

**ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, June 16 2015  
MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal Street, Alexandria, VA

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Matthew Stensrud, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

**Present:** Beth Coast, Susan Cohen, Gayle Converse, Shirley Downs, Katherine (Kate) Elkins, Susan Amber Gordon, Betsy Hennigan, David Martin, Allison Nance, and Matthew Stensrud.

**Absent:** Pamela Corsini, Michael Detomo, Allison Heck, Michelle Kozlak, Patricia Shaffer, and Lucy Medley.

**Guest(s):** Catherine Ahern, Michael Cherry, Jenny Oh, and Michael Stone

**Staff Present:** Diane Ruggiero, Cheryl Anne Colton and Matthew Harwood.

Mr. Stensrud invited the guests to introduce themselves and state their interest in attending the meeting.

**II. PUBLIC HEARING/COMMENT:** None

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The May 19, 2015 meeting minutes were reviewed. The Chair assumed the motion and received unanimous consent for approval.

**IV. CHAIR'S REPORT:** Matthew Stensrud highlighted two activities he participated in since the May meeting which included:

- a. *French Tall Ship L' Hermione to Visit Alexandria.* Matthew Stensrud and Amber Gordon participated in the June 9 evening boat ride to welcome Hermione to the City of Alexandria. The ship was in town through June 12.
- b. *Executive Committee Regular Meetings.* The Executive Committee met on June 9 at 6:45 pm at Caboose Café, located on Mt. Vernon Avenue. The Executive Committee meetings are open to any Commissioner who is interested in attending.

**V. COMMITTEE, TASK FORCE AND LIASION REPORTS:**

- a. *Arts Education.* Kate Elkins reported the Arts Education Committee met on June 10. The Committee developed a draft work plan (Attachment #1). The Commission will vote to accept the work plan at the August meeting. The Committee has identified students to participate in the next Art in City Hall exhibition that will be installed on July 17. In the Fall, an opening reception will be scheduled and a student award will be presented.
- b. *Awards Committee.* Betsy Henningan reported that the shape/format of the awards program has changed since the memorandum was distributed to the Commission. Some new thoughts for the awards program include:
  - Purchasing of a piece of art for the City
  - Having artists compete for the purchase
    - Selection panel to choose piece for purchase
    - Include the public in the selection process
  - Hosting an exhibition along with promoting gallery talks for the artists who are competing for purchase award

- Holding a small exhibition of other works by the artist who is selected for purchase award
- i. Awards Memo Discussion.
  - The Alex Art Awards program was previously funded through the grant program and operating budget of the Office of the Arts.
  - Funding is not yet identified for the purchase of art.
  - Fundraising may need to occur to fund the purchase of art.
  - The Alex Art Awards “star” medallion was shared with the Commission.
- ii. Motion to Approve Memo
  - The motion to approve the memo was struck from the agenda. The memo will be re-written to reflect the re-tooling of the awards program. The memo will include goals for the awards program. Members of the Committee include: Betsy Hennigan (chair), Allison Nance and David Martin.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Matthew Stensrud requested the Committee to work with Office of the Arts staff for the shaping of the awards program.
- The revised memo to be sent by the Committee in advance of either the August or September Commission meeting.
- c. *Communications and Outreach Committee.* Gayle Converse mentioned the Committee is working with the Office of the Arts staff to develop language for the King Street Gardens Park public art project. The language will provide background information and other information about the project. Once the language is approved by the artists and the City, it will be formatted to be placed as a vinyl wrap for the park’s electrical box doors.

The Committee is in the process of prioritizing various ideas that are outlined in the Communications and Outreach Committee’s work plan. Ms. Converse shared the following additional ideas the Committee are exploring:

- Members of the Commission could man the telephones for the WETA telethon.
  - A video message about the Commission and the arts in Alexandria could play during the telethon. Suggested to possibly have this occur when the second part of the WETA’s City of Alexandria Part II is aired.
- A speaker’s bureau could be presented by Commission members to all civic, neighborhood and business associations.
- A video “calling card” about the Commission and the arts in Alexandria could be developed.
  - Identify high school or college students to develop this video.
  - The Committee could write script for video, however there will be expenses for videography and editing.
  - Video tape could be used to encourage funding support by City Council.
  - An Arts and Economic Prosperity video tape was developed in 2013. The regional survey results were shared as part of the video. The link to this video will be sent to the Commission.
- A flyer highlighting the City of Alexandria’s Arts and Economic Prosperity survey results was developed. An electronic version of this flyer will also be sent to the Commission.
- The Mayor and City Council could participate in a Mobile Art Lab activity. This could be video taped or an exhibition of their pieces could be placed into a gallery.

