

**Alexandria Commission for the Arts - Regular
Meeting**

Tuesday, June 21, 2022

7:00 – 9:30 p.m.

Lee Center Conference Room #4
1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria, VA 22314

MEETING NOTES

- I. Call to Order. With a quorum present, Chair Brian Kelley called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. For the meeting agenda, see [Attachment 1](#).
- II. Roll Call. See [Attachment 2](#) for the Attendance Sign-In Sheet.
- III. Public Comment. No public comment.
- IV. Approval of Minutes/Record
 - a. May 17, 2022, Regular Meeting. The minutes were approved without edits.
- V. Chair Report. Brian Kelley gave the Chair Report. See [Attachment 3](#).
- VI. Guest Speaker Meagan Carrick, Fine Arts Instructional Specialist, Office of Curriculum and Instruction, explained her administrative role within the Alexandria City Public Schools.
- VII. Committee, Liaison, and Task Force Updates
 - a. Grants
 - i. Committee. No action was taken.
 - ii. Task Force. No action was taken
 - b. ARTReach Committee – update on Arts Directory. For the report by Sheryl Sims, see [Attachment 4](#). Brian Kelley offered guidelines to writing letters to City Council. See [Attachment 5](#) for his Notes on Letters to City Council.
 - c. Waterfront Commission Liaison. No action was taken
 - d. Alexandria Arts Alliance Liaison. No action was taken
- VIII. Election of Executive Committee Officers. See [Attachment 6](#). A motion was made by Dawn Rogala and seconded by Paul Painter to elect the following slate of Executive Committee members as put forward by the Nominating Committee:
 - Brian Kelley, Chair
 - Allison Heck, 1st Vice-Chair
 - Ryan Belmore, 2nd Vice-Chair
 - Gayle Converse, SecretaryThe motion passed 12-0-0.

- IX. Commission Retreat Follow Up Discussions.
 - a. Discussion on Breaking Up ARTReach Into Advocacy and Outreach Committee and Social Media Committee. No action was taken.
 - b. Discussion on Creating a Council Committee. No action was taken.
- X. Discussion of Whether to Not Hold July Meeting as Currently Planned. A motion was made by Ryan Belmore and seconded by Dawn Rogala to cancel the July meeting. See Attachment 7. The motion passed 13-0-0.
- XI. Old Town North Task Force
 - a. Appoint a commissioner. No action was taken.
- XII. New Business.
- XIII. Good of the Order and Announcements.
- XIV. Adjournment. Brian Kelley adjourned the meeting at 9:19 pm.

Alexandria Commission for the Arts - Regular Meeting

Tuesday, June 21, 2022

7:00 – 9:30 pm

Lee Center

Activity Room, 1st Floor

1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria, VA 22314

- I. Call to Order (7:00 pm)
- II. Roll Call (5', 7:00 – 7:05 pm)
- III. Public Comment (5', 7:05 – 7:10 pm)
- IV. Approval of Minutes/Record (5', 7:10 – 7:15 pm)
 - a. May 17, 2022 Regular Meeting
- V. Chair Report (5', 7:15 – 7:20 pm)
- VI. Guest Speaker Meagan Carrick, Fine Arts Instructional Specialist, Office of Curriculum and Instruction, ACPS (30', 7:20 – 7:50 pm)
- VII. Committee, Liaison, and Task Force Updates (40', 7:50 – 8:30 pm)
 - a. Grants Committee (5', 7:50 – 7:55 pm)
 - b. ARTReach Committee – update on Arts Directory (see Sheryl Sims report) (15', 7:55 – 8:10 pm)
 - c. Waterfront Commission Liaison (10', 8:10 – 8:20 pm)
 - d. Alexandria Arts Alliance Liaison (10', 8:20 – 8:30 pm)
- VIII. Election of Executive Committee Officers (20', 8:30 – 8:50 pm)
- IX. Commission Retreat Follow Up Discussions (20', 8:50 – 9:10 pm)
 - a. Discussion on Breaking Up ARTReach Into Advocacy and Outreach Committee and Social Media Committee (10', 8:50 – 9:00 pm)
 - b. Discussion on Creating a Council Committee (10', 9:00 – 9:10 pm)
- X. Discussion of Whether to Not Hold July Meeting as Currently Planned (5', 9:10 – 9:15 pm)
- XI. Old Town North Task Force (5', 9:15 – 9:20 pm)
 - a. Appoint a Commissioner
- XII. New Business (5', 9:20 – 9:25 pm)

