

# Alexandria Commission for the Arts Regular Monthly Meeting

## Meeting Information

Objective:	To address Arts Commission business.		
Date:	11-01-16	Time:	Begin: 7:01 p.m. End: 7:50 p.m.
Location:	Activity Room, Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St, Alexandria, VA	Meeting Type:	Regular Monthly Meeting
Called by:	Matthew Stensrud, Chair	Note Taker:	Cheryl Anne Colton, Regional Program Director, Office of the Arts
Facilitator:	Matthew Stensrud	Timekeeper:	Allison Nance
Secretary/Minutes	Kate Elkins		
Attendees:	Catherine Ahern Barrett, Lisa Baranello, Beth Coast, Susan Cohen, Gayle Converse, Michael Detomo, Kate Elkins, Susan (Amber) Gordon, Allison Heck, Betsy Hennigan, Michelle Kozlak, Allison Nance, Matthew Stensrud and Karen Thomas		
Absent:	Shirley Downs		
Vacancy(s):	One position (high school student)		
Observers:	Patricia Washington, President/CEO, Visit Alexandria		
City Staff:	James Spengler, Director, RPCA Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, Cultural Arts, RPCA Cheryl Anne Colton, Regional Program Director, RPCA Matthew Harwood, Public Art Manager, RPCA		

## Agenda items

## Presenter

Agenda items	Presenter
1. Call to Order:	Matthew Stensrud
2. Public Comments:	Matthew Stensrud
3. City of Alexandria Arts and Culture Plan a. Presentation b. Discussion c. Motion on Plan	Matthew Stensrud
4. Time and Place Taskforce a. Review TaskForce Memo b. Motion on Memo	Matthew Stensrud
5. Adjournment:	

## Discussion Summary

1.	Call to Order: Mr. Stensrud welcomed everyone and began the meeting 7:10 p.m. He acknowledged James Spengler, Director, Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Patricia Washington, President/CEO, Visit Alexandria.
2.	Public Comments: None.
3.	City of Alexandria Arts and Culture Plan: Ms. Diane Ruggiero distributed the Staff Memorandum –Arts and Cultural Plan Approval Recommendation ( <b>ATTACHMENT #1</b> ). a. <i>Presentation of Steering Committee Recommendation:</i> Members of the Arts and Cultural Plan Steering Committee Ms. Beth Coast, Ms. Michelle Kozlak and Ms. Susie Cohen provided insights from the Steering Committee and Public Hearing meetings that were held prior to the November 1 meeting. b. <i>Discussion:</i> Each member was asked their opinion, insights about the plan. A few highlights of the discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestion to include more information about Arts Education within the plan.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Arts and Cultural Plan’s annual work plans should align with all relevant City Plans.</li> <li>• The Arts and Cultural Plan Steering Committee will remain in place for a short time. Once an Implementation Task Force is in place, it will disband.</li> <li>• After all members shared their comments, there was a sense that all of the members were satisfied with the latest edition of the Arts and Culture Plan.</li> </ul> <p>c. <i>Motion on Plan:</i> Ms. Michelle Kozlak made a motion to approval the Arts and Culture Plan as edited. It was seconded by Ms. Beth Coast (<b>MOTION #1</b>).</p>
4.	<p>Time and Place Taskforce: Ms. Ruggiero distributed the Time &amp; Place Public Art Project Staff Memorandum and highlighted points in the Memorandum (<b>ATTACHMENT #2</b>).</p> <p>a. <i>Review of Task Force Memo:</i> Ms. Kate Elkins gave a brief overview of the Time &amp; Place Public Art Project. She mentioned that the Task Force was excited about the project. She was impressed with the proposals and felt both projects would be great. Members from the Office of Historic Alexandria serve on the Task Force. They too, were excited about the projects. These projects will take place at Gadsby Tavern Museum.</p> <p>Sheldon Scott is a performance artist who envisions a performance piece that would begin at the Potomac River and end at Gadsby Tavern Museum. Lauren Adams and Stewart Watson are exploring a series of themes. They are thrilled with the partnership with the Office of Historic Alexandria. Three themes they are exploring include: doing something with the Stoneware collection; a project about the Female Stranger; and/or to do something with the collection of historic chairs.</p> <p>Both projects will begin in the Spring and continue through the Fall 2017.</p> <p>A Tweet-up with the artists and Task Force members is scheduled for Saturday, November 19 from 2:30 pm – 3 pm. The Mobile Art Lab will participate in the Tweet-up and will be on site with a “hands-on” project.</p> <p>It was suggested to involve Manumission Tour Company which was started by Councilman John Chapman. The Tour Company’s tour guides provide insights on the black history in the City of Alexandria.</p> <p>Ms. Elkins mentioned that the Task Force had a good cross section of the community. She said too, the Task Force was quite effective and overall worked well as a whole.</p> <p>b. <i>Motion on Memo:</i> Ms. Elkins made a motion to approve the Time &amp; Place projects it was seconded by Mr. Mike Detomo (<b>MOTION #2</b>).</p>
5.	<p>Adjournment Mr. Stensrud reminded the members that the November regular monthly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15, 7 pm. This meeting will be held at the Lee Center. He then mentioned that all items were addressed from the meeting’s agenda, so the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.</p>