- The Commission should have a booth at all of the City's special events.
  - The Mobile Art Lab is at most of the City's special events. The members of the Commission could assist the Mobile Art Lab. They can share information about the Commission and the arts in the City while they are engaging participants.
  - The Commission could travel monthly with the Mobile Art Lab to different locations in the City.
  - The Mobile Art Lab will be at Market Square for the Alexandria King Street Arts Festival scheduled September 19 and 20. The Commission can assist with the art projects during these two days.
  
- d. *Grants Committee.* Michael Cherry, Grants Committee member presented the report. Patricia Shaffer and Pamela Corsini were not at meeting. Mr. Cherry mentioned the Committee met several times to develop recommendations for the next funding cycle (Fiscal Year 2017). The memorandum with recommendations for revisions to the arts grants implementation policy was distributed (Attachment #2). He summarized the recommendations:
  - To reduce the funding caps in each grant program category by \$2,500. The new funding caps would be as follows: Operating Support up to \$12,500, Program grants up to \$7,500 and Special Opportunity Grants up to \$2,500.
  - Establish standard funding allocation guidance in the Arts Grant policy:
    - Allocate funds to awardees using the percentage score as the formula;
    - Recommend against funding applications whose scores are 75% or lower;
  - Staff should apply the funding allocation guidance once the Grants Task Force has concluded its peer review and scoring of applications is considered final. Staff should prepare the Arts Grants implementation policy, including how to address any funding excess or shortfall after the standard funding allocation formula is applied.
  - The Commission will consider the staff's recommendations and approve a final funding allocation at a public meeting of the Commission.
  - Invite Grants Task Force members to participate in Arts Grants workshops/webinars and provide feedback on areas for improvement.
  - During the workshops/webinars and the Grants Task Force training, topics will be emphasized that might be confusing (residency requirement and scoring rubrics/weighting).
  - The webinar should be recorded and a link placed on the Office of the Arts website, so the webinars could be viewed "on-demand."
  - Grants Task Force members should have expertise across all arts disciplines reflected in the applicant pool and knowledge of community, including external reviewers and commissioners.
  - Commissioners should be required to serve on the Grants Task Force. This mandatory participation should be for at least one year of a commissioner's three-year term. While not all Commissioners may be selected for service, they must agree to make themselves available as a condition of Commission service.
  - Schedule the Grants Task Force at a time when it is possible for all arts community members to attend – with a stated preference for a Saturday,
  - Provide an opportunity for applicants during the panel review to respond to potential misinterpretation of information presented in applications. This could be accommodated through written notes or a brief 5-minute response period.
  - Automate the Grants Task Force review scoring process by using an online tool to reduce staff time in compiling responses.
  - Be clear in communications to the arts community about the agenda for the Grants Task Force Review, including if possible, a time slot or range when a specific application or set of applications will be reviewed.

- Eliminate the funding allocation discussion from the Grants Task Force review.
- Provide written feedback to applicants, including final scores by category and Grants Task Force comments. To help facilitate the latter, include a field in the peer reviewer form to submit comments directly to the applicants.
- Post all forms, including final report forms, at the beginning of the Arts Grant program cycle.
- Continue to streamline the application form and increase the character limits to ensure more comprehensive responses.
- Clarify on the application form and through workshops and webinars what is meant by SMART goal format.
- Offer some technical enhancements including ensuring that there is a confirmation issued to applicants that the application has been received and the time of receipt and forcing a “save” action at the end of each application page to ensure the information is not lost.
- Finally, the third grant program goal should be modified to read (*proposed change in italics*): To create a vibrant urban environment by supporting *diverse* individual artists, organizations and other entities in the creation, performance, and presentation of *high-quality* works of art across the City of Alexandria.

Matthew Stensrud thanked the Grants Committee for their work in studying and developing these recommendations. He mentioned the Executive Committee received these recommendations at their June 9 meeting, and that they are in support of them.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Betsy Hennigan moved, seconded by Amber Gordon to accept the Grants Committees recommendations for revisions to the arts grant implementation policy. The chair asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There was none. Motion passed unanimously.

