

 **City of Virginia Beach**
Cultural Affairs
Arts & Humanities Commission

Business Meeting Minutes

Thursday- December 1, 2022, 5:00 pm

Sandler Center for the Performing Arts/Classroom 1

Commissioners Present:

- Susan C. Grube, Chairman
- Brenda J. Roberts, Vice Chair
- Emma “Em” Davis, Secretary
- Hon. Winship C. Tower (Ret.), Treasurer
- Michael Cloud Butler
- C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.
- Raeesah Islam
- Cynthia Romero, MD
- Olga Torres-Baker

Cultural Affairs Department Staff Present:

- Emily S. Labows, Director
- Beth Hundley, Assistant Director

Absent:

- Hillary L. Plate, Cultural Programs & Grants Coordinator
- Mia Guile
- Alicia “Sunny” Phillips Peoples

I. Welcome

Chair Susan C. Grube called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.

II. Minutes from November Meeting

Motion I.

Ms. Olga Torres-Baker made a motion to approve the November Minutes. It was seconded by *Dr. Cynthia Romero*. There was no discussion. All those in favor said “Aye”. None opposed and the motion carried to approve the November Minutes.

III. Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Towers read figures from the report.

Motion II.

Mr. C. Cheyney Cole, Jr. made a motion to approve the November Treasurer’s Report. It was seconded by *Vice Chair Brenda Roberts*. There was no discussion. All those in favor said “Aye”. None opposed and the motion carried to approve the November Treasurer’s Report.

IV. Old Business

- a. Bylaw Review: *Chair Grube* shared that the major revisions pertain to changes in the Public Art Committee duties.

Motion III.

Treasurer Towers made a motion to approve the revised Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission Bylaws. It was seconded by *Mr. C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.* There was no discussion.

All those in favor said "Aye". None opposed and the motion carried to approve the revised Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission Bylaws.

- b. Holiday Social Reminder: The event will take place on Friday, December 9 at 6 pm. Food is to be provided by the host, *Secretary Em Davis*. Guests are to bring their own drinks. The Commission formally thanked *Secretary Davis* for hosting.
- c. Virginia Beach Human Rights Commission Award: The ceremony is to be held Thursday, December 8 at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. Staff, Chair Grube, Mr. Michael Cloud-Butler, who nominated the Cultural Affairs Department, will be attending. Two seats are available for any other Commissioner interested in attending.

V. Committee Reports

- a. Champion for the Arts Committee: The nomination form is to be reviewed prior to being released in February.
- b. Advertising & Marketing Committee: *Ms. Beth Hundley* shared that *Mr. Alex Dye* has put together a Marketing Report with attention to advertising in multicultural publications like Tidewater Hispanic.
- c. Advocacy Committee: No report.
- d. Public Art Committee: *Mr. C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.* shared that the Virginia Beach Sports Center is moving along and the 21st Street Surfboard Art Project has the review committee panel meeting to review and select the artwork submissions.
- e. Cultural Equity Committee: *Ms. Olga Torres-Baker* shared that the committee is working to coordinate a focus group in January.

VI. New business

- a. FY23 Community Cultural Arts Grant (CCAG) Presentation – Art of Living Foundation (AOLF)
Mr. Nitin Kakde played a video and shared the following information:
 - The Art of Living Foundation (AOLF) is a non-profit, educational and humanitarian organization founded in 1981 by the world-renowned humanitarian and spiritual leader, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.
 - Many of its programs are conducted through or in conjunction with partner organization, the International Association for Human Values (IAHV). While IAHV is focusing mostly on service projects, support to communities in need and conflict mediation, AOL is investing in Individual stress relief and self-empowerment, promoting an attitude of nonviolence and inner peace.
 - The Art of Living Foundation (AOLF) is dedicated to educate and strengthen an individual to create a stress free mind and a violence-free society by offering programs that eliminate stress, create a sense of belonging, restore human values, and encourage people from all backgrounds, religions, and cultural traditions to come together in celebration and service.
 - AOLF offers numerous highly effective educational and self-development programs and tools that facilitate the elimination of stress and foster deep and profound inner peace, happiness, and well-being for all individuals. Its stress-elimination and self-development programs are based on the breathing technique Sudarshan Kriya (or SKY), meditation, and yoga.
 - This \$5,000 grant request is focusing on the self-empowerment and self-healing introduction sessions which will be offered to attendees of World Culture Festival gala hosted on March 25, 2023 by AOL and IAHV, as well as many local partners.
 - The sessions planned during that day event are:

- 4 “art of living introduction to Breathing and Meditation sessions
- 2 Yoga sessions (local partners),
- 1 Healing thru art and culture session
- 1 introduction session to sound and vibration healing.
- The funds requested will allow AOLF to cover part of those session providers' costs (\$2400) and part of the rental and production / AV expenses for those sessions (\$2600). The overall production costs (including wellness sessions) for the entire event are estimated at about \$40,000. This grant will contribute to 12.5% of those overall production costs and 2.5% of the overall gala costs (\$200,000). Funds are being raised by the local Chapters of Art of Living Foundation, with support from IAHV, through local sponsors, grants, donations, and tickets sales.
- The goal is to promote peace and harmony through the wellness workshops.

Commissioner Q&A:

- *Chair Grube* confirmed if the project budget worksheet was prepared for the entirety of the World Cultural Festival Gala at the Convention Center. Mr. Nitin answered yes. If there is a prediction of a \$14,000 surplus – why is this grant request for \$5,000 needed? Mr. Nitin responded that they are dependent on funding coming in from sponsors and grants. The funding is to help put together tours, payment of presenters and to take care of the logistics.
- *Chair Grube* asked how people are expected for the March event? Mr. Nitin responded that 5,000 are expected to attend.
- Mr. Nitin added that AOFL is providing the wellness and lifestyle aspect; IAHV is providing the culture and human values aspect. They are not separate; they are being done in partnership. Tickets are going to be made as low as possible, around \$15-\$20.
- *Mr. C. Cheyney Cole* disclosed that he is an employee of S.L. Nusbaum Realty Company and has been to India several times. He wanted to vocalize his support of any group whose goal is to promote peace harmony and the calming of the mind.
- *Chair Grube* suggested viewing the second presentation before voting because of the festival partnership between AOFL and IAHV.

b. FY23 Community Cultural Arts Grant (CCAG) Presentation – International Association for Human Values

***NOTE: Technical issues experienced preventing presentation from being viewed.*

Speakers Ms. Chantel Dejou and Mr. Uday Khambhamettu were present to request funding of \$5,000 for the cultural performance portion, bringing in diverse local artists to create innovative partnerships and provide a platform to showcase their cultures with the focus on cultural gatherings and connecting people.

- The International Association for Human Values (IAHV) was created in Geneva in 1997 by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar as a global platform for humanitarian initiatives that solve problems by uplifting human values.
- The IAHV, in partnership with the Art of Living Foundation (AOL) fosters the daily practice of human values –a sense of connectedness and respect for all people and the natural environment, an attitude of non-violence, and an ethic of social service. Through its country organizations and partners, IAHV conducts service projects and raises funds for humanitarian and disaster relief initiatives throughout the world. The

IAHV offers researched and evidence-based programs to solve root causes of society's most serious problems – allowing Human Values to flourish again worldwide. Activities administered or funded by IAHV include prisoner rehabilitation, trauma relief for veterans, youth and community development, disaster and trauma relief, and organizational excellence programs. The programs enhance clarity of mind, shift attitudes and behaviors, and develop leaders and communities that are resilient, responsible, and inspired.

- Many of the IAHV programs are conducted through or in conjunction with its partner organization, the Art of Living Foundation. While AOLF is investing in Individual stress relief, promoting an attitude of non-violence and inner peace, IAHV is focusing mostly on service projects, support to communities in need, conflict mediation, and promoting peace and harmony including through arts and culture
- This grant request is to support the cultural and artistic performances during the World Culture Festival gala hosted on March 25, 2023 hosted by IAHV and AOLF, as well as many local partners.
- The grant of \$5,000 would fund the feature performance from Symphonicity with the “Voices of Fire” choir and several other artists. This unique cooperation of different artists will premier during the WCF and promote creativity and connections in the art community and with the Hampton Roads diverse communities. Honoraria for all cultural performers, at \$50,000, are expected to be a significant portion of the overall costs of this project. This grant will contribute to 10% of the overall costs of performers and 2.5% of the overall gala costs (\$200,000). Funds are being raised by the local Chapters of IAHV and of AOLF, through local sponsors, grants, donations, and tickets sales.
- Ticket prices would be conservative and be made available for free for certain organizations like the schools/universities, students and certain community groups.
- Support of this grant would let the world audience know that the City of Virginia Beach wants to be included in the World Culture Festival and supports this event.
- Mr. Khambhamettu closed the presentation by adding that culture embeds beliefs and processes. The WCF would provide a platform for all groups to showcase their culture in forms of dance, music and food.
- Ticketing is being used to target a larger audience and ensuring attendance. It is still in discussion to incorporate food coupons with the ticket system and the budget. This is an explanation behind the ticket revenue costs.
- There was also a wish for setting up seed money for future events.

