



**MEETING OF THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION**  
**March 8, 2023**  
**6:00 PM**  
**Savannah Cultural Arts Center**  
**201 Montgomery Street**

**Commissioners:**

*Present:*

- Sharon Wanda Aikens
- Alexis Alexander
- Danielle Barboza
- Michael Chaney
- Lynda DeLoach
- Barbara Essig
- Deborah Glenn
- Andrea Hall-Houston
- Emilee Kornegay
- DJ Murphy

*Virtual:*

- Joanna Angell
- Lu Fang
- Tana Fileccia-Flagg
- Rob Hessler
- Patrick Kelsey
- Kareem McMichael

*Absent:*

- Keyshawn Housey
- Spencer White, III

**City Staff:**

- Stuart Miller, Sr. Director, Cultural Resources
- CJ Bogle, Contract Coordinator, Cultural Resources
- Ebony Middleton, Sr. Administrative Assistant, Cultural Resources

**Public Attending:**

- Michael Camp

**I. Call to Order/Determination of Quorum – D. Glenn**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM by Commission Chair Deborah Glenn and a quorum was determined.

**II. ACE Recipient Presentations**

There were no presentations conducted at this meeting.

**III. Announcements – D. Glenn**

There were no announcements no announcements.

**IV. Review and Approval of Minutes – D. Glenn**

Commissioner Glenn called for a motion to approve January CAC minutes. The minutes were approved with no objections.

**V. Introductions & Welcome of New Commissioners – D. Glenn/All**

Commissioner Glenn welcomed Emilee Kornegay to the CAC. Commissioner Kornegay introduced herself to the commission who stated she was excited to join the CAC. Commissioner Kornegay gave a brief summary of her background.

**VI. Director's Report – S. Miller**

Mr. Miller opened with an update for Spring term registration. In the first two days there were around 200 registration forms received. Classes will start on March 27 and run for 6-8 weeks. New classes this term will include Hip-Hop Dance, Violin Explorations, Teen Drawing & Painting, and Abstract Acrylic Painting. Registration for summer camp will open on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Summer camp will run from the beginning of June until July. This summer specialty camps will be offered. Some of those camps include an art camp for youth who are blind or visually impaired, a creative writing camp, and an adult art bootcamp.

Help is still needed to complete the Arts & Economic Prosperity surveys. Currently, only 535 out of 800 surveys have been completed. The next opportunity for commissioners to volunteer to hand out surveys will be on March 22 for the Savannah Ballet Theater performance. Other opportunities will include the Savannah Music Festival, which will host multiple performances at the Cultural Arts Center starting on April 1. Commissioners will receive an email with more information. Surveys are due in May.

Photos of Ben Tucker are now a permanent installation in the Ben Tucker Theater. The Cultural Arts Center's Customer Service Representative, Tasheca Hutchinson researched and created a visual timeline of Ben Tucker's life. The Black Art Expo was well received by the public. At least a couple hundred people attended. We are looking forward to repeating it in 2024.

## **VII. Contract Coordinator's Report – C. Bogle**

Mr. Bogle stated that Hospice Savannah Foundation has withdrawn from the Arts & Cultural Enrichment (ACE) program, however, the funds that were awarded to the organization may now be applied to the Weave-A-Dream (WAD) funding allocation, nearly doubling that program's budget.

Mr. Bogle stated that the WAD program had received its first application this year from the Savannah Jewish Federation. The WAD subcommittee met on Tuesday, March 7<sup>th</sup> to review the application and that the organization was not recommended for funding.

Starting next month, on April 12<sup>th</sup>, there will now be optional meetings at which ACE recipient organizations will present information about their programming to the CAC. These meetings will host between 3-4 ACE recipient organizations and give commissioners an opportunity to ask questions and better understand each organization's programming. The reason that these meetings will be offered is to free up time in the regular CAC meetings to allow more time to focus on important agenda topics.

Mr. Bogle invited the commissioners to the upcoming ACE contract meetings. The next upcoming meetings will be with Deep Center at 11 AM on Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup> and with First City Pride Center at 11:30 AM on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Bogle asked interested commissioners to RSVP to these meetings by no later than 5 PM the day before. Mr. Bogle continued to say that there are about 7 contract meetings left to be completed and encouraged commissioners to attend at least one meeting if they have not already done so.

Mr. Bogle updated the commissioners on upcoming ACE programming and stated that the next couple of weeks are a little quieter due to St. Patrick's Day. Commissioners should be receiving invitations from organizations for upcoming events. If commissioners are not, to please let him know.

**VIII. Chair Report – D. Glenn**

Commissioner Glenn put forth a motion to reinstate the annual requirement for commissioners to complete 6 ACE and/or WAD evaluations per year as is indicated in the bylaws. The requirement had been suspended due to COVID-19.