- e. *Alexandria Arts Forum Liaison.* Michelle Kozlak was not in attendance, so there was no report.
- f. *Torpedo Factory Liaison.* Michael Detomo was not in attendance, so there was no report.
- g. *Waterfront Liaison.* Shirley Downs distributed her report (Attachment #3). The report highlighted issues related to the current plan for Robinson Terminal Northern. There are initial discussions for Fitzgerald Square to possibly have temporary public art in this location. Public art for the waterfront and its timing will be included in the annual public art work plan for the Commission. Ms. Downs participated in the June 16 South West Boat Tour with the Waterfront Commission.

## VI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

- a. *2015-2016 Nominees.* The Chair reminded the Commissioners, at the May meeting he stated that the current Executive Committee members are running for their respective positions. He asked if there were any nominations from the floor. No nominations were given.
- b. *Introduction of Nominees.* Matthew Stensrud, chair; Allison Nance, vice chair; Michael Detomo, vice chair; and Amber Gordon, secretary.
- c. *Election of 2015-2016 Officers.* Matthew Stensrud closed the nominations.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Shirley Downs moved, seconded by David Martin to approve the slate of Officers as introduced. Individual votes were taken for each Officer. Motion passed, with unanimous votes for each member (10-0-0).

## **VII. NOMINATING PROCEDURE:**

a. *Review of Executive Committee Memo.* Matthew Stensrud distributed a recommendation from the Executive Committee for the Election of Officers (Attachment #4). The Nominating Committee will be appointed in April of each year, with slate of officers presented at the May meeting and the election of officers occurring at the June meeting. The Committee will be considered as ad hoc with the term of the Committee running from April to June. Question posed, if there were any job descriptions for each of these positions. Mr. Stensrud said that there was not, however, the Executive Committee will work to develop the job descriptions during Fiscal Year 2016.

b. *Motion to Approve Memo.*

**ACTION TAKEN:** David Martin moved, seconded by Susan Cohen to accept the Executive Committees recommendation for the election of officers. The chair asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There was none. Motion passed unanimously.

## **VIII. TASK FORCES**

a. *Upcoming Task Force Appointments:*

- i. *2015-2016 Annual Work Plan.* This Task Force will meet in June or July for about two hours, and in August for one hour to map out an annual work plan. The annual work plan includes three years of capital improvement public art projects. The work plan will be presented to the Commission at the September meeting. Todd Bressi will be returning to facilitate the development of the annual work plan.
  1. *Appointee recommendation from Executive Committee and Office of the Arts.* Current Commission members include Allison Nance and Allison Heck. Appointees for consideration (Attachment #5) : Samatha May, Elizabeth Converse Carriger, Deirdre Ehlen MacWilliams and Tendani Mpulubusi El.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Amber Gordon moved, seconded by Beth Coast to approve appointments of new annual work plan task force as presented. The chair asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There was none. Motion passed unanimously.

ii. *Simpson Park.*

1. *Appointee recommendation from Executive Committee and Office of the Arts* Members are Michelle Kozlak and Betsy Hennigan have stated they were interested in serving on this Task Force. The Task Force will advise staff on integrating public art into the Simpson park playground renovation. The Park Planning Office will issue a request for design proposals for the renovation. At the same time, the Office of the Arts will issue a request for qualifications for artists. Once the artist is selection, the artist will work with the design team. Funding is appropriated for this project (Design process total: \$35,000 – of which \$30,000 is for the design process and \$5,000 is for artists interviews; and for the construction of public art elements \$65,000).

**ACTION TAKEN:** Allison Nance moved, seconded by Susan Cohen to appoint Michelle Kozlak and Betsy Henningan to the Simpson Park Task Force. The chair asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There was none. Motion passed unanimously.

