

**MINUTES OF THE  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL  
ANNUAL PLANNING AND BUDGET RETREAT  
March 20, 2024**

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

<p><b><u>Members Present</u></b>          Brian May, Chairman          Mitchell Bierman          Kareem Brantley          Sandra Curbelo          Al Dotson, Jr.          Councilwoman Linda Julien          Cheryl Rees          Janá Sigars-Malina, First Vice Chair          Zaba St. George Castro          Rosa Sugrañes          Monty Trainer</p>	<p><b><u>Members Not Present</u></b>          Adolfo Henriques, Immediate Past Chair          Commissioner Daniela Jean</p>
<p><b><u>Staff</u></b>          Marialaura Leslie, Director          Ashlee K. Thomas, Deputy Director          Kelly Allocco          Francine Andersen          Stephanie Antequera          Patricia Arbelaez          Stefania Barigelli Rodriguez          Gilda Battle Mooney          Nikenna Benjamin          Doriamny Cardenas          William Campbell          Eduardo Calero          Tania Centeno          Nicole Chaplin          Marie Denis          Vanessa Duque          Eric Fliss          Stephanie Garcia          Bianca Gonzalez          Olga Gonzalez          Theodore Harrell          Liliana Hernandez-Constenla          Christine Jefferson          Regla Lee          Ana Meza          Dorixis McComas</p>	<p><b><u>Staff (continued)</u></b>          Carmen Morris          Steven Padilla          Alex Peraza          Adriana Perez          Dana Pezoldt          Katherine Revell          Pablo Rincon          Gisella Rivas-Diaz          Patricia Romeu          Helen Sanchez          Amanda Sanfilippo          Javier Siut          David Solomon          Christina Tassy          Jane Thayer          Geraldine Toussaint          Nicolle Ugarriza          Pamela Valles          Eduardo Vivas          Graham Winick</p> <p><b><u>Guests Present</u></b>          Renee Pesci          Manuel Prestamo</p>

Director Marialaura Leslie called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM on behalf of Chairman Brian May who is expected to join via Zoom. She welcomed the Cultural Affairs Council members and Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs staff that have joined the meeting via Zoom.

## ITEMS FOR RATIFICATION

### Approval of the January 24, 2024 Minutes

The minutes of the January 24, 2024, Council meeting were presented. They were approved unanimously. (Motion by Mr. Trainer; seconded by Ms. Curbelo)

### FY 2023-2024 Community Grants (CG) Program Panel Recommendations – Third Quarter

Director Leslie presented the grants recommendations from the FY 2023-2024 Community Grants Program – Third Quarter panel which was chaired by Councilor Sandra Curbelo and managed by Geraldine Toussaint with the help of Stephanie Antequera. The panel convened on February 8, 2024, to review 21 applications requesting \$155,810 for the Third Quarter of the program, (supporting projects taking place between April 2024 – June 2024). The Panel recommended funding 21 applicants for a total of \$127,000.00. The projects recommended for funding represent a diversified range of activities and demographic locations. In its deliberations, the Panel carefully considered and applied the Community Grants guidelines as outlined below. The Community Grants Program is responsive on a quarterly basis to organizations, which develop small and large-scale community-based programs, projects, events, and publications. The program is particularly sensitive to the needs of 1) indigenous cultural neighborhood activities and projects encouraging the preservation of heritage, traditions, and culture; and 2) social service organizations and cultural groups developing collaborative intervention projects.

Director Leslie noted no Councilor conflicts were identified.

Although the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County is not among the organizations seeking funding, Councilor Zaba St. George Castro noted her conflict with the organization for the record.

The Panel's recommendations to fund the remaining organizations were approved unanimously. (Motion by Mr. Bierman; seconded by Ms. St. George Castro)

Algo Nuevo Incorporated	\$6,670
ArtesMiami, Inc.	\$6,670
Artwalk Presents, Inc.	\$6,670
Association of Exchange and Development of Activities and Partnership AEDAP, Inc.	\$3,556
Ayiti Haiti Hall of Fame-Music, Entertainment & Sports Museum Corp.	\$4,445
Blue Scholars Initiative, Inc.	\$6,670
Margi Happenings, Inc.	\$6,670
Miami Collegium Musicum, Inc.	\$6,500
Miami Community Music Center, Inc.	\$6,670
Miami River Fund, Inc.	\$8,893
Name Publications, Inc.	\$6,670
New Conscience Productions, Corp	\$2,668
NWD Projects, Inc.	\$6,670
Our Chance Enterprise, Inc.	\$3,113
Para Bajitos, Inc.	\$6,670

Pinecrest City Music Project, Inc.	\$6,670
Seminole Cultural Arts Theatre, Inc.	\$6,670
South Florida Educational Development Center, Inc.	\$6,670
The New Light Foundation Inc. a/f/a Victoria Collado	\$6,670
The New Theater Foundation, Inc.	\$4,445
Tradisyon Lakou Lakay, Inc.	\$6,670

