



**MEETING OF THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION**  
**March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**6:00pm**  
**Savannah Cultural Arts Center**  
**201 Montgomery Street**

**Present:** *Commissioners:*

- Patrick Kelsey, Chair
- Eddie Edenfield, Vice-Chair
- Curt Bryant
- Lu Fang
- Tana Fileccia-Flagg
- Andrea Hall-Houston
- Doris Liggins
- Kareem McMichael
- Kristopher Monroe

*Virtual:*

- Sharon Wanda Aikens
- Michael Chaney
- Raymond Gaddy
- Antonio Hunter
- Robin Sherman
- Anne Allen Westbrook

*Absent*

- Taqwaa Saleem

*Guest Speakers:*

- Erika Dongre, Savannah Book Festival
- Paula Fogarty, Savannah Jazz Association
- Dr. Amy Williams, Savannah Philharmonic Orchestra

*City Staff:*

- Stuart Miller, Director, Cultural Resources
- CJ Bogle, Contract Coordinator, Cultural Resources
- Rachel Weymouth, Marketing Coordinator, Cultural Resources
- Jacqué Fountain, Senior Administrative Assistant

**Public Attending:** None

**I. Call to Order/Determination of Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM by Commission Chair Patrick Kelsey and a quorum was determined.

**II. Review and Approval of March Minutes**

Commissioner Kelsey called for a vote to approve the January Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC) minutes. Minutes were approved with no objections.

**III. Announcements**

None.

**IV. ACE Investment Recipient Presentations**

Dr. Amy Williams of the Savannah Philharmonic thanked the Commission for the invitation to speak and for the continued support this year. This month the organization will launch its education initiative via a digital platform to reach out to bring the Savannah Philharmonic to local schools. Preparations are being made for next season's Picnic in the Park and investments are being made to ensure musical education access to all students within the public education system. The District Band Program is moving forward virtually. Once the program is complete it will undergo a thorough evaluation to determine its success. The organization is working to integrate the chorus with the orchestra in collaborative events. Due to Covid-19 singing events are challenging with masks, but (as vaccinations are occurring) the organization is planning to begin with small octets that will perform outdoors. The Savannah Philharmonic will continue outreach through "Fill the Squares" and the "Soundtrack of Savannah" series.

Erika Dongre of the Savannah Book Festival thanked the Commission for the invitation to speak and for last year's support in helping to grow the "SBF at Schools" program. The goal of the organization is to bring nationally and regionally recognized authors to the Savannah area to encourage civil conversation about the written word. This year's featured author is Edgar Award winner James Ponti. Mr. Ponti is the author of the *City Spies* series which are mystery books geared towards middle school-aged children. The Savannah Book Festival is continuing its programs virtually but is looking forward to resuming in-person presentations in the future.

Paula Fogarty of the Savannah Jazz Association thanked the Commission for the invitation to speak and for supporting the virtual Savannah Jazz Festival which can be viewed at [www.savannahjazz.org](http://www.savannahjazz.org). 2021 marks the

40<sup>th</sup> year of the Savannah Jazz Festival. Last year the organization partnered with WSAV to bring the festival to viewers locally and globally. This virtual partnership brought in 175,000 viewers worldwide. This year the organization is aiming to top that record viewership.

**V. Director's Report**

Stuart Miller, Cultural Resources Director, announced the installation of an antenna booster to the Savannah Cultural Arts building which will expand cell and radio signals throughout the facility.

Mr. Miller stated the Cultural Resources staff has been very busy despite the building not being open. The center is now offering five virtual classes per week, virtual storytelling biweekly, and virtual programming for children and seniors with local partners. These online programs are not only attracting local participants, but students from five different states are now tuning in to the classes as well. Mr. Miller says the center will continue to offer virtual classes even after in-person classes resume. The Cultural Arts Center is also hosting a one-week virtual Spring break camp for children ages 5 to 11 during the week of March 29<sup>th</sup>. Summer camps are also being planned and hopefully will be in-person.

The Recreation Reimagined Plan is underway to join Human Services, Recreation and Leisure Services, and Cultural Resources in a 10-year strategic plan that will focus on providing the best possible future for recreation, leisure, and arts services for Savannah. Currently, these departments are assessing facilities and the scope of programming. Recreation Reimagined will also work on gathering public input which will include surveys, focus groups, and interviews. The Cultural Resources piece in the plan will include a proposed public art plan and the cultural arts mapping system. The goal is to present the plan to City Council by late summer/early fall.