**IX. OFFICE OF THE ARTS STAFF REPORT:** Diane Ruggiero noted a few highlights items from the report:

- a. *Cultural Plan.* The City is in the final stages of securing a consultant to work with developing a cultural plan. The consultant will develop a recommendation for the type of individuals who should be appointed to a Steering Committee. The consultant will work with staff over the summer. The Steering Committee will be appointed at the September Commission meeting.
- b. *Public Art Conservation Projects.* The Office of the Arts staff is working with conservators for the restoration of Brio and the Alexandria War Dead Memorial.
- c. *Contemporary Art in Historical Context Program Development.* The deadline for submission of proposals to develop this plan is June 17. The plan will be developed over the summer. It will be a framework and a program plan for the integrating of art and history into public art projects.
- d. *Target Store Expansion.* Even though this project falls outside of the DSUP, the City negotiated a \$5,000 cash contribution for public art from Target for the store expansion project.
- e. *Torpedo Factory Mural Project.* The mural will be placed on the Torpedo Factory Arts Center's receiving door. The Torpedo Factory Board has solicited design proposals for the mural project. Once the Torpedo Factory Board approves the design, it will come to the Commission for a vote. There is no funding for this project, however, the Torpedo Factory Board feels that when the design is selected, they will be able to solicit for donations to fund the project.

**XII. GOOD OF THE ORDER – ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

- Diane Ruggiero attended the Americans for the Arts conference. Two Alexandria public art projects were submitted, but not accepted for the curated “year in review” of public art. There were 400 submissions however, only 30 pieces were selected.
- Amber Gordon mentioned the Mt Vernon Pedestrian Plaza will meet on June 17. There is a lot of excitement in the Del Ray neighborhood for this project.
- Ms. Gordon said the opening reception for the Art Uniting People exhibition was held on June 12. The show will be displayed on the second floor of City Hall until July 9.
- Cheryl Anne Colton informed the members that the Youth Arts Festival's traveling exhibition is in the Vola Lawson lobby, City Hall. The opening reception is scheduled for June 18. This exhibition will be there until July 6. From City Hall the exhibition will travel to the Durant Arts Center.
- Amber Gordon and commissioners congratulated Matthew Stensrud on his upcoming nuptials.

**X. ADJOURNMENT.**

**ACTION TAKEN:** Matthew Stensrud stated since the end of the Agenda had been reached and there were no further motions, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Attachments:

- #1 Arts Education Committee Plan 2015
- #2 Memorandum: Recommendations for Revisions to the Arts Grant Implementation Policy
- #3 The Waterfront and Robinson Terminal North Report
- #4 Memorandum: Recommendations for Election of Officers
- #5 Public Art Annual Work Plan Task Force Proposed Roster

**Alexandria Commission for the Arts  
Art Education Committee Plan 2015  
(DRAFT)**

**Mission Statement**

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts' Art Education Committee is dedicated to promoting the value of arts and culture by nurturing, investing in, and celebrating quality art experiences. We seek to promote, and support, creative opportunities that give children, youth, and adults living in the city of Alexandria, Virginia the freedom to explore their creative selves. Through communication and collaboration between artists, city agencies, community groups, and educational institutions, we work to ensure that the arts are accessible to everyone in our community.

**Goals**

1. Provide and support opportunities for Alexandria's children, youth, and adults to participate in art activities, ensuring that the arts are accessible to all members of the community.
2. Work to build community awareness and appreciation for the value of the arts by highlighting the positive impacts that art education has on learners of all ages.
3. Develop, sustain, and strengthen partnerships between artists, city agencies, community groups, and schools to support creative experiences and community engagement with the arts.
4. Work to ensure that visual and performing arts funding is distributed equitably and seek additional support for arts education throughout the city.
5. Embrace, support, and integrate the wealth of arts and cultural resources in the City of Alexandria.

**Strategies**

- Develop four individualized task forces within the committee to address separate goals:
  - PreK-12 Art Education Opportunities
  - Art Advocacy
  - Community Partnerships
  - Life-long Learning Opportunities
- Ensure that the Arts are adequately and equally represented in the Alexandria City School's Five-year Strategic Plan.
- Work with the District's new School Arts Education Coordinator as the primary liaison for the design and implementation of an Art Education Plan.
- Review, select, organize, and implement community art opportunities for city residents of all ages.
- Work with the Arts Commission and Office of the Arts to promote a quarterly calendar of art education opportunities and or events.
- Seek to acquire additional funding for Art Education Programs within the City and the Alexandria City Public Schools.
- Organize a High School Visual Art Exhibit to showcase exceptionally talented art students in grades 10-12, from each of the four, public and independent, high schools.
- Provide support to the Youth Arts Festival and the Art in City Hall program.
- Work to create partnerships between schools and arts organizations.

\*\*Quarterly Art Education Committee reports will be delivered at Alexandria Arts Commission meetings.