	<b>New Action Items</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
1.	Review of the “Parking Lot” Items at the end of each Arts Commission meeting.	Arts Commissioners	End of each meeting

## Other Notes & Information

### ATTACHMENTS:

1. Arts and Cultural Plan Approval Recommendation - Staff Memorandum.
2. Time & Place Public Art Project - Staff Memorandum

### “PARKING LOT” – Future Discussion/Agenda Items:

09-20-16

- Auditorium/Performance Space: First Step is to find documented created in past on this area and explore history of Commission involvement to ensure we are not retracing steps.
- Fee-Free Parades: Ms. Ruggiero is working with groups like the Scottish Walk so they are fee-free in the future for City Commissions.
- Social Justice: need for inclusion and equity in the Arts and Culture Plan.
- Parking lot issues will be reviewed at the end of each meeting to determine the next steps.
- Art and Health Collaboration (i.e. color run partnership with pacers), Ms. Allison Nance and Ms. Gayle Converse.
- Attendance at the Multi-cultural Festival sponsored by RPCA, Ms. Amber Gordon.
- Public input and requests for public art, Ms. Amber Gordon.
- Could the ACA approach WMATA/Metro to encourage the Transit system to purchase art from local artists?, Ms. Shirley Downs.
- An Accessibility Workshop should be scheduled for the Arts Grant Program’s grantees (possible with Imagination Stage), Ms. Allison Nance.

08-16-16

- Making a crosswalk Arts Task Force. 08-16-16, Shirley Downs
- Create a call for “Sidewalk Chalk” Project – Local Artists – one day, might generate a “Good News” story, Michael Detomo.

7-19-16

- Google Group Email: ALEXCOMMISSIONARTS.ALEXANDRIAVA.GOV, Visible to the public, just copy email on all correspondence, Michael Detomo. This may be a bad idea.
- ACA “Budget” do we have \$ for event participation, Gayle Converse.
- Field Trips, Gayle Converse.

7-12-16

- Lee Center Kaufman Auditorium/Center, 7-12-16, ACA Special Meeting, Michael Detomo.

Submitted by:	Cheryl Anne Colton	Draft Notes Sent to Secretary	11-15-16
Reviewed by:	Kate Elkins	Draft Minutes Sent to Commissioners	12-15-16
Approved by:	Alexandria Commission for the Arts	Date:	12-20-16

### Motion Tracker

	<b>Motion</b>	<b>Made By</b>	<b>2nd</b>	<b>Vote</b>
1.	<p>Agenda Item: #3, City of Alexandria Arts and Culture Plan, item b. Discussion and c. Motion on the Plan.</p> <p>Motion: To Approve the Arts and Culture Plan as edited</p> <p>Discussion: As noted in the minutes.</p>	Michelle Kozlak	Beth Coast	<p>Yes - 12</p> <p>No - 1</p> <p>Abstain - 0</p> <p>One person did not vote (14 people voting)</p>
2.	<p>Agenda Item: # 4, Time and Place Task Force, Item b. Motion on the Memo.</p> <p>Motion: To approve the Time and Place Task Force Memo as written.</p> <p>Discussion: As noted in minutes.</p>	Kate Elkins	Mike Detomo	<p>Yes - Unanimously Approved</p> <p>No -</p> <p>Abstain - (14 people voting)</p>

Meeting date: 11-01-16

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## City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** OCTOBER 28, 2016  
**TO:** ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS  
**FROM:** DIANE RUGGIERO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, OFFICE OF THE ARTS  
**RE:** CULTURAL PLAN APPROVAL RECOMMENDATION

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**Background:**

The City of Alexandria Office of the Arts has contracted with Cultural Planning Group (CPG) to lead the development of a city-wide cultural plan that shall define the role of the City in supporting, producing, defining, and sustaining arts and culture initiatives throughout the City to accomplish the City's broader goals. As part of the plan development, CPG has recommended the formation of a Steering Committee to help inform the plan and provide feedback along the way.

Since October, 2016, CPG has been working on the development of the plan. The community engagement kicked off in February with a week-long series of meetings, focus groups, open houses, etc. The community engagement extended through June (due largely to the addition of special events to the Office of the Arts) and concluded when the survey closed on June 30, 2016. In August and September, 2016 CPG met with key City officials and shared drafts of the plan through various stakeholder workshops.

A town hall meeting was held on Wednesday, September 15 to get feedback on the goals and strategies outlined in the plan. Over 70 people attended and participated in that meeting. Prior to the town hall, the Steering Committee and Arts Commission had meetings on September 14 to provide feedback.

Additional meetings were held with the Steering Committee and the Arts Commission on October 19 and 20 respectively to review and provide feedback on the implementation strategy of the plan.

