



Board Meeting Minutes

I. Attendees

- Commissioners: Dr. Dena Jennings, Jan Monroe, Barbara Parker, Frazier Millner Armstrong, Lou Flowers, Robert Goudie, Mike Markley, Amanda Pillion, Dr. Vanessa Thaxton-Ward, Dr. David Trinkle
- Staff: Margaret Hancock, Cathy Welborn, Casey Polczynski, Karina Klemz, Lorraine Crilley, Shauna Jones-Friend
- Attorney General's Office: Abigail Gump, Attorney
- Special Guest: Ed Harvey, Virginians for the Arts President

II. Call to Order

Chair Jennings called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and provided a welcome. Jennings invited new Commissioners Flowers and Thaxton-Ward to introduce themselves.

III. Approval of Agenda

Chair Jennings called for a motion to approve the agenda.

All approved; motion passed.

IV. Approval of Minutes from September 2023 Commission Board Meeting

Chair Jennings called for a motion to approve the minutes from the VCA's Board meeting in September 2023.

Motion: Commissioner Trinkle

Seconded: Commissioner Monroe

All approved, motion passed. Commissioners Goudie, Markley, and Thaxton-Ward abstained as they were not present at the September Commission Board Meeting.

V. Advisory Panel Focus Group Update

Commissioner Armstrong and Commissioner Markley provided an overview of the Advisory Panel Focus Group and confirmed that Advisory Panels are a valuable asset to the VCA. The recommendations for future Advisory Panels are to continue to streamline and implement best practices for long-term sustainability.

Discussion: Chair Jennings asked if the honorarium should be increased and how Commissioner training on Advisory Panels would be implemented. Discussion followed around the benefits of Advisory Panels meetings as closed sessions. Executive Director Hancock shared the new Advisory Panel Nomination Form that was uploaded to the VCA website.

VI. Executive Update

Executive Director Hancock:

- Presented the Strategic Planning Workbook, a new resource designed to assist VCA grantees with the formulation of their own strategic plans.
- Shared special initiatives, including the successful On the Square event in October – Arts and Humanities month – in collaboration with VCA grantees and as a service to state employees.
- Announced the kickoff of the VCA Passport Program on November 1. This program was featured in the NASAA newsletter on November 2.
- Noted several media and outreach opportunities: ArtsFairfax television interview; Small Town, Big Arts Podcast; VCA grant program overview at Christopher Newport University with National Endowment for the Arts in attendance.
- Discussed the agency’s technology and communication upgrades: 53% open rate for Constant Contact, 61%+ engagement on Instagram, and utilization of Box, a cloud platform for secure file sharing
- Shared funding priorities: FY25 grants went live on Dec 11. The ‘Which Grant is Right for You?’ workshop had 134 registrants.
- Briefly discussed the VA250 Impact Webinar in collaboration with VA Humanities and VA Tourism. The VCA will also share this new grant program at the Virginia Associations of Museums conference in March.
- Provided an update on the funding of 100% of Virginia’s municipalities initiative. Continuing to support libraries as potential grantees by hosting an ‘Art + Library = Vibrant Community’ webinar in collaboration with fellow state agency, Library of Virginia.
- Introduced new VCA fiscal officer, Shauna Jones-Friend who comes to the agency with over 21 years of state experience.
- Commissioner Trinkle shared an update on the VCA request for increase for the FY25-FY26 Biennial Budget for a total of \$9,048,500. Executive Director Hancock provided the narrative shared with the Secretary of Education and justifications shared with Department of Planning and Budget for this request.

VII. Professional Development Dialogue

Executive Director Hancock delivered a comprehensive overview of professional development opportunities for VCA stakeholders. Alongside the newly implemented in-person Impact Celebration, the VCA has engaged various audiences over the past two fiscal years, both in-person and virtually. These offerings cover a range of topics, including best practices, endowments, onboarding of Roster Artists, and insightful panels from partnering agencies such as Mid Atlantic Arts. Following this overview, she asked Commissioners for feedback for how the VCA continues professional development with the team’s limited resources. Commissioners split into groups and discussed in breakout rooms. See addendum.

VII. Advisory Panel Recommendations | Artist Fellowships in Printmaking and Choreography and Teaching Artist Roster

Executive Director Hancock presented an overview of FY24 Artist Fellowship and Teaching Artist Roster Advisory Panel recommendations. Fellowship recommendations represented Virginia Commission for the Arts

diverse regions cross the Commonwealth and featured multifaceted motifs ranging from environmental and social advocacy to language, cultural frameworks, and technology. The staff made no recommended changes to the Advisory Panel recommendations.

Teaching Artist Roster recommendations spanned various disciplines and showcased a robust cultivation of engagement with distinct communities.

Commissioner Flowers, Pillion, and Monroe provided observations from the Advisory Panels, and commended the Advisory Panelists and the artists under review.

VII. Commission Vote | Artist Fellowships in Printmaking

Chair Jennings called for a motion to accept the Artist Fellowships in Printmaking as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Trinkle
Seconded: Commissioner Markley

All approved; motion passed.

VII. Commission Vote | Artist Fellowships in Choreography

Chair Jennings called for a motion to accept the Artist Fellowships in Choreography as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Armstrong
Seconded: Commissioner Parker

All approved; motion passed.

VII. Commission Vote | Teaching Artist Roster

Chair Jennings called for a motion to accept the Touring Artist Roster as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Monroe
Seconded: Commissioner Flowers

All approved; motion passed.

VIII. Impact Celebration

Executive Director Hancock shared an update on the upcoming Impact Celebration taking place at Piedmont Virginia Community College on January 19, 2024. Programming will include National Geographic Society speaker Kara Ramirez Mullins, on the topic of fundraising; Touring Artist Roster and VCA grantee performance; and the official launch of the new Virginians for the Arts License Plate. Chair Jennings encouraged Commissioners to invite artists or arts leaders in their community to join them in attending this event.

X. Meeting Adjournment

Executive Director Hancock announced that the next Board meeting will be held in Fredericksburg on March 12-13.

Chair Jennings called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Markley
Seconded: Commissioner Trinkle

All approved; motion passed.

Meeting adjourned by Chair Jennings at 11:55 a.m.

Professional Development Dialogue

Additional Opportunities for Grantees and Stakeholders

- Identify specific areas where applicants struggle, ensuring the right questions are asked to uncover these issues.
- Recognize regional differences in needs, such as contrasting requirements between Richmond Tri-cities and Southwest/Northern VA.
- Provide clear guidance on outreach and engagement expectations, leveraging the Diversity and Accessibility Committee, and tailor support to meet the varied needs of different applicants.

Focus for Professional Development

- Emphasize increasing opportunities for successful grant applications.
- Explore the role of AI in grantee operations and its implications for arts organizations.
- Consider topics like audience development post-pandemic, effective storytelling for organizations, and leveraging marketing and technology in the AI and post-COVID era.
- Reintroduce resources on becoming a 501(c)(3) organization.

Maximizing Limited Resources

- Continue virtual trainings to extend reach without overextending resources.
- Develop and maintain online workbooks and resources, similar to the Strategic Planning Workbook.
- Serve as a convenor and host for workshops, inviting outside experts rather than preparing and presenting internally, to minimize administrative effort.
- Produce personalized videos for grant-related speaking engagements, providing tailored information without the need for staff travel.
- Engage VCA Commissioners in various roles, including assisting with unfunded counties.
- Continue to partner with state and local arts agencies to extend reach and resources.