## City of Alexandria, Virginia

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### MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 15, 2015  
TO: ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS  
FROM: GRANTS COMMITTEE OF THE ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS  
RE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVISIONS TO THE ARTS GRANT  
IMPLEMENTATION POLICY

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#### Background

During 2014, the Alexandria Commission for the Arts approved a number of changes to how the Arts Grants program was implemented. These changes were outlined in the Grants Implementation Policy (2014). A commitment was made at the time of the policy change to evaluate the implementation of this policy and to make recommendations for refining the process in 2015. This memorandum presents the recommendations by the Grants Committee for modifying the current grants implementation policy based on its assessment of the FY2016 Arts Grants program implementation.

#### Reduction of Funding Caps:

The City of Alexandria has reduced funds available for grants to arts organizations since its FY2009 funding level of \$214,937 to \$173,941 in FY2015 – a reduction of 19%. While the total number of funding requests also reduced from 39 to 26 during this same time period, the demand for funds did not: the total funds requested in FY2015 was \$282,082, only slightly reduced from the FY2009 total funds request of \$282,550. In short, there are increasingly less funds available while the demand for arts funding has remained constant over time.

In FY2015, the Commission approved a change in Arts Grants policy to establish the following funding caps: *Operating Support* up to \$15,000, *Program* grants up to \$10,000, and *Special Opportunity Grants* up to \$5,000. While the Grants Committee remains committed to supporting artists and arts organizations providing diverse opportunities for the citizens of Alexandria to meaningfully engage with the arts, it concedes the challenge of offering grants of this size in a scenario of increasingly reduced City funds. Therefore, the Grants Committee recommends the following:

- Reduce the funding caps in each grant program category by \$2,500. The new funding caps would be as follows: *Operating Support* up to \$12,500, *Program grants* up to \$7,500, and *Special Opportunity Grants* up to \$2,500.

### **Funding Allocation:**

The revision of the Arts Grants implementation policy did not provide a statement on how to allocate funding once the scoring process is completed. Lack of policy guidance as to who makes funding allocation decisions and how these decisions are made raised questions by both staff and panelists during this year's grant review. Since funding levels are insufficient to meet the current demand for arts funding, even with the reduction of funding caps, this issue has the potential to become even more challenging in the future. An Arts Commission approved funding allocation policy is recommended to provide guidance in developing future funding recommendations.

The Grants Committee advocates for awarding excellence through larger awards to the highest-scoring organizations using a practice commonly employed by other regional arts councils/commissions: award funds on the basis of the peer review scores and/or using a cut score for award-making. Also, the staff and committee members have expressed concern about making awards at or below the 75% funding level, since it becomes increasingly difficult for the awardee to meet the original grant goals and objectives with diminished funds.

Recommendations: Based on feedback from the Commission and an analysis of past Arts Grants funding allocations, the Grants Committee recommends the following:

- Establish standard funding allocation guidance in the Arts Grant policy as follows:
  - Allocate funds to awardees using their percentage score as the formula;
  - Recommend against funding applications whose scores are 75 or lower.
- Staff should apply the funding allocation guidance once the Grants Task Force has concluded its peer review and scoring of applications is considered final. Staff should submit a formal memorandum to the Commission with their recommendations based on the Arts Grants implementation policy, including how to address any funding excess or shortfall after the standard funding allocation formula is applied.
- The Commission will consider the staff's recommendations and approve a final funding allocation at a public meeting of the Commission.

**FY16 Arts Grant Workshops and Webinars.** As previously presented to the Commission, the majority of applicants responding to the survey attended either a FY16 Arts Grant workshop or webinar, with 18 of 19 respondents indicating attendance. 94% of those in attendance found their attendance to be helpful. Applicants made several suggestions for improvement. Based on these suggestions, the Grants Committee makes the following recommendations:

- Invite Grants Task Force members to participate in Arts Grants workshops and/or webinars and provide feedback on areas for improvement.
- During training, emphasize topics that were confusing to applicants, specifically the residency requirement and scoring rubrics/weighting.

- Record the webinar and place a link to this recording online so that it could be available on-demand to applicants.
- Offer a shorter workshop and webinar for returning applicants that addresses new changes and provides an opportunity for questions.

