

**MINUTES OF THE  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL  
August 19, 2020**

A meeting of the Miami-Dade County Cultural Affairs Council was held online via Zoom.

<p><b><u>Members Present</u></b>  Xavier Cortada, Chair  Mireille Chancy-Gonzalez, Second Vice Chair  Sandra Curbelo  Denise Gerson  Cheryl Rees  Janá Sigars-Malina, First Vice Chair  Rosa Sugrañes  Monty Trainer  Justin Trieger</p>	<p><b><u>Members Not Present</u></b>  Alejandro Aguirre  Mitchell Bierman  Adolfo Henriques  Brian May</p> <p><b><u>Others Present</u></b>  John Copeland</p>
<p><b><u>Staff</u></b>  Michael Spring, Director  Marialaura Leslie, Deputy Director  Carolina Alfonso  Kelly Allocco  Francine Andersen  Roxana Barba  Stefania Barigelli  Nikenna Benjamin  Sue Camp  Tania Centeno  Kimberly Chuck  Lisa D'Andrea Thompson  Marshall Davis  Marie Denis  Ivette Dominguez  Eric Fliss  Olga Gonzalez  Teddy Harrell</p>	<p><b><u>Staff (continued)</u></b>  Liliana Hernandez-Constenla  Regla Lee  Amanda Sanfilippo Long  Gilda Mooney  Steven Padilla  Alex Peraza  Adriana Perez  Dana Pezoldt  Katherine Revell  Liz Shannon  Javier Siut  Christina Tassy-Beauvoir  Pamela Valles  Graham Winick</p>

Chairman Xavier Cortada called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. He thanked the Councilors for coming together for the Cultural Affairs Council virtual meeting. He recapped the results of the primary election and discussed the impact on the Miami-Dade County Commission and Cultural Affairs Council.

**ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

**Requests for Excused Absences for August 19, 2020**

Requests for an excused absence were submitted by Alejandro Aguirre, Mitchell Bierman, Adolfo Henriques and Brian May. (Motion by Ms. Sigars-Malina; seconded Ms. Gerson)

### **Approval of July 15, 2020 Minutes**

The minutes of the July 15, 2020 Council meeting were approved unanimously. (Motion by Ms. Sigars-Malina; seconded by Mr. Trainer)

### **FY 2020-2021 Artist Access (ART) Grants Program Guidelines**

Mr. Spring reported Artist Access (ART) Grants Program provides mini grants to artists. He summarized that some changes were made to the guidelines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines were approved unanimously. (Motion by Ms. Sigars-Malina; seconded by Ms. Sugrañes)

### **FY 2020-2021 Major Cultural Institutions (MCI) Grants Program Panel Recommendations – Interim Cycle**

Ms. Kelly Allocco reported that the FY 2020-2021 the Major Cultural Institutions (MCI) Grants Program Panel, chaired by Council Chairman Xavier Cortada, convened on Friday, August 14, 2020 to review fourteen applications for the Interim Cycle year. The Panel recommended funding all fourteen applications. The panel also recommended that the Council appropriate funding from the FY 2020-2021 Major Cultural Institutions program allocation to facilitate the transition of GableStage, Inc., into the Coconut Grove Playhouse as its theater presenter and operator and for programming support.

The following Council members declared conflicts of interest and abstained from voting on the following:

Xavier Cortada – Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of Jewish Museum of Florida; Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum; Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of The Wolfsonian; University of Miami, Lowe Art Museum

Denise Gerson - University of Miami, Lowe Art Museum

Cheryl Rees - Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of Jewish Museum of Florida; Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum; Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of The Wolfsonian

Justin Trieger - New World Symphony, Inc.

Monty Trainer - Museum of Contemporary Art, Inc.; University of Miami, Lowe Art Museum

A motion was made to fund all the of the panel's recommendations subject to Councilors with conflicts abstaining from voting on the applications affected. They were approved unanimously. (Motion by Ms. Sugrañes; seconded by Ms. Sigars-Malina)

Actors' Playhouse Productions, Inc.