**VI. Contract Coordinator's Report**

CJ Bogle, Contract Coordinator, stated he sent all Commissioners a request for information via email. Please complete that request, making sure to include occupation and field of study, and return it to Mr. Bogle. This information is used for the Cultural Resources Department's grant writing purposes.

Mr. Bogle stated there is a new Commission Evaluation Form posted on the city website. This new form has a section with the option to choose whether an event is live or virtual. Once the choice is selected, a form tailored to that choice can be completed.

Mr. Bogle announced postcards advertising the Weave-A-Dream program are getting ready to be sent out. Commissioners were advised to contact Mr. Bogle should anyone want additional postcards to hand out.

**VII. Chair and Vice-Chair Report**

There are five subcommittees on which Commissioners can serve. Should Commissioners like to join a subcommittee please notify the chair of that subcommittee.

Commissioners can also participate as panelists for the ACE Program application review that will be held on September 11, 2021. Should Commissioners like to participate in the application review please notify Commissioner Kelsey.

**VIII. By-laws Sub-Committee Report**

Commissioner Eddie Edenfield stated the by-laws sub-committee is an ad hoc committee created to address questions surrounding the residency requirement of Commissioners. No work has been completed within the sub-committee yet as there was a waiting period until the Commission was fully staffed and new Commissioners were appointed. Commissioners that are interested in participating on the By-laws Sub-Committee should contact Commissioner Edenfield.

**IX. Youth Advisory Sub-Committee Report**

Commissioner Raymond Gaddy stated the committee has not met this year as there was a waiting period until the Commission was fully staffed and new Commissioners were appointed. Commissioners that are interested in participating on the Youth Advisory Sub-Committee should contact Commissioner Gaddy.

**X. Public Art Sub-Committee Report**

Commissioner Kristopher Monroe stated the committee has met twice since the last Commission meeting and has been discussing the goals the committee would like to accomplish this year. The consensus is the committee will focus on the public art proposal that would include the creation of an ordinance for public art. This would be determined based on the city's revenue stream and capital improvement projects. The proposed ordinance would offer revenue for public art that is separate from Weave-A-Dream and ACE funding and evolves into community art and creative placemaking. Commissioners that are interested in participating on the Public Art Sub-Committee should contact Commissioner Monroe.

**XI. City Priorities Sub-Committee Report**

Commissioner Kelsey stated the City Priorities subcommittee was formed to find the ways and means to align what the commission is doing with the priorities of the city. Now that Recreation Reimagined is underway, the subcommittee will focus on getting what the city needs in terms of public input. That information will be gathered through a public forum in each Alderman District and a large focus group through the virtual environment. The goal will be to provide the City with comprehensive and holistic feedback. Commissioners that are interested in participating on the City Priorities Sub-Committee should contact Commissioner Kelsey.

**XII. Weave-A-Dream**

Commissioner Edenfield stated Weave-A-Dream has had one application that has been funded for 2021. The Savannah Voice Festival was awarded \$4000 for their program “Voices That Heal”. The program will bring musical therapy to patients in Hospice.

After funding the Voices That Heal program, the Weave-A-Dream funding balance is \$19,000.

**XIII. 2021 ACE Program Discussion**

Commissioner Kelsey presented a motion to table the ACE Program discussion until the next Commission meeting on May 12, 2021. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bogle stated the organizations are beginning to send invites for events via email. Commissioners should have already received a few invitations. Please let Mr. Bogle know if Commissioners are not receiving invites.

**XIV. General Discussion**

Commissioner Kelsey announced Tana Fileccia-Flagg and Doris Liggins are the newest Commissioners for 2021 and asked each to take a moment to introduce themselves.

Commissioner Tana Fileccia-Flagg stated she is originally from Albany, New York, but has resided in Savannah for the past 12 years. Her connection to Savannah’s arts community began with taking and teaching classes at S.P.A.C.E. Ms. Fileccia-Flagg revealed that she is a bead and metalsmith artist. She is a member of both the Coastal Bead Society and the Hilton Head Bead Society. She is very happy to be a serve as a Commissioner and being connected to the Savannah arts community.

Commissioner Doris Liggins stated she resided, for a time, in Dakar, Senegal, and speaks fluent French. She is a native of Savannah and cannot get enough of this city. She spent time as an artist traveling from coast to coast and has been a playwright, producer, and festival organizer. She is looking forward to her work as a Commissioner to help get things done for the arts and artists in Savannah.

**XIII. Adjournment**

Commissioner Kelsey adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.

**Next Cultural Affairs Commission Meeting  
May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
6 PM**