



**Commission Board Meeting
Wednesday, June 16 and Thursday, June 17, 2021
Hybrid—In-person/virtual**

Attendees: Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Commissioners: (in person) Abigail Gómez, Asa Jackson, Terry Emory Buntrock, Matthew Conrad, Jan P. Monroe, Sushmita Mazumdar, Asa Jackson, Michael Markley, Barbara Parker: **(virtual)** Robert Goudie, Amanda Pillion; **(phone)** Laurie Naismith

Staff: Janet Starke, Lucas Hall, Cathy Welborn, Casey Polczynski, and Deborah Love (AG Office Representative)

Absent: Dr. Dena Jennings, D.O. and David Trinkle, MD

Meeting convened by Abigail Gómez (Chair) for morning convening at 9:12 AM.
Please join me in honoring, acknowledging, and uplifting America's native communities. For more than 500 years, native communities across the Americas have demonstrated resilience and resistance in the face of violent efforts to separate them from their land, culture and each other. Today, in the Richmond area, we are meeting on the traditional lands of the Monacan people.

Approval of Minutes from the March 25, 2021 and May 17, 2021 (Special) Meeting

Motion to approve: Mike Markley

Seconded: Matt Conrad

All approved by roll call vote

Special Guests

Beverly Hess update from Virginians for the Arts (VFTA)

Summary

Relative to the Federal Legislative update--Virginians for the Arts met with six Congressional Representatives (2 senators and 4 legislators). The conversation focused on continued and increased funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Legislators recommended a "Dear Colleague" letter, which was sent out after the recommendation was made.

Hess then stated the need for intentional arts education messaging, and its relevance and importance to the entire Commonwealth. The Arts Factory (Hess' organization in Manassas) has worked to develop STEAM education models to share with the local school system. This is providing a direct pathway for accessible arts integration. VFTA is looking to strengthen the message that arts education is for everyone, and can be applied to all disciplines. This message resonated well with Congressional legislators, and needs to be communicated more directly with state legislators.

Finally, there is consideration for legislators to change the tax laws to reinstate the charitable tax deduction, or add an above-the-line charitable line item deduction. This will specifically assist organizations moving forward in a post-COVID-19 economy.

Agenda Items

Key Points	Presenter	Reference	Action
Overview of the FY2022 Grants Budget	Janet Starke	Board Book -Tab 3	<p>Overview of Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explanation of how these figures are derived. -Reminder that Touring Assistance support was voted on at the October 1, 2020. -Reference the overview of regional disbursement of FY22 grant awards.
Discussion/Approval Creative Communities Partnership Grants (CCPG)	Janet Starke	Board Book -Tab 5	<p>CCPG Program Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -117 localities applied. -This is consistent with average number of applicants in recent years. -\$496,500 in requests were submitted. -VCA anticipated a decline which was not the case based on the conditional applications submitted. -These funds are matched with local dollars. -VCA funding is allocated once appropriation documentation is provided by the February 1, 2022 deadline. -This is an opportunity to highlight the ROI from a cultural policy statement, and something the VCA should leverage as we make the case for future funding. -Abigail Gómez asked about the process for localities to apply. Cathy Welborn addressed. <p>Recusals for specific locality votes: Abigail Gómez (Winchester), Asa Jackson (Newport News), Jan P. Monroe (Fredericksburg), Amanda Pillion (Abingdon), Robert Goudie (Fairfax County) Terry Buntrock (Williamsburg, James City County)</p> <p>Motion to approve: Barbara Parker Seconded; Jan P. Monroe Roll Call vote: all ayes</p>
Discussion/Overview General Operating Support Grants (GOS)	Janet Starke	Board Book—Tab 6	<p>GOS Program Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Several organizations did not apply for various reasons. -124 short-form application submitted

