



Business Meeting Minutes
Thursday- December 2, 2021, 5:00 pm
Sandler Center for the Performing Arts / Classroom 1

Commissioners Present:

- Susan C. Grube, Chair
- Emma “Em” Davis, Vice Chair
- Brenda J. Roberts, Secretary
- Michael Cloud Butler
- C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.
- Mia K. Guile
- Raeesah Islam
- Cynthia Romero, MD
- Olga Torres-Baker
- Hon. Winship C. Tower (Ret.)

Cultural Affairs Department Staff Present:

- Emily S. Labows, Cultural Affairs Director
- Hillary L. Plate, Cultural Programs & Grants Coordinator
- Beth Hundley, Assistant Director

Guest:

- Councilmember Michael Berlucchi, AHC Council Liaison

Absent:

- Nina Goodale, Public Art & Placemaking Coordinator

I. Welcome

Chair Susan C. Grube called the meeting to order at **5:00 pm** and made a special welcome to AHC Council Liaison, Councilperson Michael Berlucchi.

II. Approval of Minutes from November 4, 2021

Motion I.

Ms. Raeesah Islam made a motion to approve the November 4 Business Meeting Minutes and it was seconded by *Dr. Cynthia Romero*. There was no discussion. All those in favor said “Aye”. None opposed and the motion passed to approve the minutes.

III. Approval of Treasurer’s Report

Chair Grube presented the Treasurer’s Report.

Motion II.

Vice Chair Em Davis made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report and it was seconded by Ms. Olga Torres-Baker. There was no discussion. All those in favor said “Aye”. None opposed and the motion passed to approve the Treasurer’s Report.

a. Vote for new AHC Treasurer

Motion III.

Dr. Cynthia Romero made a motion to approve Hon. Winship C. Tower (Ret.) as Arts and Humanities Commission (AHC) Treasurer and it was seconded by Mr. Michael Cloud-Butler. There was no discussion. All those in favor said “Aye”. None opposed and the motion passed to approve Hon. Winship C. Tower as AHC Treasurer.

IV. Old Business

a. Mentor List

Chair Grube distributed the Commission Mentor list that paired up veteran board members with the newer members to answer questions and provide guidance. Below lists the paired board members:

VETERAN COMMISSIONER	PAIRED WITH
Susan C. Grube, Chair	Raeesah Islam
Emma “Em “ Davis, Vice Chair	Mia Guile
Brenda J. Roberts, Secretary	Olga Torres
C Cheyney Cole, Jr.	Michael Cloud Butler
Cynthia Romero, MD	Hon. Winship C. Tower (Ret.)

b. Updated Committee Assignment

Chair Grube shared that Secretary Brenda Roberts will be moving from the Advertising/Marketing Committee to chair the Advocacy Committee. Ms. Raeesah Islam will step in to Chair the Advertising/Marketing Committee.

Below lists the updated committee assignments for 2021-2022:

ADVERTISING/MARKETING/ SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE	ADVOCACY COMMITTEE	CHAMPION FOR THE ARTS AWARDS COMMITTEE	PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE	CULTURAL EQUITY COMMITTEE
CHAIR - Raeesah Islam	CHAIR - Brenda Roberts	Co-CHAIR - Cynthia Romero	CHAIR - Cheyney Cole Jr.	CHAIR - Olga Torres-Baker
Olga Torres Baker	Sue Grube	Co-CHAIR - Em Davis	Members not gathered from Sign Up	Raeesah Islam
Brenda Roberts	Michael Cloud-Butler	Sue Grube		Cynthia Romero
		Winship Tower		Elliott Jones (non AHC Member)

c. Updated Council Liaison

Chair Grube provided the Commission with a reorganized Council Liaison list. The role of the Council Liaison is to help their group present the best grants during deliberations; make their availability be known and to attend their group's performances to comment on their experience with the Commission.

Chair Grube also shared that *Ms. Plate* will hold a total of four (4) workshops in January to provide grant assistance, three (3) virtual and one (1) in-person.

V. New Business

a. Leadership & Organizational Development Grant:

Chair Grube reported that there is only \$250 remaining in funds for this grant only allowing \$125 to be granted for each applicant if approved.

Virginia Symphony Orchestra: *Mr. Patrick O'Brian* shared that funding for \$750 is being requested for two (2) registrations for the Major Orchestra Librarians 3-Day Conference to allow their librarians to remain up to date, premier new works and gain critical networking opportunities.

Councilperson Berlucchi asked if this grant is contingent on the librarians attending. *Mr. O'Brian* responded that it is and the two options are to either have the attendees incur or split the difference in cost or Executive Management may be discussion on how funds may need to be moved to allow for at least one if both cannot attend. This expense is outside of their funding and will look into their reserve funding.

Mr. C. Cheyney Cole stated that if funding was available, full support would be given for this grant request. Less money had been allocated this year due to the pandemic.

Ms. Plate shared that the representative *Ms. Melissa Day* for *Zeiders American Dream Theater* is on route. *Chair Grube* stated that when *Ms. Day* arrives, she can present their grant request to the Commission.

b. Announcement

Director Emily Labows reported that FY23 budgets are due tomorrow, December 3 to Budget Management Services. For the first time in many years, there will be no cuts and the Commission will get a small increase based on the recommendation of the City Manager. The budget proposal is submitted to the Budget Department for review. It is then forwarded to the City Manager and finally in March, it is presented to City Council to deliberate and be finalized in mid-May 2022. Last year, AHC was awarded

\$625K. *Councilperson Berlucchi* said that he would try to advocate for more funding for the Commission because he sees that it is needed. *Chair Grube* added the Commission can relatively do a lot with even a small increase.