**FY16 Arts Grant Task Force Review.** As previously presented to the Commission, attendance at the public panel review meeting was strong, with 74% of organizations responding to the survey reporting attendance. Almost 79% of those in attendance found the meeting and review process to be transparent, while a smaller percentage (57%) found the process to be fair and impartial. Overall, applicants appreciated the opportunity to hear the panelists' discussions and in particular the critiques of their own applications, and to observe the deliberations over the funding allocations. Regarding the perception of fairness, some applicants expressed concern that panelists did not have a deep familiarity with the city's arts organizations. While there was a recognition that the new process improved the objectivity of the process, there were individual applicant concerns about changes in their scores from previous years. Applicants appreciated hearing panelists' comments about their applications but would have liked the opportunity to correct what they perceived at times to be the panelists' misunderstanding of what had been written in their applications.

Based on suggestions received from the community, the Grants Committee makes the following policy recommendations:

- Select panelists with expertise across all arts disciplines reflected in the applicant pool and knowledge of community, including external reviewers *and* commissioners.
- Make commissioner participation in the Grants Task Force mandatory, with participation in the Grants Task Force required for at least one year of a commissioner's three-year term. While not all commissioners may be selected for service, they must agree to make themselves available as a condition of Commission service.
- Schedule panel review at a time when it is possible for all arts community members to attend – with a stated preference for Saturday.
- Provide an opportunity for applicants during the panel review to respond to potential misinterpretation of information presented in applications. This could be accommodated through written notes or a brief 5-minute response period.
- Automate the peer review scoring process by using an online tool to reduce staff time on compiling responses.
- Be clear in communications to the arts community about the agenda for the panel review, including if possible a time slot or range for when a specific application or set of applications will be reviewed.
- Eliminate the funding allocation discussion from the panel review.

- Provide written feedback to applicants, including final scores by category and panelists' comments. To help facilitate the latter, include a field in the peer reviewer form to submit comments directly to the applicants.

**FY16 Arts Grant Applications.** Overall, there was positive accolades for the change in application forms this year, including shorter forms, the ease of online submission, and the availability of a Word document version to develop an application draft.

Based on community feedback, the Grants Committee makes the following recommendations:

- Post all forms online, including final report forms, at the beginning of the Arts Grants program cycle.
- Continue to streamline the application form and increase character limits to ensure more comprehensive responses.
- Clarify on the application form and through workshops and webinars what is meant by SMART goal format.
- Offer some technical enhancements, including ensuring that there is a confirmation issued to applicants that application has been received and the time of receipt and forcing a "Save" action at the end of each application page to ensure that information is not lost.

### **Arts Grant Goals**

The arts grant policy should align with the overall goals of the Arts Grant Program. The current goals for the arts program are:

- To strengthen Alexandria's creative capacity by providing its citizens with diverse opportunities to meaningfully engage with the arts;
- To improve the capacity and stability of Alexandria-based arts organizations to create, perform, and present works of artistic excellence and innovation through organizational support and program funding;
- To create a vibrant urban environment by supporting individual artists, organizations, and other entities in the creation, performance, and presentation of works of art across the City of Alexandria.

Recent discussions about the Arts Grants policy, making awards based on excellence, and encouraging diverse artists and arts organizations to apply for funding have led the Grants Committee to review the Arts Grants policy goals. With the submission of these recommendations, we also are formally recommending the modification of the Arts Grant policy goals to explicitly state that the Commission supports excellence through its grants program. Specifically, we are recommending the modification of the third goal to read as follows (proposed change is in *italics*):

- To create a vibrant urban environment by supporting *diverse* individual artists, organizations, and other entities in the creation, performance, and presentation of *high-quality* works of art across the City of Alexandria.