			<p>-Priority 1 has been averaging 3% of eligible request (10%).</p> <p>-Priority 2 has been averaging 1.5% of eligible request (10%).</p> <p>-Priority 3 is provided no funding.</p> <p>-VCA took the average of the FY21 and FY22 requests, a common practice among state arts agencies (SAAs).</p> <p>-Typically, Priority 1 organizations are placed on a Long Form rotation for three years.</p> <p>- GOS Long Form applicants for FY23 is going to be larger than normal, and staff will need to problem-solve to address this issue.</p> <p>Recusals from vote: Asa Jackson (Area 6) Mike Markley (Area 4B), Robert Goudie (Area 4B)</p> <p>Motion to approve: Mike Markley Seconded: Barbara Parker Roll Call vote: all ayes</p>
Discussion/Approval of Project Grants - Areas 1,2,3,4A & 4B	Barbara Parker	Board Book—Tab 7	<p>Project Grants Overview Regions 1, 2, 3, 4A and 4B</p> <p>Barbara Parker’s report as the Commissioner in attendance:</p> <p>-16 grants were reviewed</p> <p>-Program adaptations were provided with many applications, demonstrating forethought in planning.</p> <p>-Art of the Matter, Inc’s application did not demonstrate sufficient organizational capacity and clear plan.</p> <p>-Metro Stage is highlighted based on a staff recommendation of a Priority 2.</p> <p>-Laurie Naismith pointed out that not all Commissioners were not included as silent observers. Janet explained that, in part, because we didn’t have full regional panels, fewer Commissioners were needed. In terms of the implications to having more than several (or all) Commissioners as silent observers, Janet Starke will confer with Deb Love (Attorney General’s Office).</p> <p>-Panelists were provided a virtual orientation prior to the Advisory Panel Meeting, which seemed to facilitate a better review process.</p>
Discussion/Approval of Project Grants Areas 5 & 6	Asa Jackson, Matt Conrad,	Board Book—Tab 7	<p>Project Grants Overview Regions 5 and 6</p> <p>Asa Jackson reported as Commissioner in attendance:</p>

	<p>Sushmita Mazumdar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Panel was extremely diverse in a variety of facets. -Chat feature for a discussion thread would be an accessible way for applicants and grantees to post Q&A (though not allowed as part of FOIA, as not every participant could be guaranteed ability to view Q&A on-screen.) <p>Matt Conrad reported as a Commissioner in attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Professional panel; experienced and prepared. -Cultural Equity and Access was addressed in the applications. -Staff agreed with the Advisory Panel's Priority Ratings for these regions (particularly Area 5). <p>Sushmita Mazumdar reported as a Commissioner in attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interesting projects reflective of current social themes. -Strategies not evident to reach diverse populations as they are working to incorporate IDEA into their project plan. -An IDEA strategic chart to incorporate within the application would be easier to review than a narrative question. <p>Other Commissioners asked about additional ways in which the Commission could help organizations to more successfully address IDEA components within the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cathy Welborn suggested that this is the first year the agency has incorporated IDEA questions within the Project Grant application and it has involved a learning curve for staff. -This is the first year the VCA put out a call for new panelists and it served the Commission well in providing some new, diverse and qualified panelists. - Virtual panels also provided access to more observers. -All applicants are provided the panel summaries as you see them in the Board Book. -Conversation about holding the panel meetings virtually moving forward from an efficiency standpoint. <p>Recusals: Matt Conrad (Area 5)</p> <p>Motion to approve: Matt Conrad</p>
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<p>Discussion/Approval Artists in Education Grants (AIE)</p>	<p>Terry Buntrock Jan P Monroe Sushmita</p>	<p>Board Book—Tab 8</p>	<p>AIE Grants Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -29 applications submitted this is lower than typical years. -FY22 requests totaled \$147,496. -The panel was ethnically diverse. -Majority of panelists were new with only 1 returning. -Priority 1 Funding 90% and Priority 2 Funding 70% is the highest it has been in seven years. -FY22 AIE requests lower (quantity) than it has been in 7 years. <p>Jan P Monroe reported as a Commissioner in attendance (one of the two days):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Panelists were coming from a place of really willing to work collaboratively. -Staff and panel recommendations differ because of the thorough nature of the panelists' review. -Pleased with differing staff recommendations. <p>Terry Buntrock reported as a Commissioner in attendance (one of the two days):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pleased that the staff worked to differ from the panel recommendations. -Panelists wanted the applications to stand on their own. -Extremely thorough group for reviewing. -They will be an even stronger next year. <p>Barbara Parker added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Appreciates the staff recommendation regarding Piedmont Arts to support an organization that has had some staff turnover during COVID-19. <p>Motion to approve: Jan Monroe Seconded: Barbara Parker Roll Call vote: all ayes Recusals: Asa Jackson (Oakwood Arts), Robert Goudie (ARTSFAIRFAX)</p>
<p>Discussion/Approval Teaching Artist Roster</p>			<p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teens with A Purpose (TWP) is a strong community development organization. -TWP has a strong training program for their Teaching Artists. -Two TWP Teaching Artists are independently listed on the VCA Teaching Roster.