**Discussion**

The Steering Committee met on Thursday, October 27 to review the latest draft of the plan and to ensure that the edits from the earlier meetings had been included. Of the 8 remaining members, 6 were in attendance (Gwen Day Fuller, Dawnielle Miller, Suzie Cohen, Gayle Converse, Michelle Kozlak, and Jordan Potash).

There was a lot of discussion about the plan and a lot of questions about the implementation. Two edits have been suggested by the Steering Committee:

- The addition of cultural competency and humility training for staff, commissioners, and others involved with the implementation of the plan, and;
- The addition of a statement ensuring diversity in arts leadership recruitment.

**Recommendation**

After a lot of discussion and debate, four members of the Steering Committee voted to recommend approval of the plan as edited (Gwen Day Fuller, Dawnielle Miller, Michelle Kozlak, and Jordan Potash). Two members voted to not recommend approval (Gayle Converse and Suzie Cohen). Gayle stated that she needed to see the edits before voting to recommend the plan and Suzie says: "The role of government with respect to the arts is a delicate and difficult subject. At one of our meetings, Martin joked about creating an "art tsar." But I am uncomfortable with the idea of consolidating authority or power with respect to decisions affecting the arts in one person. And such a person's accountability should be clearly spelled out. Further, there should be a transparent and democratic decision-making process, assuring that those affected will be heard. There also should be an appeal procedure for those who are adversely affected. The overarching question is how far should the government be involved? It should lead, but not dictate."

**City of Alexandria, Virginia**

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**TO:** ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS  
**FROM:** DIANE RUGGIERO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, OFFICE OF THE ARTS  
**RE:** TIME & PLACE PUBLIC ART PROJECT – PROJECT APPROVAL

**Background:**

A collaboration between the Public Art Program and the Office of Historic Alexandria, Time & Place addresses one of three “Creative Directions” outlined in Alexandria’s Public Art Implementation Plan adopted in 2015, the other two being Neighborhood Identity and Urban and Natural Systems. Time & Place will be a unique aspect of Alexandria’s Public Art Program, distinguishing it from its peers in the region and establishing national leadership in the field while also allowing artists to play a central role in Alexandria’s ongoing dialogue with history.

The inaugural Time & Place exhibition will commission one to three artists to examine different facets of Alexandria’s history through the context of Gadsby’s Tavern Museum, making use of its collections, historic source materials, historians, and curators. As site-specific installations, the power of the artwork will come, in part, from being installed in the context of the historic site. Artists will be given the freedom to bring to light new stories, address both historic and contemporary issues, and even challenge prevailing narratives regarding the site’s history. The Office of the Arts will encourage dialogue and feedback through community outreach and collateral programming.

In June, the Arts Commission approved the selection of artist Sheldon Scott and artist team Lauren Adams and Stewart Watson for the project.

The Project Task Force is: Beth Coast, Kate Elkins, Katherine Glennon, Carol Reed, Liz Williams, and Michele Longo.

**Discussion**

The Project Task Force met on Wednesday, October 26 to hear presentations from the artists about their proposed projects. The artists were asked to provide a program element before the end of the calendar year (Dec. 31, 2016) and then before the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2017).

**Sheldon Scott**

Sheldon “will produce both an immersive performance art installation and temporary art exhibition. Both works will examine the historic relationship of the Potomac River and the people of Alexandria, and the contemporary utility of the river as a resource.”

“The work sets to lift up the narratives of those who have serviced Gadsby’s since its inception as to examine the relationship of worth of human bodies and the impact on environmental resources to matters of race, class and luxury. This interrogation of these historical relationships, rarely accounted and more rarely given value, will prompt audiences to challenge pedagogy and think critically of current social practices that allow the lack of acknowledgement and value to persist.”

For Fall, 2016 project Sheldon is proposing a panel discussion/pod cast with himself, a historian, and an environmental expert who can talk about the Potomac River.

For Spring, 2017 project Sheldon is proposing a fine art exhibit and a performance art project. For the performance art project, Sheldon will cart a large block of ice from the river to the tavern and then bring the ice into the tavern on his back into a larger performance in the Tavern.

Lauren Adams & Stewart Watson

Working in collaboration, Lauren Frances Adams and Stewart Watson will research and develop a series of artworks to be installed at Gadsby's Tavern Museum from May - August 2017. Our interests congregate within three major themes: Centennial of the everyday; Domestic material culture; Narratives of anonymity and loss. With over 230 years of histories to explore, Gadsby's mission to exhibit early American life in Virginia sets the stage for our interest in exploring the untold histories of Gadsby's. Our research focuses on women, enslaved peoples, and anonymous citizens whose stories are rarely told in light of the typical fêting of historically famous individuals, such as George Washington. Our artworks will utilize familiar domestic materials such as wood, ceramics, and textiles in period-specific iterations to bring a contemporary understanding to the above themes.

For Fall, 2016 Lauren and Stewart will be hosting a "tweetup" with participants at Gadsby's Tavern on November, 19. The Mobile Art Lab will also be there working with the artists on a hands-on project.

For Spring, 2017 Lauren and Stewart will be installing an exhibit that will be in place through the summer.

Recommendations

The Task Force recommends approving the proposed projects.