Applicant	Grant Type	Score	Funding Request	Revised Grant Requests with Recorded Grants w/New Funding Caps	% of score	% of score with 75% cutline
Arts on the Horizon	PROG	95	\$8,000	\$6,000	\$5,682	\$5,682
Art League, Inc.	OP	92	\$15,000	12500	\$11,456	\$11,456
Alexandria Symphony Orchestra	OP	89	\$15,000	12500	\$11,069	\$11,069
Tom Teasley	SP OP	88	\$2,100	\$1,050	\$923	\$923
Alexandria Harmonizers	OP	88	\$15,000	12500	\$10,956	\$10,956
First Night Alexandria	OP	87	\$15,000	12500	\$10,919	\$10,919
UpCycle Creative Reuse Center	OP	87	\$15,000	12500	\$10,900	\$10,900
Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association	PROG	87	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$6,525	\$6,525
Eclipse Chamber Orchestra	OP	87	\$12,000	10,000.00	\$8,685	\$8,685
American Showcase Theatre Co. Inc T.A. MetroStage	OP	87	\$15,000	12500	\$10,813	\$10,813
Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association	OP	86	\$15,000	12500	\$10,731	\$10,731
QuinTango	OP	86	\$15,000	12500	\$10,700	\$10,700
Jane Franklin Dance	PROG	85	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$6,405	\$6,405
Alexandria Singers	OP	85	\$10,000	\$6,666.67	\$5,647	\$5,647
Torepdo Factory Art Center Board	OP	84	\$15,000	12500	\$10,544	\$10,544
Friday Morning Music Club, Inc.	PROG	84	\$8,000	\$6,000	\$5,028	\$5,028
Virginia Bronze Handbell Ensemble of N. Virginia	PROG	83	\$6,000	\$4,500	\$3,740	\$3,740
Margaret Wohler	SP OP	83	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$827	\$827
Virginia Opera Association, Inc.	PROG	82	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$6,135	\$6,135
Arts Resource Foundation dba Del Ray Artisans	OP	81	\$15,000	12500	\$10,150	\$10,150
Port City Playhouse	OP	81	\$8,000	\$6,666.67	\$5,413	\$5,413
Alexandria Film Festival	PROG	78	\$9,700	\$7,275	\$5,704	\$5,704
Alexandria Choral Society	OP	77	\$13,350	\$8,900	\$6,866	\$6,866
Washington Balalaika Society	PROG	76	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$5,685	\$5,685
Heloisa Escucero	SP OP	73	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1,824	\$1,824
Focusmusic	PROG	73	\$2,500	\$1,875	\$1,365	\$1,365
<b>Total</b>			\$276,650	\$217,433	\$184,690	\$181,501
			\$176,500	\$176,500	\$176,500	\$176,501
<b>Difference</b>			\$100,150	\$40,933	\$8,190	\$5,000
<b>Average Score</b>		<b>84</b>				

**To: The Arts Commission**  
**From: Shirley Downs**  
**Re: The Waterfront and Robinson Terminal North**

The Planning Department has delayed consideration of RTN until fall.

### **Issues Related to The Current Plan for Robinson Terminal North**

#### **A. The Wall**

The critical point in terms of the Robinson Terminal North site is that this is the location where Alexandria began. The establishment of the Tobacco Warehouse at this site is what stimulated trade and the growth of the city. This is the most important focus for the West Point location. Therefore we recommend that this prominent wall should focus on this early history and the development of our city. While quotes from American Indian representatives may be included there are many other individuals and events which might be featured here and the representations could be in other forms that just words carved into stone. Further any quotes and representations used should reference Indian leaders and groups from this locality not those from other parts of the country.

#### **B. Too Great an Emphasis on Words**

In general the current RTN Plan places too great an emphasis on words to convey the story. In the original plan there were suggestions to incorporate some words into the pathways or carved into benches but now the emphasis is to put words and quotes on much larger and taller walls. Also some of the history and information can be more helpfully conveyed via pamphlets and such things as phone apps.

#### **C. Not Enough Emphasis on Artistic Representations of Concepts**

We are supposed to have funds dedicated for a Public Art sculpture but there are other artistic representations that should also be incorporated. For example there were supposed to be medallions in the pathways and the manhole covers to represent Waterfront themes and locations. Further artistic representations could be incorporated into the Wall.

#### **D. Cultural Activities in RTN**

The original plan (pages 20 to 23) Recommendations stated that the plan should “Encourage mixed-use development that includes a performing arts center (including a black box theatre, practice studios and wardrobe facilities for music, dance and theatre productions, as well as providing space for administrative offices for arts organizations.)” In the letter to the Waterfront Commission accompanying their current proposal the developers of RTN stated:

“In the Interim Letter, the Commission expressed concern over the nature of the first floor space in the pavilion portion of the eastern building. As was discussed in the last meeting of the Commission, this first floor space will be active space as required by the Plan. This active space will be leased to rent paying tenants that could be either a restaurant, retail, museum, gallery space or any combination of these uses.” ( See attached letter from McGuire Woods.