			<p>Motion to approve: Terry Buntrock Seconded: Mike Markley Roll Call vote: all ayes</p>
<p>Discussion/Approval Special Recognition Award</p>	<p>Janet Starke</p>	<p>Board Book—Tab 9</p>	<p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Historically a one-off award to the Blue Ridge Institute and Museum as a part of Ferrum College, for their work in preservation and archiving of Blue Ridge and Appalachian Arts. They do not really qualify for any other grant program, but their service to the arts and the state is extremely worthwhile. -The VCA is recommending that the Blue Ridge Institute apply for \$4,500 to support their general operations. -NEA has shifted in state arts agencies' (SAA) Partnership Agreements so folklife funds now go through the SAAs to the states humanities/folklike councils. As VCA has been planning with Virginia Humanities to partner, the staff is recommending that Virginia Humanities apply for a Special Recognition grant to receive the NEA-dedicated funding, in support of the Virginia Folk Life program (\$20,000). -VA Humanities is the Commonwealth's Humanities Council. <p>Public Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Robert Goudie advised that the meeting was being observed by external constituent Stacey Williams, who wished to address the Commission on the need to support individual artists. --Chair Gómez invited the Public Comment. -Fairfax County has improved to address the need to support individual artists. -Appeal to the VCA regarding the need to support that can be provided offline. -Janet Starke shared the recent series of Emergency Relief Grants that were distributed, the first open to all artists; and the second targeted towards artists of the Performing Arts Tour Directory and Teaching Artist Roster. -Ms. Williams acknowledged and commended the VCA for those efforts, suggesting she hopes to see more to follow. <p>Motion to approve: Mike Markley Seconded: Jan P. Monroe Roll Call vote: all ayes</p>
<p>Discussion/Approval of FY 2021-2022 Commission Budget</p>	<p>Mike Markley</p>	<p>Board Book—Tab 4</p>	<p>Budget Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -There are two proposed budgets presented to the Commission board.

			<p>-VCA is requesting approval for the Board to approve both projection 1 and projection 2 as they are presented, with projection 2 to be enacted if VCA is permitted to keep FY21 carryover funds.</p> <p>-Plan to come back to the Commission Board if for proposed disbursement of the ARP (American Rescue Plan) funding.</p> <p>-VCA is also looking to address the most efficient and effective use of the AARP that are not administratively demanding on staff.</p> <p>-Laurie Naismith suggested a paid intern to support virtual convenings.</p> <p>-Janet Starke stated that internships are part of the agency's strategic plan regarding capacity-building.</p> <p>Artists Showcase Discussion</p> <p>-The Artists Showcase is a partnership program with VPM to promote VCA Performing Arts Tour Directory Artists and venues across the state. Slated for fall.</p> <p>Artists Fellowship Discussion</p> <p>-Matt Conrad: How many fellowships will be allocated in FY22?</p> <p>-Five Fellowships for five artists.</p> <p>Motion to approve: Matt Conrad Seconded: Barbara Parker Roll Call vote: all ayes</p>
Emergency Relief Funds Update	Janet Starke		<p>-Requests totaling \$103,500</p> <p>-388 artists benefitting from the Emergency Relief Fund for artists on the Performing Touring Directory and the Teaching Artist Roster (combined).</p>

Comments/Contributions from the Public

See above is discussion of the FY22 Budget.

Meeting Adjourned

Abigail Gómez adjourned the meeting at 2:00 PM.

**Thursday, June 17, 2021
Commission Board Meeting (continued)**

Attendees

Commissioners: Abigail Gómez, Asa Jackson, Terry Emory Buntrock, Matthew Conrad, Robert Goudie, Jan P. Monroe, Sushmita Mazumdar, Asa Jackson, Michael Markley, Barbara Parker, Amanda Pillion

Staff: Janet Starke, Lucas Hall, Cathy Welborn, Casey Polczynski, and Deborah Love (AG Office Representative)

Absent: Dr. Dena Jennings, D.O. and David B. Trinkle, MD

Meeting convened by Abigail Gómez (Chair) for morning convening at 9:06 AM.