Adrienne Arsht Center Trust, Inc. d/b/a Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts

Florida Grand Opera, Inc.

Friends of the Bass Museum, Inc., for the Bass Museum of Art

Miami City Ballet, Inc.  
South Florida Arts Center, Inc. d/b/a Oolite Arts  
The M Ensemble Company, Inc.  
The Miami Symphony Orchestra / Orquesta Sinfonica de Miami, Inc.  
GableStage, Inc. / Coconut Grove Playhouse

The Panel's recommendation to fund the following organizations, for which there are the above-mentioned conflicts of interest and abstentions from voting, was voted on and passed unanimously as follows:

Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of Jewish Museum of Florida  
Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum  
Florida International University Board of Trustees, for the benefit of The Wolfsonian

(Motion by Ms. Sigars-Malina; seconded by Ms. Sugrañes)

Museum of Contemporary Art, Inc.  
(Motion by Ms. Sigars-Malina; seconded by Ms. Gerson)

New World Symphony, Inc.  
(Motion by Ms. Chancy-Gonzalez; seconded by Ms. Gerson)

University of Miami, Lowe Art Museum  
(Motion by Ms. Sugrañes; seconded by Mr. Trieger)

## **REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update**

Mr. Spring reported that at the moment, the cultural community remains closed with few exceptions including Fairchild Tropical Botanic Gardens, Frost Museum of Science, Vizcaya and Deering Estate natural areas and gardens which are open with restrictions. The Department continues to gather important financial data monthly with the COVID-19 Survey of the Impact on Miami-Dade County's Cultural Community. The Department has documented a financial impact of almost \$70 million with over 12,500 jobs affected through the month of June and will release survey data for the month of July in the coming weeks. On July 27, 2020, the Miami-Dade County Commission allocated \$10 million in CARES Act funds for the arts. The COVID-19 relief program legislation was written by Miami-Dade County Commissioner Eileen Higgins, District 5, and was championed by Miami-Dade County Commissioner Dennis Moss, District 9. The item had nine co-sponsors and was approved unanimously by the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners. The new Miami-Dade Arts Support program provides COVID-19 relief grant funds to cultural organizations that currently receive annual operating support and organizations that do not receive general operating support can apply to a special pool of funds as a category B applicant. Through the program the Department has also activated a second round of grant support for individual artists. The first round of the Miami-Dade Artist Support Program helped 540 artists. A virtual workshop series was established to help organizations understand the application process. The deadline for cultural organizations to apply is August 31, 2020, and the deadline for artists is August 26, 2020. The Department of Cultural Affairs worked closely with the County Attorney's Office as well as a consultant that is an expert on the use of federal funds to develop the program guidelines. The new program is the only one of its kind in the nation.

## **County Arts Budget Update**

Mr. Spring reported Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez has recommended the renewal of full funding of the Department's grants budget for FY 2020-2021. Consequently, the Department will be able to maintain the same level of grant funding to cultural organizations. The Mayor has also recommended to renew the Department's operational funding and has issued a hiring freeze across the board. The Miami-Dade County Commission met on July 16, 2020 and voted to set the upper limit for the millage. Department staff have participated in virtual budget town hall meetings to address any issues regarding the arts. The County Commission will hold two budget hearings scheduled for September 3 and September 17 to approve the budget.

## **State Arts Budget Update**

Mr. Spring reported the State of Florida Governor vetoed over a billion dollars in funds from the state budget due to the downturn in revenues and increases in expenditures resulting from COVID-19. The Culture and Museums Grant program was approved at \$13.6 million which is a higher dollar value than last year, but the Cultural Facilities Grant and Culture Builds Florida Grant programs were both vetoed. The State of Florida grants review process is underway for fiscal year 2021-2022 and staff members Amanda Sanfilippo Long and Graham Winick are serving as grant panelists. Mr. Spring reported he has been asked by the State of Florida to serve as Co-Chair of its Grants Task Force to study and recommend ways to improve their grantmaking process and expect to release recommendations in October. Next year's legislative session will begin in March 2021.