This effectively results in no accommodation to arts and cultural groups which have limited financial resources. Contrast this with Robinson Terminal South which not only gave funds for PA, but are providing use of a room for cultural activities for local community and non-profit organizations and Alexandria’s government agencies several times a year to foster art, history and cultural awareness. They are also providing \$25,000 dollars a year for on site activities and exhibits for such activities. We believe RTN ought to provide space within the pavilion specifically for art, history and cultural activities in addition to their pledge to provide a Public Art donation. (See attached letter from the arts Commission on RTS.)

#### E. Poetry References

The RTN draft envisions including poetry references and suggested that the Alexandria Poet Laureates assist in this effort. The poetry could include poems from the historical period. Further modern poems that relate to water, the environmental experience and nature might be included. Our Poet Laureates should be involved in both suggesting and selecting appropriate quotes and the Arts Commission and Office of the Arts can facilitate this.

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 15, 2015

TO: ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

FROM: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

RE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS

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### Background

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts does not currently have an official process for electing officers. Historically, officers have been elected annually at the regular meeting in June. A nominating committee would normally meet before the regular May meeting to discuss those interested in the position and present a slate at the May meeting for the election in June. In 2015, this process was not followed and the Commission discussed at the May meeting the best way to proceed. Commissioners felt that a nominating committee was still a viable option, and the Executive Committee was tasked with creating a process for this committee to ensure this process is followed in the future.

### Recommended Nominating Process:

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts Executive Committee consists of the following positions:

- 1) Chair
- 2) First Vice-Chair
- 3) Second Vice-Chair
- 4) Secretary

The Commission elects these positions on an annual basis at its regular meeting every June. Once elected, the elected Commissioners take their position immediately following the adjournment of the June meeting.

The Commission appoints an ad-hoc Nominating Committee on an annual basis at its regular meeting every April. This committee consists of three Commissioners, none of which are currently on the Executive Committee.

The Nominating Committee is tasked with the following duties:

- 1) Create a deadline for interest in serving on the Executive Committee, to be no later than the second Tuesday of May
- 2) Inform the Commission of this deadline with proper advance notice
- 3) Following the deadline, meet as a committee to discuss the names of those interested and recommend a slate of nominees
- 4) Present this slate at the Commission's regular meeting in May

Commissioners interested in serving on the Executive Committee must submit a statement of interest to the Nominating Committee within the given timeframe.

Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at the June meeting.

Each position is elected individually by voice vote. Any Commissioner can request a roll call vote for the position currently being considered by the Commission. If a roll call vote is requested, the Secretary of the Commission will call the roll, record the vote, repeat the vote for accuracy, and present the vote to the Commission.

Following the election of the Executive Committee members at the June meeting, the Nominating Committee is dissolved.

If any Executive Committee member is unable to complete their term of office, the Chair of the Commission for the Arts, with approval from the Executive Committee, will have the power to fill the vacancy until the regular June election. Should the Chair position become vacant, the First Vice-Chair would assume the position of Chair.

## Public Art Annual Workplan Task Force Proposed Roster

### Samantha May

Currently works for the WPS (since 2013) where she directs exhibitions, public programs and public art initiatives. Samantha is a graduate of American University with an MA in Art History. Samantha has served on numerous panels and juries.

### Elizabeth Converse Carriger

Elizabeth is the Public Art Coordinator for the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (since 2013) and manages a variety of temporary and permanent art projects throughout DC. Prior to that Elizabeth was the Program Assistant for public art in Chattanooga, TN.

### Deirdre Ehlen MacWilliams

Deirdre serves as public art project manager for Arlington County's Public Art program. Deirdre also works independently on creative projects and initiatives and is the producer for DCCA's temporary public art program 5x5-2014, the curator for the Foggy Bottom Sculpture Biennial and curator for Washington Project for the Art's Art Night.

### Tendani Mpulubusi El

Tendani Mpulubusi El is an innovative and influential artist, entrepreneur, and civic leader. Tendani's professional affiliations include serving on the boards of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Ward 8 Youth Leadership Council, and Ward 8 Business Council, and as an advisory board member for the Smithsonian Community Museum. He is also an AmeriCorps alumni.

*Allison Nance  
Miss Gabe*

### Alternates:

- Eric Nelson (former owner of Artfully Chocolate)
- Jennifer Cortner (media specialist, wife of Bruce Scallon)
- Carrie Carrol (graphic designer)