Special Guests

Annamarie Bollino, Teaching & Learning Facilitator – Fine & Performing Arts, Stafford County Public Schools
John Brewington, Chair, Coalition for Fine Arts Education

Joined by VCA Staff: Casey Polczynski, PhD, Arts in Education Coordinator

Summary

Key Points	Presenter	Reference Report	Action
Budget and Policy Committee	Mike Markley	Board Book— Tab 10	<p>Discussion/Approval of Revised Bylaws and Policy Manual</p> <p>Revised Bylaws Vote Motion to approve : Matt Conrad Seconded: Mike Markley Roll call vote: all ayes</p> <p>Revised Policy Manual Vote Motion to approve: Barbara Parker Seconded: Asa Jackson Roll call vote: all ayes Matt Conrad absent</p>
Nominating Committee— Executive Committee	Abigail Gómez		<p>Recommended Slate of Executive Officers for 2021-2022 Asa Jackson, Chair Dr. Dena Jackson, Vice Chair Terry Emory Buntrock, Secretary</p> <p>Motion to approve: Mike Markley Seconded: Jan P. Monroe Roll call vote: all ayes Matt Conrad absent</p>

<p>Executive Director's Report</p>	<p>Janet Starke</p>		<p>APA Audit -Began in April 2021; part 1 of fieldwork is due to completed this month (June); part 2 of fieldwork to take place in August after closing the books on FY21. Report expected early fall. -Once again, auditors have noted the vulnerabilities of the agency given that Deputy Director and Executive Director are both appointed positions. -IT Security Measures were also noted, which the agency continues to work to address with VITA (Virginia Information Technology Agency) -Create and strengthening manuals included in the \$118,000 increase in Administrative Budget; delayed to budget uncertainties in FY20; now back in process, including: -Accounting Procedural Manual -Transition Manuals (key information) about ED and Deputy Roles. -Orientation manual</p> <p>Office of the Chief Diversity Officer, DEI Plan -VCA will submit a strategic plan related to DEI.</p> <p>VCA Return to Office -3/2 (three days in office; two teleworking days) plan for moving forward with teleworking options. -VCA staff with children will continue to primarily telework over the summer.</p> <p>One Virginia Plan The Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) -Inclusive Excellence is a running theme throughout the plan with powerful potential. Plan Includes the following: -Increase organizational effectiveness. -Share accountability for visible equity. -Fostering genuine community engagement. -Generating knowledge about diversity-led innovation -Fostering an inclusive and welcoming organizational culture -Increasing diversity at all levels of leadership</p> <p>Year in Review -Slide deck shared with Commission Board. -Organizations transitioned to meet community needs and creating unique models of arts performances.</p>
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			<p>--Relief Measures implemented over the past year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FY20 GOS Final Payments were disbursed early (April/May instead of June) -Virginia CARES Awards were disbursed from April – August; \$482,000 to 175 orgs -Round 1 Emergency Relief Grants to artists (Open Call); July-August \$25,000 (50 grants to individual artists \$500) -Reallocated \$10,000 of Technical Assistance Grants support transition efforts -June - \$102,500 disbursed (387 artists— Emergency Relief Grants to Performing Arts Tour Directory and Teaching Artist Roster Artists) <p>-Survey—impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Website—COVID-19 resource page and e-blasts <p>Webinars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -April 2020: Arts Leaders -May 2020: Virginia Presenters -September 2020: Touring Artists -October 2020: Arts Leaders -October 2020: Local Arts Agencies (LAAs) -February 2021: Unpacking Federal Relief Programs -May 2021: The Arts are Open for Business: Guidance and Best Practices for a Safe Reopening <p>Artworks for Virginia-Jan. 27-28, 2021 Virtual Conference</p> <p>Grant Making Statistics</p> <p>Typical Year of Grant Making: 720-750 grants</p> <p>FY21 Grantmaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -358 additional grants through three new grant programs -50% increase in number reviewed/processed by staff <p>On the Horizon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Organizations continue to need unrestricted operating support -It will take time for organizations/artists to realize income (at anywhere near historic levels) -In-person/hybrid Art Works for Virginia conference (anticipated) -Preparing for winter/flu season
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			<p>-VCA's 21/24 Strategic Plan to continue to be employed -One Virginia Plan—VCA's strategic plan due July 1, 2021. -Cultural Equity/Grantmaking—increase goals, meeting those goals -\$1 per capita</p> <p>Discussion Barbara Parker—How was staff able to maintain productivity? Janet Starke--The work was driving the effort. Janet further expressed extreme gratitude to the entire staff for their perseverance and commitment to service.</p>
<p>Commissioners' Report</p>			<p>Commissioner's Regional Reports All Commissioners</p> <p>Area 1: Amanda Pillion reported that Abingdon has a lot going on. AIEx Arts Depot Grant worked out well. Regional Conversation to begin a local Arts Council to support the smaller regional groups who do not have the support from grant funding. William King is preparing a large renovation with funding from the legislature with local support from CARES funding. Considerable stress with equity artists has been a challenge. Barter Theatre performers have primarily been the Barter Players. Highlands Festival is happening at the end of July. Abingdon Main Street has taken over local musical performances.</p> <p>Area 2: Barbara Parker is regionally reaching out to organizations to determine whether they are slowly beginning to open up and whether some never shut down. Area 2 has not taken advantage of AIEx and the arts organizations are reaching out to the schools.</p> <p>Area 3: Mike Markley reported this region is opening a bit more slowly. Some organizations are merging into the non-profit sector.</p> <p>Area 4A: Sushmita Mazumdar provided a regional artist update that it has been frustrating for Teaching Artists are having a difficult time connecting with schools.</p>