Alexandria Commission for the Arts – Meeting Agenda

XIII. Good of the Order and Announcements (5', 9:25 – 9:30 pm)

XIV. Adjournment (9:30 p.m.)

**Times are approximate. Please allow for the possibility that some items or the meeting in general may run longer than announced. I have added estimated times for each item (e.g. 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 30 minutes, etc.) to give us a general idea of how long each item may take. If this additional element to the agenda is agreeable and productive in the judgement of the Commission, I can make it a regular component of the agenda. –*
Brian Kelley

ATTENDANCE SIGN-IN SHEET
ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

Meeting: Regular

Date: Tuesday, June 21, 2022

Meeting Place: Lee Center

COMMISSION MEMBERS:	(Please Sign Name)
Brian Kelley, Chair	<i>Brian Kelley</i>
Allison Heck, 1 st Vice Chair	
Christina Calloway, 2 nd Vice Chair	
Gayle Converse, Secretary	
Sumrien Ali	<i>Sumrien Ali</i>
Betty Amron	<i>Betty Amron</i>
Ryan Belmore	<i>Ryan Belmore</i>
Marcee Craighill	PHONED IN
Judy Heiser	<i>Judy Heiser</i>
Chris Kurowski	
Paul Painter	<i>Paul Painter</i>
David Pritzker	<i>David Pritzker</i>
Dawn Rogala	<i>Dawn Rogala</i>
Sheryl Sims	PHONED IN
Tiffany Williams	<i>Tiffany Williams</i>
Roger Yoerges	<i>Roger Yoerges</i>
CITY STAFF	
James Spengler, Director, RP&CA	
Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, Cultural Arts	
Cheryl Anne Colton, Program Director	
Brett Johnson, TFAC Director	
Matthew Harwood, Public Art Manager	<i>Matthew Harwood</i>

Chair Report

June 2022

Introduction

Summer tends to be a calmer season for the arts, and that is true for us in this June meeting. Our main item of business is the election of Executive Committee Officers. You will recall that last month the Nomination Committee presented a slate of officers. This month also has particular focus on education. Meagan Carrick, the Fine Arts Instructional Specialist at ACPS will be our guest speaker. There has also been progress on the Arts Directory project in the ARTReach Committee.

Officer Election

The Executive Committee holds elections every June for the positions of Chair, First Vice Chair, Second Vice Chair, and Secretary. Our current slate from the Nominating Committee is Brian Kelley for Chair, Allison Heck for First Vice Chair, Ryan Belmore for Second Vice Chair, and Gayle Converse for Secretary. This slate does not prevent any other nominations being made from the floor. The new term becomes effective at the end of the June meeting.

Guest Speaker Meagan Carrick (ACPS) and the Arts Directory

Meagan Carrick oversees art throughout Alexandria City Public Schools. This can include, but is surely not limited to everything from making sure pianos in music classrooms are in tune to working with every arts teacher. She will be with us at roughly the same time that the Arts Directory application is expected to be going online, so that its first iteration will be ready for the upcoming school year. Meagan Carrick has already been in touch with the Commission in how to make sure this project will be most useful for ACPS. Expect to hear more about the state of the arts in ACPS along with a lively discussion of other ways that the Commission can help foster the arts in our schools.

