

# CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

## Cultural Arts Commission

### Minutes

February 9, 2022

Members Present:	Karen Askin, Francis Bevington, Therese Capal, Connor Lee, Patricia Dubroof, Melissa Law, Howie Jung, Brian Rogers, Rosemary Storey
Members Absent:	None
Councilmember:	Mark Pierzchala
Staff Present:	Laura Creech, Andy Lett, Betty Wisda,
Guests Present:	None

Karen Askin called the virtual online meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

#### **Re: Approval of the Minutes**

The Cultural Arts Commission unanimously approved the minutes as written for the February 9, 2022 meeting.

#### **Re: Councilmember Report**

- After last month's outstanding presentation, Mark made a personal donation to the Philadelphia Mural Project.
- Mayor and Council held their first budget hearing on March 7.
- Mark again encouraged board members to show up early and often to meetings and let Mayor and Council hear your requests. Personal presentations are an essential tool for advocating for the Arts.
- The City Manager included the new Arts Coordinator position in the FY2023 budget.
- The County has acknowledged its tax duplication obligations. The change impacts the amount of funding the City should receive. The City is exploring new ways to leverage the funds.

#### **Re: Chairperson's Report**

Karen spoke on behalf of the CAC at the March 7 budget hearing. She encouraged others to speak either as commission members or as a resident. She also recommended that everyone sign-up early

#### **Re: Staff Report**

- The FY2023 Budget proposal included a new Special Events position under Recreation Services, and the Arts Coordinator position under City Manager's office.
- Special Events staff are touching one event every three days, whether through permitting events, coordinating with FRIT and several significant special events, or needing additional staff.
- Outside Agency community grant program supports cultural arts by providing grant monies to RESCOs and VisArts.
- There are still two more budget hearing meetings on March 21 and April 7 to voice your support in person or by sending comments via email.
- Under the direction of Dr. Juan Gallastegui, the Rockville Concert Band presented a "sold out" *Swing! Swing! Swing!* concert with guest ensemble Rockville Swing Band at 3 p.m. on Sunday, February 13, at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre. Tickets were required for this free concert to ensure social distancing seating due to COVID-19.
- Betty Wisda, City's staff liaison, attended the virtual meeting of the Planning Committee of the F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Conference, Inc. on February 22.
- Under the direction of Linda Garrettson and accompanied by Sasha Beresovsky, the Rockville Chorus will record musical selections on Monday, March 7 at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre. The recorded music will be presented as a hybrid concert for Rockville Emergency Assistance Program (REAP) for Community Ministries.
- Under the direction of Dr. Juan Gallastegui, the Rockville Concert Band will present a "The Year 2020" concert featuring the world premiere of a commissioned music composition by Johan de Meij to honor lives lost to COVID-19 and hope for the future at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 13 at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre. The award-winning artwork from the "Lost, Found, and Looking Forward" exhibit will be displayed in the lobby that afternoon. Tickets are required to this free concert to ensure social distancing seating due to COVID-19.
- Members of the Rockville Art League submitted 114 artworks representing a COVID-19 theme on February 18 for consideration to be juried into the "Lost, Found, and Looking Forward" exhibit. Cultural Arts Commissioner Therese Capal selected first place, second place, third place, and honorable mentions from the submitted works. Pat Sieg, Rockville Art League President, Lisa Sieg, and Betty Wisda greatly appreciate her time and effort and her thoughtful comments regarding the selection of the award-winning artworks. Award winners will be displayed during the concert on March 13 and move the entire art show over to Glenview Mansion the next day.
- The "Meet the Artists" for the "Lost, Found and Looking Forward" exhibit will be held from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 20 at the Glenview Mansion Art Gallery. The exhibition will be displayed in the art gallery from March 20 through May 6.
- Under the direction of Eleanor Simpson and Erin Kwong, the Rockville Civic

Ballet will present "Cinderella" at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 26, and at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 27 at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre.