			<p>Area 4B: Jan Monroe provided a (regional) Teaching Artist’s statement about moving forward in opening up and continuing the work.</p> <p>Area 6: Laurie Naismith shared that the Virginia Symphony has a new conductor. Facebook gave \$1,000,000 to Hampton Roads Community Foundation, to award to 31 racial and ethnically diverse organizations in the region. In sum, 66 Organizations led by African Americans have been identified.</p> <p>Asa Jackson reported there is a huge gap in Newport News. The Peninsula Arts Center has been a bedrock organization for the community to access arts education, and that has changed now as they have formally become a part of Christopher Newport University. Norfolk and Virginia Beach have remained resilient throughout COVID. D’Arts moved into a new building. Regional museums are stable. The South Side has more activity.</p> <p>Terry Emory Buntrock stated that local funding has stayed level in her area. Outdoor activities are beginning to happen with festivals in Williamsburg. Eastern Shore summer camps are all sold out. A new Public Art Commission is in place and a new piece of art was delivered yesterday.</p>
Arts Education	Casey Polczynski	Board Book— Tab 8	<p>Poetry Out Loud</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program participation included for FY21 -Azhane Pollard, from Hopewell High School, was the (national) Poetry Ourselves Winner. -2022 Program Timeline provided <p>AIEx Program Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -List of FY21 Awardees provided -Regional table of awardees -Goals outlined for Arts Education moving forward in refining the FY23 program guidelines.
IDEA Leading and Learning	Janet Starke		<p>Leadership Prince William</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Janet Starke shared excerpts from a presentation she gave (earlier in the year) to Leadership Prince William, documenting the agency’s evolution in implementing IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access). <p>Putting into practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Land Acknowledgements

			-Use of Pronouns in signature, videoconference Names -Introductions at speaking events -Professional Development at Art Works for Virginia conference for past three years --Much more to come, including integration into the Commonwealth's One Virginia Plan
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Special Thanks

Asa Jackson and Janet Starke acknowledged Abigail Gómez and Matt Conrad for their five years of experience and leadership serving on the Commission Board. They both took on specific roles on the Executive Committee both as Chair. Matt Conrad's leadership and guidance in public leadership has been invaluable. Each has led the agency through the evolution of our work in IDEA, from the development of policy, to land acknowledgement, and other best practices.

Cathy Welborn was also recognized for her 15 years of service to the Commission.

Old Business/New Business

None

Public Comment

None

The next quarterly board meeting is October 6-7, 2021; details will follow in the summer.

The meeting was adjourned by Abigail Gómez at 2:50 PM.