



Business Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 4, 2021, 5 pm
ELECTRONIC MEETING VIA WEBEX EVENTS

To comply with the requirements of holding an electronic meeting, let these minutes reflect that the Special February Business Meeting of the Arts & Humanities Commission was held by electronic communication using the WebEx Events platform due to the current climate and social gathering restrictions of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Commissioners Present:

- C. Cheyney Cole, Jr., Chairman
- Susan C. Grube, Vice Chairman
- Brenda J. Roberts, Treasurer
- Cynthia Romero, MD
- Michael Cloud-Butler
- Raeesah Islam
- Elliott C. Jones
- Megin R. Kennett
- Olga Torres-Baker

Cultural Affairs Department Staff Present:

- Emily S. Labows, Cultural Affairs Director
- Nina Goodale, Creative Placemaking and Public Art Coordinator
- Hillary L. Plate, Cultural Programs & Grants Coordinator

Absent:

- Emma "Em" Davis, Secretary

I. Welcome

Chairman C. Cheyney Cole, Jr. called the meeting to order at **5:05 pm** and to be compliant with conducting an electronic meeting, made the following statement:

*"In accordance with Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.2, Virginia Code § 15.2-1413 and the City's Continuity of Government Ordinance adopted on September 15, 2020, and Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly as amended, I hereby call for a **MEETING BY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION MEANS** of the Cisco WebEx Events Center.*

This evening's meeting is also being recorded."

II. **Approval of Minutes**

MOTION I.

Ms. Cynthia Romero moved to approve the minutes from the December 4 Business Meeting. There was no discussion. It was seconded by *Vice Chair Susan C. Grube*. The motion passed unanimously.

III. **Approval of Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Brenda J. Roberts presented the Treasurer's Report. *Ms. Hillary Plate* added there are \$10,000 available in the Community Cultural Arts Grant.

MOTION II.

Vice Chair Susan C. Grube made a motion for the Treasurer's Report be approved. There was no discussion. It was seconded by *Ms. Cynthia Romero*. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. **Old Business**

No old business was discussed.

V. **New Business**

a. **Update on Grant Applications and Workshops**

Ms. Plate reported that two workshops were held on January 15th and January 22nd to introduce the approved changes and new data worksheet. They were both well attended.

There are at least two possible applicants for the Cultural Community Arts Grant (CCAG) for FY21 which will be processed on the same day as the Project Grants in March. *Ms. Plate* reiterated that the March Meeting will have presentations from both CCAG applicants using FY21 funds and Project Grant applicants using FY22 funds.

b. **Procedures for March Presentations/Deliberations**

Due to the current pandemic climate, the March meetings will be held virtually. The process will be like the previous year where applicants will be given designated time slots to log in during the meeting. All applicants are being instructed to email their presentations one week prior to the meeting for set up and testing purposes. February 8 is the deadline for all application submissions with an estimated number of 20-22 applicants.

Vice Chair Susan C. Grube had three questions:

1. Are the March meetings going to be virtual?

Answer: Yes.

2. When will the applications be available for the board to view?

Answer: *Ms. Plate will have them ready for the Board by February 25 to allow a full month's time to review.*

3. When will the evaluations be due from the Commissioners ?

Answer: *Evaluations are to be turned in a week before the meetings on March 18.*

VI. Committee Reports

- a. Champion for the Arts: Ms. Cynthia Romero reported that she is working on setting up a time to meet with Ms. Plate and Ms. Emily Labows to discuss the following:

1. Finalize formal celebration plans for the winner Nancy Creech which would also explore the idea of a possible fundraising event.
2. The process by which to select and identify nominees for the 2021 award.

Ms. Plate is to set up the initial group meeting between Ms. Romero, Ms. Plate and Ms. Labows and afterwards follow up with a meeting to include Nancy Creech.

Ms. Plate shared that she met with former commissioner Marynell Gordon to collect her committee binder and notes to share with the group. Virginia Musical Theatre is connected to Nancy Creech and they may have a role with the planning.

- b. Advertising & Marketing Committee: Treasurer Brenda J. Roberts reported that she had met with Alex Dye, the Communications and Media Coordinator for Cultural Affairs and received an overview of how things were being done. The focus had shifted more on the organizations instead of the events and a robust social media campaign was developed to continue pushing the arts. She had the Board refer to the Marketing Report that was included with the agenda packet and asked the Board to remember to use #VBArts.

- c. Advocacy Committee: Due to internet connectivity issues, Ms. *Megin Kennett* was not able to present her report.
- d. Public Art Committee: *Mr. Elliott Jones* reported that the committee reviewed their Equity Statement and plan to adopt a final draft in their February Meeting. The selection of mural artists for the Shore Drive Gateway project will take place this month and Public Art Committee members *Mr. Chris Buhner* and *Ms. Mia Guile* are included on the review panel. The neighborhood utility box wrap project that is partnered with the public schools is underway. The budget is \$9,000 with \$1,500 allotted for the artist stipend. The cost per utility box is \$500 totaling \$8,000. *Ms. Kate Pittman* provided her activity update from the ViBe and encouraged the Board to drive through the ViBe district personally view all the work done. The next meeting is virtually scheduled for February 26.

VII. Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Olga Torres-Baker: She stated her interest in leading with assistance a committee to create the Equity Statement for the commission. Commissioner *Elliott Jones* and Vice Chair *Susan C. Grube* have agreed to join this committee. A member from the Cultural Arts Roundtable that consist of several cultural organization in the community will also be invited to join this committee. An update will be given to the commission.

VIII. Public Comments

- a. Presentation from Teens with a Purpose – Deidre Love
Ms. Love narrated her presentation to the Board which gave an overview of their creative and resourceful staff, organization and partners that work to make sure every student has every opportunity to be involved with their performance workshops, virtual showcases and events. They hope to draw even more people in the process and add more opportunities.
- b. General Public Comments :
Lauren DiPeppe from the Virginia Symphony Orchestra thanked the commission for their support and was excited to share their upcoming performances.
- c. *Chairman C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.* wanted to thank the Cultural Affairs Staff for putting this meeting together. He reiterated that grant applications are due by 5 pm on Monday, February 8.

IX. Next Meeting

a. March 25, 2021: Grant Presentation Meeting

Grant applicants will be emailed their scheduled presentation time.

b. March 26, 2021: Grant Deliberation Meeting

There was a reminder that there will be no meeting at the beginning of March.

X. Adjournment

The meeting ended at **5:56 pm.**

Submitted by Arts and Humanities Commission Recorder: Mari R. Coronado, Executive Assistant II