Councilperson Berlucchi asked *Director Labows* is she can provide him with budget information if we were to adhere to the recommended standards of per capita to invest in the arts. He added that he would recommend for an increase for the AHC to City Council.

c. *Project Grant Applications open first week of December:*

Chair Grube announced that the project grant application will go live the first week of December and will be due Tuesday, February 1, 2022.

VI. Committee Reports

a. Champion for the Arts Committee/ Committee Chair: Cynthia Romero, MD
Dr. Cynthia Romero reported that the committee members consisting of *Secretary Em Davis*, *Treasurer Tower* and *Chair Grube* will be meeting on Monday, December 6 at 4:15 pm to discuss the timeline process and to review the nominations and celebration timeframe.

b. Advertising & Marketing Committee/ Committee Chair:

Secretary Roberts reported that a copy of the Marketing report was included in the agenda packet. She will set up a transition meeting with Mr. Alex Dye to introduce him to Ms. Islam.

c. Advocacy Committee/Committee Chair:

Secretary Roberts reported that the three top picks for December are MOCA's exhibit "Shaping Memories Especially Clay", Virginia Beach Chorale's "Hot Chocolate and Cinnamon Sticks" and Virginia Symphony Orchestra's "Jingle Jam and Holiday Props".

d. Public Art Committee/ Committee Chair: C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.

No report.

e. Cultural Equity Committee/ Committee Chair: Olga Torres-Baker

Ms. Olga Torres-Baker reported that a meeting with *Ms. Plate* has been scheduled in early January. She also announced that *Mr. Michael Cloud-Butler* will be joining the committee.

VII. Commissioner Comments

- Vice Chair Davis: "Forever Plaid" was excellent. The pianist on stage is also a musician in her church and is wonderful. She will be watching "Hello Dolly" tomorrow. Lastly, she added that Symphonicity had an excellent concert.

- Treasurer Tower: She gave a shout out to VA Ballet performance at MOCA. *Chair Grube* added that the tickets sales were so robust that they added an extra performance of the Nutcracker.

VIII. Public Comments

The following organizations presented event updates and announcements:

- Mr. Homer Bobbitt / MOCA
- Mr. Patrick O'Brian / Virginia Symphony Orchestra
- Richard Pulley / Symphonicity
- Amber Caudell / Hurrah Players

IX. Community Cultural Arts Grant Update

Ms. Plate and *Chair Grube* shared that there had been a conditional approval for Atumpam Edutainment and the Commission is in receipt of the requested financial records which were in line with what was needed. That process is moving forward and working on getting their funds distributed.

Their project is a partnership with Zeiders American Dream Theater. The request made is to fund the production of a variety of performances and interactive workshops on cultural awareness and African tradition along with an ongoing YouTube broadcast. The founder is visually impaired and has been successfully running this organization for a couple of years. More information will be circulated to the Commission when it is made available.

X. Leadership & Organizational Development Grants:

Chair Grube reported that Director Labows brought to her attention that there is \$5K available in the Community Cultural Arts Grant (CCAG) budget. Currently, there are no pending CCAG applications in the pipeline and *Ms. Plate* announced that a Press Release announcing the Project Grant Application opening is also a reminder of the CCAG deadline on February 1, 2022 deadline.

Motion IV.

Mr. C. Cheyney Cole, Jr. made a motion to move \$500 from the Community Cultural Arts Grant (CCAG) line item to the Leadership & Organization Development (LOD) Grant line item in order to fully fund Virginia Symphony Orchestra for \$750. It was seconded by *Dr. Cynthia Romero*. There was no discussion. All those in favor said "Aye". None opposed and the motion passed to approve the transfer of funds from the CCAG to the LOD Grant to fully fund VSO's grant request.

Motion V.

Vice Chair Em Davis made a motion to approve \$750 funding to Virginia Symphony Orchestra (VSO) from the LOD Grant. It was seconded by *Secretary Brenda Roberts*. There was no discussion. All those in favor said "Aye". None

opposed and the motion passed to approve LOD funding of \$750 to Virginia Symphony Orchestra (VSO).

Zeiders American Dream Theater: Ms. Melissa Day made a request for funding of \$750 to support the travel of the Music and Community Series Producer to present at the the Jazz Education Network Conference (JEN) in January 5-8, 2022 to promote Virginia Beach to an international audience.

Motion VI.

Dr. Cynthia Romero made a motion to transfer \$750 from the Community Cultural Arts Grant (CCAG) to the Leadership & Development (LOD) Grant to support the funding request of Zeiders American Dream Theater. It was seconded by Ms. Olga Torres-Baker. There was no discussion. All those in favor said "Aye". None opposed and the motion passed to approve the \$750 transfer of funds from the CCAG to the LOD Grant to support Zeiders American Dream Theater.

Motion VII.

Ms. Torres-Baker made a motion to approve LOD funding for Zeiders American Dream Theater for \$750. It was seconded by Treasurer Tower. There was no discussion. All those in favor said "Aye". None opposed and the motion passed to approve LOD Grant funding of \$750 for Zeiders American Dream Theater.

Ms. Day added that the Commission is to expect an email for free tickets to an upcoming Holiday Show.

XI. Next Meeting – Sandler Center, Second floor

- a. No January meeting.
- b. February 3/4:00 pm: Executive Committee Meeting (Conference Room)
- c. February 3/5:00 pm: Business Meeting (Classroom 1)

XII. Adjournment

The meeting ended at **5:50 pm**

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