Preparing the Annual Report

On a side note, our Annual Report to City Council is coming up soon. Chairs or heads of Committees should please prepare a brief summary of activity and accomplishments over the last year (such as in the form of a paragraph or two) and forward it to the First Vice Chair. If you have any photographs, publicity images, etc. such as images of Commissioners appearing at art receptions and performances, these are great additions to the Annual Report. Please send them to the First Vice Chair.

Spring Retreat Follow-up and Committee Reorganization

Also, as a follow up to some of our discussions from the Spring Retreat, I would like to us to consider the idea of breaking up the ARTReach Committee into an Advocacy and Outreach Committee and Social Media Committee, and creating a Council Committee. Advocacy and Outreach could have the same basic mission of ARTReach, but it would no longer be responsible for running our social media accounts. It would still be responsible for projects such as the Arts Directory. The Social Media Committee could very well stay as a two-person outfit, as it is currently, though I would suggest we consider making those co-chair positions. The Council Committee idea came out of the idea of having a more dedicated focus on writing letters to Council, arranging for Council Coffee meetings, keeping track of developments in

Alexandria Commission for the Arts – Chair Report

Council, attending their meetings in-person, etc. Much of this general role is currently done by the Executive Committee, particularly the chair.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Brian Kelley

Chair, Alexandria Commission for the Arts

The ArtReach Committee of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts Report

The ArtReach Committee met on Wednesday, May 18th, at the Durant Center.

In attendance were: Brian Kelly, Gayle Converse, Sheryl Sims and Ryan Belmore (by phone).

- Committee Chair, Gayle Converse, gave a brief history of the ArtReach Committee and the goals of the committee. She stated that the ArtReach Committee was formed to handle matters of social media, education regarding the arts, advocacy and outreach, grants and council committee matters. She stated that anyone may attend City Council committee meetings each month and give a report to the ArtReach Committee. The ArtReach Committee is working with the Art Alliance to create a directory for Alexandria teachers and students that will consist of a list of workshops, performances, field trips, etc. for Alexandria schools
- The goal is to have the Directory completed and published online by Fall 2022. Once published, a link will be available to ACPS teachers and Alexandria residents via social media/e-mail distribution.
- It was discussed as to whether the ArtReach Committee should handle writing letters to the City Council and it was thought that it made sense to let the Executive Committee handle letter writing since they will be doing so for ACA; and will be aware of what it being said/sent to the City Council.
- The draft Arts Directory that Sheryl submitted to Gayle and Brian was distributed for review/discussion.
- We discussed who would maintain/host the directory and it was suggested that the Art Alliance will do so. Gayle and Brian proposed reviewing previously received questions from the ACPS and incorporating them into the current questionnaire. Ryan offered lots of good technical/graphic advice. He offered ideas regarding how the directory can be edited and posted so that ACPS can access it and how the directory can be updated easily and efficiently.
- It was discussed that the committee is looking for new members and leadership should others wish to join.
- Regarding Council Coffees, Gayle and Brian are open to attending future Council Coffees with others, especially new commissioners—just reach out to them.

Notes on Letters to City Council

Brian Kelley

Introduction

The Commission for the Arts has the role of advising City Council on any and all matters regarding arts and culture. This is arguably our most foundational role as a citizen commission. Recall that it is City Council itself that appoints us. While we do, of course, regularly review and approve public art projects, program grants, elect officers, submit annual reports, etc., our communications with Council are also of great importance. There are many ways to communicate with Council. We can discuss with Councilmembers in-person at public events or meetings in City Hall, for example. Letters to City Council, in the grand scheme of things, are more formal and better for documentation. They also allow the Commission the option of speak as one unified body, rather than as individuals.