Q&A from Commissioners:

- In order to confirm the connection between the two groups, *Chair Grube* reaffirmed that the overarching event, the World Culture Festival is taking place in Washington, DC next year, and these two groups (AOLF and IAHV) are working in partnership on the smaller event, the World Culture Festival Gala on March 25, 2023 at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. IAHV is handling the cultural component through entertainment and AOLF is organizing the wellness sessions through yoga and meditation. Food would be available for purchase from the various cultures. It is an all day festival.
- It was explained that AOLF, who is handling all the organizing components resulting in the bigger budget, is using the ticket prices to pay for the venue.

Motion IV.

Mr. C. Cheyney Cole, Jr. made a motion to approve the Community Cultural Arts Grant funding of \$5,000 to The International Association for Human Values (IAHV). It was seconded by *Ms. Olga Torres-Baker*. There was no discussion. All those in favor said "Aye". None opposed and the motion carried to motion to approve the Community Cultural Arts Grant funding of \$5,000 to The International Association for Human Values (IAHV).

Motion IV.

Secretary Em Davis made a motion to approve the Community Cultural Arts Grant funding of \$5,000 to The Art of Living Foundation (AOLF). It was seconded by *Mr. C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.* *Chair Grube* opened discussion and because city funds are being used, there are some number discrepancies in the budget and the balance sheet that need to be corrected. The funds would be fully funded subject to receiving the corrected completed documentation.

Motion V.

Secretary Em Davis amended the motion to approve the Community Cultural Arts Grant funding of \$5,000 to The Art of Living Foundation (AOLF) subject to receiving the completed documentation on the budget sheet. It was seconded by *Mr. C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.* All those in favor said "Aye". None opposed and the motion carried to motion to approve the Community Cultural Arts Grant funding of \$5,000 to The Art of Living Foundation (AOLF).

- c. FY24 Project Grant applications – *Ms. Beth Hundley* shared that the Project Grant applications will be available online starting the week of December 5, 2022. Multiple virtual workshops will be offered in the month of January 2023 and one in-person workshop at the end of the month. Deadline for applications is the first week of February. Project Grant Deliberations are scheduled for the end of March.

VII. Commissioner Comments

- *Vice Chair Roberts*: Tomorrow, December 2nd is the Virginia Beach Arts Center's Annual Holiday Exhibit Banquet and reception.
- *Treasurer Tower*: Ballet Virginia's Nutcracker will be December 16-17. Tickets are currently on sale. *Chair Grube* will be playing the flute in the pit.
- *Mr. C. Cheyney Cole, Jr.*: Over the Thanksgiving break, he saw incredible outdoor displays in Aspen which triggered his excitement for upcoming projects that the Public Art Committee and Cultural Affairs has in line for the coming new year.

VIII. Public Comments

- a. *Ms. Kate Pittman/ ViBe Creative District* shared the following news:
- The City of Virginia Beach and the ViBe District was mentioned in an inspiration article titled: "*The 23 Best Places To Go in the USA in 2023*" through a luxury travel magazine called Conde' Nast Traveller .
 - She toured Virginia Living Magazine through the ViBe District which is to be featured in the January/February edition about traveling to Virginia Beach in the winter.
 - *Ms. Pittman* announced that ViBe has a new intern onboard, Elizabeth Denton from Cape Henry Collegiate School pursuing an Arts Management degree.

- There are no new updates regarding Pharrell Williams' Virginia Beach Dome project other than a notice for the 19th Street road closing.

IX. Next Meeting

- a. Feb 2, 2023: 4 pm- Executive Committee Meeting
Location: Sandler Center / 2nd Floor / Conference Room
- b. Feb 2, 2023: 5 pm - Business Meeting
Location: Sandler Center / 2nd Floor / Classroom 1

X. Adjournment

The meeting ended at 6:10 pm.

Submitted by Arts and Humanities Commission Recorder: Mari R. Coronado, Executive Assistant II