- Under the direction of Dr. Juan Gallastegui, the Rockville Concert Band will present the "Music for an Anniversary" concert at 3 p.m. on Sunday, April 10, at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre. Dr. Robert Tennyson, Vincent Patterson, and John Saint Amour, former Music Directors, will also conduct musical selections to celebrate the 65th Anniversary of the Rockville Concert Band.

### **Re: Arts in Public Places**

Matthew Geller, artist of the sculpture at Rockville Swim and Fitness Center, updated staff that the armatures and brackets are being fabricated. He is still waiting to hear about fiberglass. He has been testing the projectors and getting estimates for the blue film for the entrance windows.

Finalists for Skatepark Art Project will present their works virtually in mid-March. The top two priorities for the newly created sub-committees are identifying City-owned sites visible to pedestrians and traffic for significant works of art and working with REDI to identify sites in Rockville East for temporary murals.

Conor had two recommendations for the CAC:

- The City should incorporate participatory art projects during future public events such as Hometown Holidays 2022 with a sidewalk chalk project or something vertical to paste on a wall. As a result of staff shortages and many upcoming events, Andy stated that City staff could not take on this project for 2022. Participatory art projects are an excellent idea for the temporary art sub-committee to coordinate as a possible volunteer project organized by CAC. The sub-committee would need to plan together and map out the details and funding required.
- As part of the job requirements for the new Cultural Arts coordinator position, we recommend that candidates have experience in public and private partnerships.

### **Re: Cultural Arts Organizations and Creatives Summit Planning Task Force**

Francis went over the key findings and recommendations of the Cultural Arts Commission COVID-10 Listening Sessions Report that she created from all the notes and recordings from the listening sessions by local arts groups.

Key findings:

- Rockville's cultural and arts organizations contribute enormously to civic engagement and social cohesion for the city.
- Rockville has a wide variety of arts and cultural organizations that serve city residents, many of which went to extraordinary efforts to continue programming during COVID-19.

- Arts and cultural organizations pivoted to virtual programming with varying degrees of success.
- Organizations leaned heavily on government funding to survive the pandemic.
- Rent abatement was crucial to fiscal stability for organizations operating out of the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater and other city facilities.
- Organizations expressed a need for venues and spaces accessible by metro and public transportation for performing arts and events.

Recommendations:

- The City should update the code with CAC's requested changes to show the connection between wellness and cultural arts.
- The City should explore more opportunities for collective creative expression for members.
- The City should continue to provide financial support to arts and cultural organizations.
- The City should prioritize hiring the arts coordinator position.
- The City should consider identifying sites for more accessible venues and expand partnerships with WMATA.

Karen made the motion, and CAC passed it to submit the listening sessions report to Mayor and Council.

Karen asked Andy where we were on changing our mission. Karen sent an email in September and hasn't heard back. Andy will resend Karen's email to the City Clerks' office.

**Re: Human Rights Commission**

Brian reported that the HRC would be presenting results from the community survey at their next meeting. They were concentrating their efforts on planning the Pride Celebration on June 26.

**Re: Old Business**

- Conor is working on an application for the Student Ambassador Program for CAC and would like to link it to the CAC webpage. He is preparing a list of high school guidance counselors. He will send out the application and counselor listing to CAC.
- Francis is looking for interested people to join the Artis in Public Places Temporary Art subcommittee. Howie, Rosemary, and Conor were interested and have now joined the new subcommittee.
- Karen asked for updates on the WMATA bus shelter project, and Betty said that the City's legal department is reviewing their draft agreement to see if we can enter into this agreement.

**Re: New Business**

- Andy announced that the recordings of CAC meetings are posted on the City's website. To review, go to the agenda section of the CAC's webpage.
- Motion made to allow Frances and Karen to speak on behalf of the CAC to Mayor and Council at the next two budget hearing meetings. Francis will attend on March 21, and Karen will participate on April 4.

**Re: Announcements**

Mark attended the Victorian Lyric Opera Company's presentation of "Iolanthe" at FSFT and said it was super.

**Re: Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held virtually at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 13, 2022.

**Re: Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.