ability in constructing a well-built facility.
- Commissioner Clampitt asked that Commissioners with conflicts of interest with any FY17 FAB grantees to leave the room.
- Chair Kendall and Commissioner Ford recused themselves.
- Commissioner Clampitt motioned to vote. Commissioner Wharton seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
- Grants Director Mazzola reminded Commissioners that the Heritage Grant Program (HGP) budget had already been voted on.
- Grants Director Mazzola explained that Project, Events and Festival (PEF) applicants were paneled based on budget size, rather than project size.
- Grants Manager Regan Spurlock mentioned that many new organizations are recommended for Projects, Events and Festivals (PEF).
- Commissioner Williams asked for the difference between Cohort 1 and Cohort 2.
- Grants Manager Spurlock explained that Cohort 1 consisted of small organizations with budgets under \$150K, and Cohort 2 was made of larger organizations with budgets of \$150K or more.
- Commissioner Clampitt asked that Commissioners with conflicts of interest with any FY17 PEF grantees to leave the room.
- Commissioners Clampitt and Banks recused themselves.
- Commissioner Wharton motioned to vote. Commissioner Friedman seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
- Public Art Manager Tonya Jordan recommended full funding for the top 6 scoring Public Art Building Communities (PABC) applicants, and partial funding for the 7th applicant.

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- Commissioner Williams asked for an explanation of PABC.
 - Public Art Manager Jordan explained that PABC is similar to a community initiated project where individuals or organizations propose and manage the project from start to finish.
 - Commissioner Clampitt asked that Commissioners with conflicts of interest with any FY17 PABC grantees to leave the room.
 - Commissioner Wharton called for a vote. Commissioner Ford seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
 - Grants Director Mazzola explained that UPSTART is a program for organizations in need of capacity building.
 - Commissioner Friedman asked for an explanation of why 6 organizations were recommended when there was not much of a variance in the scores of the remaining applicants.
 - Grants Director Mazzola explained that the contractual agreement with consultants is for 6 organizations.
 - Executive Director Espinoza explained that in hearing from potential UPSTART applicants, some felt the criteria was not applicable to their organization (i.e. did not have full-time staff). Assistance is still required and could be provided through a “lift off” program as a preamble to UPSTART; and this might help address concerns for EOR organizations as well.
 - Commissioner Friedman suggested using the remaining \$133K to fund some of the applicants that were not recommended for funding.
 - Executive Director explained that the remaining \$133K is to be expended during FY16 and that the grants being discussed are part of the FY17 budget.
 - Commissioner Williams acknowledged that UPSTART is a transformative program, and though it is extensive and requires time and dedication, if done properly it can position the organization for greater growth.
 - Commissioner Ford wondered if some of the applicants may benefit from American University’s program that teaches small businesses how to grow.
 - Commissioner Glymph asked why some grantees are recommended to receive the same amount of funding as they did in FY16.
 - Commissioner Wharton explained that even though UPSTART is a multi-year program, recipients are still required to apply every year to allow for the Commission to know what has been done with the previous fiscal year funds.
 - Commissioner Clampitt asked that Commissioners with conflicts of interest with any FY17 UPSTART grantees to leave the room.
 - Commissioner Friedman motioned to vote. Commissioner Miller seconded.
The motion carried. Unanimous
 - Commissioner Glymph stated that Ward 4 is historically underrepresented and would like to see a breakdown of funding for all Wards, not only Wards 7 and 8. He also asked that documentation be provided listing all FY16 grantees with their total grant award amount.
 - Commissioner Clampitt reminded Commissioners that the Grants Committee report details are confidential, and that Staff will send out declination and acceptance letters.
 - Commissioner Glymph lauded the presentation of FY17 Grant recommendations, but suggested that more time be given to Commissioners for review, in two meeting sessions so that Commissioners can have a chance to review recommendations and panel minutes.
 - Commissioner Clampitt stated that next time minutes from each panel can be included in the recommendation packet and that Commissioners can come early to review.
 - Commissioner Gates explained that one cannot solely base their opinions off of minutes. Minutes must be weighed against grant criteria and applications.
 - Commissioner Uclés added that panelists are supposed to feel they can express their comments and concerns anonymously during the panel.
 - Commissioner Glymph responded that in dealing with public funds, if the Commissioners have an issue with the allocation of funds, the Commission has the authority to reallocate how money is distributed in a panel.
 - Commissioner Miller mentioned that a Commissioner cannot change scores made by the panel, and that she would personally not want to be responsible for reallocating funds for a grant or grantee for which she did not sit on a panel or read an application.
- Mayors Arts Awards Committee:

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- Commissioner Uclés reminded Commissioners that the Mayor's Arts Awards will take place on Thursday, September 22 and noted that this event is a time to celebrate DC's wonderful art and culture.

Panel Recommendations

- There were no panel recommendations presented.

New Business and Announcements

- Commissioner Friedman stated Shakespeare Theatre Company has donated the Harman Center for the Arts venue for DCCAH's upcoming Education Spotlight event in November.
- Executive Director Espinoza noted that there is a certain donation protocol to follow.
- Commissioner Friedman explained that the donation is not entirely free as lunches will be paid.
- Commissioner Friedman reminded Commissioners that the ballot to vote on DC statehood will take place in November.
- Executive Director Espinoza suggested that Commissioners keep the Hatch Act in mind during this political season.
- Commissioner Glymph asked General Counsel J. Carl Wilson if OPLA has reviewed the FY17 Bylaws.
- General Counsel J. Carl Wilson stated that as of today, they have not been approved.
- Chair Kendall stated Commissioner Gates will give a Public Art Committee report next meeting.
- Public Art Manager Jordan mentioned that an artist has been selected for the K Street Gateway project with Golden Triangle BID.

Unfinished Business

- There were no panel recommendations presented.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:09 pm.