Commissioner Michael Chaney asked for the commission to open a discussion.

Commissioner Rob Hessler asked if the requirement would still be met if a commissioner reviewed the same program six times, such as Arts Southeast's exhibitions and/or *Artist in Residency* program that changes throughout the year. Commissioner Glenn stated that there was nothing in the bylaws that restricted a commissioner from doing so.

Commissioner Joanna Angell questioned if a commissioner was restricted to the organizations that they are assigned to. Mr. Bogle explained that it is open to any ACE/WAD program, but commissioners are encouraged to review the ACE organizations that they are assigned to. Commissioner Angell asked if there was a way to tell if there was a particular organization that was not getting enough evaluations. Mr. Bogle explained that when you submit the evaluation form online, the information is put in an Excel document, which will show how many evaluations a commissioner has completed, which organizations and programs, and would be able to tell if a particular organization needed more evaluations.

Concerns were brought forth about whether there would be enough remaining programs to attend, and which organizations have already completed their programming. Mr. Bogle stated that Savannah Black Heritage Festival and Savannah Book Festival have completed their programming. There are still 14 organizations with programming remaining throughout the year. Commissioner Kareem McMichael stated that Mountainfilm has as well. Mr. Bogle reminded the commission that Mountainfilm still had their family matinee program in August.

Commissioner Glenn brought the motion to vote to reinstate the 6 annual review requirements. The motion passed unanimously. The required annual evaluations are not back in effect.

**IX. Vice-Chair Report – A. Hall-Houston/P. Kelsey**

There was no report given.

**X. Sub-Committee Reports:**

- **Youth Advisory Sub-Committee Report** – T. Flagg

Commissioner Tana Fileccia-Flagg stated that the Youth Advisory subcommittee had been on a roll during the summer but has not had a meeting in a while. Commissioner Fileccia-Flagg stated that there would be a meeting scheduled in the upcoming weeks.

- **Public Art Sub-Committee Report** – R. Hessler

Commissioner Rob Hessler stated that they met a couple of weeks ago and the focus was on the Public Art Ordinance which was passed by the CAC in January 2022. Mr. Miller recently met with the City Manager and the City Manager is in favor of the ordinance. Mr. Miller stated that several city departments must meet to evaluate and review the ordinance before it is brought before the city council.

Commissioner Lynda DeLoach asked if there would be public forum to discuss potential public art projects. Commissioner Hessler and Mr. Miller responded that there would at least one or hopefully, two opportunities for public input.

- **City Priorities Sub-Committee Report** – P. Kelsey

No report was presented.

- **Weave-A-Dream Subcommittee Report** – A. Hall-Houston/ P. Kelsey

No report was given as information had previously been discussed. Commissioner Patrick Kelsey emphasized the importance that WAD applicants follow the city priorities and guidelines.

- **Spotlight Subcommittee Report** – Kareem McMichael

Subcommittee Chair Kareem McMichael stated that the Spotlight application was currently open for dates in August, September, October, and November and for commissioners to encourage organizations to apply. Commissioner McMichael discussed the two current Spotlight programs. The 100 Black Men of Savannah which performed the *Broken Wings* play in early February and the upcoming dance theatre performance by Lauren Ohmer, *Have I Told You About the Time*, a dance theatre piece

that will be performed at the Savannah Cultural Arts Center on Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup> with doors opening at 6:30 and the show starting at 7 PM.

Mr. Bogle added that the performance this weekend was being sponsored by Over the Moon Diaper Bank, a local nonprofit that supplies diapers and feminine products to low-income families. Donations of such items will be accepted at the performance on Saturday.

#### **XI. ACE Recipients Evaluations**

There were no additional discussions.

#### **XII. General Discussion**

Mr. Miller stated that the city council has requested that the ACE application process be reviewed and that it has been a couple of years since that has been done. In response, the CAC will be forming an ad hoc subcommittee to review the ACE application process. Mr. Bogle stated that interest commissioners should email him if they would like to join.

Multiple commissioners stated that one of the biggest concerns regarding the ACE program was the lack of increased funding for the program. Commissioners Fileccia-Flagg and Glenn reiterated that ACE funding has been level for several years. Commissioner Kelsey stated that in fact ACE funding has gone down and is at a record low.

#### **XIII. Adjournment**

Commissioner DJ Murphy motioned that the meeting be adjourned.  
Commissioner Glenn adjourned the meeting at 7:03 PM.

**The next scheduled meeting of the Commission will be held on  
Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 6:00 PM**

**The optional ACE Recipient Presentation Meeting will be held on  
Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 6:00 PM**