Drafting a Letter

A letter will likely be about pending business before Council, such as budgets, small area plans, the Torpedo Factory Arts Center, etc. Business like budgets follows a predictable calendar cycle, so there are certain portions of the year in which a letter will or will not have much of an impact. Business items will be listed in upcoming City Council docket agendas (Note: you can sign up for email updates at Alexandria eNews here: <https://member.everbridge.net/1332612387832027/new>). The local press such as the Alexandria Times, Alexandria Gazette Packet, ALXNow, and social media accounts of Councilmembers are also important sources of information. Good communication with city staff, particularly the Office of the Arts, and members of Council is also instrumental in knowing about relevant pending business. The most impactful letters will be timely and in advance of Council deciding on an issue, though there is still utility in sending letters after the fact with feedback, if only to remind Council that we are attentive to its work.

Make sure that your topic and “ask” are clear and direct. The letter need not be much longer than a page in most circumstances.

On the following page is a general template for writing a letter to Council, with specifics for the time of writing in 2022.



*The Honorable Mayor Justin Wilson and Members of the Council
City of Alexandria, Virginia*

RE: [Topic]
[Month X, 2022]

Dear Mayor Wilson and Members of City Council:

[Body Text]

Most Cordially

[Insert Signature Here – optional]

[Full Name, Commission Title (ex: Chair, First Vice Chair, Commissioner, etc.)]
Alexandria Commission for the Arts [*Note: Use ACA seal at top of letter and “Alexandria Commission for the Arts” only when the ACA has formally moved to write a letter. If you are writing to City Council without a formal motion, such as when writing as a private citizen, omit these elements]

Cc: Members, Alexandria Commission for the Arts
Mark Jinks, City Manager
Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager
Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager
James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, Office of the Arts (RPCA)
Matthew Harwood, Staff Liaison, Alexandria Commission for the Arts

Commission Versus Private Letters

Letters can either come from the Commission as a whole or from individuals. Only use the Commission seal and titles when there has been a successful motion for a letter. If you want to write as an individual, omit these elements. Letters from the Commission do not need to be written by the entire Commission during a general meeting, however. We can make motions to delegate individual Commissioners or a Committee (such as the Executive Committee) to write a letter, with the option of making the letter as a draft to later be formally approved by the Commission in the next general meeting or simply empowering the delegate to write the letter without review. For subjects in which there is little perceived controversy and a need for a quick response, this delegation can be a good choice. For subjects in which the Commission may be divided and the business before Council is not imminent, it may be better to review the draft.

How to Send to City Council

Alexandria has an online system called Alex 311, or Call Click Connect. The easiest way to use the system is to first save the letter as a digital file, such as a PDF, and then send it through the city website.

Use the following link:

<https://alex311.alexandriava.gov/customer/request/CTYCNCL/details>

Under “Which Council Member would you like to contact?” – select All Members

Under “What is the nature of your request?” – choose the most relevant field

Under “Is your request related to the upcoming public hearing or Council meeting?” – you will likely but not necessarily select yes (example: if you are writing to invite Council to an upcoming arts event, you will likely select no)

Under “Upload a file” – attach the digital file of the letter

Click on the Next button

Under “How can we reach you with updates on this service request?” – Write your First Name, Last Name, Email Address, and Phone Number. Expect some Councilmembers to contact you (usually by email) often within one or two business days of sending the letter. This can be another opportunity for contact with Council.

Click on the Next button and send.

The overall process, while somewhat daunting for when it is your first letter, is straightforward, taking only a few minutes once the letter itself is finalized.

MOTION MADE BY:	MOTION SECONDED BY:	VOTE COUNT:
Dawn Rogala	Paul Pintor	YES - 12 NO - 0 ABSTAINED - 0

ACA MOTION

AGENDA ITEM #:

MOTION: to elect the slate of executive committee members as put forward by the nominating committee:

Brian Kelley for Chair
 Allisa Heck for First^{Vice} Chair
 Ryan Belmore for Second^{Vice} Chair
 Gayle Converse for Secretary

MOTION MADE BY:

MOTION SECONDED BY:

VOTE COUNT

Ryan
Belmore

Dawn Rogala

13-0

ACA MOTION

AGENDA ITEM #:

MOTION: For 50 July meetings as currently Planned