## **Federal Arts Budget Update**

Mr. Spring reported that the House Appropriations Committee has recommended \$170 million in funding which is an \$8 million dollar increase for the National Endowment of the Arts. The Senate did not vote for an increase. The Americans for the Arts Action Fund has just released a poster by artist Shepard Fairey to encourage people to vote and to support arts candidates. Americans for the Arts is also monitoring a second CARES Act bill which could have additional funds in support of the arts.

## **Department Facilities Updates**

### **Status Report**

Mr. Spring reported that the Department's capital projects team is very busy as construction activity at the facilities continues at a brisk pace now that they are closed to the public. The African Heritage Cultural Arts Center construction and renovation could be completed by the end of the calendar year. The Center held a successful virtual summer camp that was free to the public and is currently hosting virtual hip-hop classes. The Miami-Dade County Auditorium was activated as a temporary COVID-19 testing site for three weeks. The State of Florida sent a letter recognizing the staff for their professionalism. The Auditorium is sharing their first Drive-Through Theater online featuring Jose Negroni on its Facebook page and YouTube. The South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center continues to develop plans for its future café. The virtual program, SMDCAC Sessions, continues to feature a variety of artist performances on Thursday evenings via Facebook Live. The next session features Ranky Tanky.

### **Westchester Cultural Arts Center**

Mr. Spring reported that the construction sign identifying and recognizing the project as a future Miami-Dade County cultural facility will be posted in the coming weeks. Designed by Zyscovich, the Center will be located at the Bird Road entrance to Tropical Park and will feature a black box theatre with 125-150 seats, including a significant lobby that will function as an art gallery and potential meeting space.

## Coconut Grove Playhouse

Mr. Spring reported that Miami-Dade County will file an appeal to the Third District Court of Appeal. The appeal refutes the opinion issued by the lower court which ruled it did not have jurisdiction over the City of Miami Mayor's veto of the County's application for a final Certificate of Appropriateness for the Coconut Grove Playhouse. The latest appeal, if successful, will mean that the lower court will be instructed to review the County's case on its merits.

## Art in Public Places Update

Ms. Amanda Sanfilippo Long provided two updates on Art in Public Places (APP) projects. A professional advisory committee was held to view artist submissions for the Department of Public Housing and Community Development's River Parc Masterplan project. The recommended Miami-Dade artists for the Gallery at River Park and Brisas del Rio are: Mark Handforth, A.S.T., Sri Prabha, Pepe Mar, Nicolas Lobo, Magnus Sodamin, Emmett Moore and Augustina Woodgate. Smathers Plaza is a different project and new housing facility for the elderly. The recommended artists for that project are: Geovanna Gonzalez and Adler Guerrier. The projects are being developed in partnership with Related. The public artwork "Leaning Arches" by Athena Tacha has been relocated and restored.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

- Mr. Spring announced that Cultural Affairs Council members are required to complete Source of Income Statement forms and as necessary, Gift Disclosure forms. Forms were due July 1 and are to be submitted to the Miami-Dade Elections Department.
- Deputy Director Marialaura Leslie was honored by the South Florida Theater League with the 2020 Civic Arts Award.
- Arts education team wrapped up session two of the Youth Arts in the Park in virtual format.
- Department of Cultural Affairs staff represented the Department and worked the election: Alex Peraza, Steven Padilla and Graham Winick, along with new recruits Patricia Romeo, Eric Fliss and Tania Centeno. Staff members Marie Denis and Marialaura Leslie have been trained and are on stand-by if they are needed in the coming election. Miami-Dade County Auditorium is a polling place and is activated for elections.

## COUNCILOR REPORTS

- Ms. Sigars-Malina reported Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden is open from 10 am to 4 pm. The garden has "dog-friendly" dates.
- Mr. Monty Trainer reported there is a lot of construction in Coconut Grove. He thanked Adriana Perez for preparing him so well for the panel meeting.

Deputy Director Marialaura Leslie reported that she accepted the South Florida Theater League award on behalf of the staff at the Department's cultural facilities and Adriana Perez who is the staff liaison for the organization.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Liliana Hernandez-Constenla