### **FY 2023-2024 Miami Individual Artists (MIA) Grants Program Panel Recommendations**

Director Leslie presented the grants recommendations from the FY 2023-2024 Miami Individual Artists (MIA) Grants Program Panel. Director Leslie reported that during the pandemic, the Department of Cultural Affairs secured a major grant of \$500,000. from the National Endowment for the Arts' American Rescue Plan Funds (ARP) to launch the Miami Individual Artists (MIA) program. This program provides non-matching awards to individual artists of all disciplines in Miami-Dade County, representing key diversity factors including race, ethnicity, individuals working with underrepresented populations, those with disabilities, and geography. Following the success of the MIA Program, Miami-Dade County renewed and increased funding for the program. To date, three cycles of the grant program have been completed. For the FY 2023-2024 cycle, almost 500 artists applied, with 296 artists of all disciplines being recommended for funding. Award amounts vary, with grants at the \$10,000, \$5,000, and \$3,000 levels.

Director Leslie thanked Gilda Mooney for her leadership of the Miami Individual Artists (MIA) Grants Program, and Jane Thayer for her current management of the program. Both Ms. Mooney and Ms. Thayer have executed an outstanding job in effectively managing the panels for this program. The process is intricate as each discipline has a separate panel, ensuring that applications receive thorough consideration from experts in their respective fields.

Al Dotson inquired about the artists who were not awarded and asked what role the Council plays in helping them prepare for the next round of funding. Director Leslie responded that in the past two cycles, artists who were not recommended for an award received a declination letter advising the artists of other funding opportunities within the Department for which they were eligible to apply. For example, artists have the option to apply to programs such as the Community Grants Program, the Artist Access Grants Program which provides professional development opportunities for artists of all disciplines, the South Florida Cultural Consortium Grants Program for Visual Arts and Media, and the Dance Miami Choreographers' (DMC) Program, among others. Department of Cultural Affairs staff, Adriana Perez and Amanda Sanfilippo also review the list of applicants and highlight applications that show potential but were not awarded. They then follow up with the artists and offer professional development and technical assistance to help them put together a stronger application for the next cycle.

The list of recommended artists and grant award amounts attached was approved unanimously. (Motion by Ms. Sigars-Malina; seconded by Ms. Curbelo)

### **FY 2023-2024 Summer Arts & Science Camps for Kids (SAS-C) Grants Program Panel Recommendations**

Director Leslie presented the grants recommendations from the FY 2023-2024 Summer Arts & Science Camps for Kids (SAS-C) Grants Panel which was chaired by Councilor Trainer. The Panel convened on February 22, 2024, to review 30 applications requesting a total of \$1,112,936. The Panel recommended funding all 30 applications for a total of \$900,000. The Summer Arts & Science Camps for Kids (SAS-C) Grants Program was created as a joint initiative of the Miami-

Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and The Children's Trust. The objective of the SAS-C Grants Program is to grant funding to nonprofit organizations that will provide underserved children in Miami-Dade County with opportunities to attend high-quality cultural arts or science summer camp programs at little or no cost.

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

Mitchell Bierman, Adolfo Henriques - Florida International University  
 Mitchell Bierman and Monty Trainer - Museum of Contemporary Art  
 Monty Trainer - University of Miami

The Panel's recommendations to fund the remaining organizations were approved unanimously. (Motion by Mr. Brantley; seconded by Ms. Rees)

Arts Ballet Theatre of Florida, Inc.	\$40,000
ArtSouth, A Not-For-Profit Corporation	\$40,000
CodeArt, Inc.	\$13,941
Diva Arts & Entertainment, Inc.	\$40,000
Due to Arts, Inc.	\$15,292
El Ingenio, Inc.	\$40,000
Fantasy Theatre Factory, Inc.	\$40,000
Friends of the Bass Museum, Inc. dba BASS	\$40,000
Homestead Youth Arts Center, Inc.	\$40,000
IFCM Corp.	\$12,877
Locust Projects, Inc.	\$13,059
Mahogany Youth Corporation	\$40,000
Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center, Inc.	\$40,000
Miami City Ballet, Inc.	\$40,000
Miami New Drama, Inc.	\$40,000
Miami Stage Company/Miami Children's Theater, Inc.	\$24,707
Miami Theater Center, Inc.	\$40,000
Moonlighter FabLab, Inc.	\$22,064
Paige and Friends Helping Hands, Inc	\$23,783
Para Bajitos, Inc.	\$21,295
South Florida Youth Symphony, Inc.	\$25,877
South Temple Empowerment Project, Inc.	\$18,652
The Children's Voice Chorus, Inc.	\$40,000
The Florida City Foundation, Inc.	\$25,008
The Opera Atelier, Inc.	\$40,000
The Salvation Army	\$25,592
Voices of Miami, Inc.	\$23,829

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

Florida International University Board of Trustees (Motion by Ms. Rees; seconded by Ms. St. George Castro)	\$24,583
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Museum of Contemporary Art, Inc. \$25,424  
(Motion by Ms. St. George Castro; seconded by Ms. Rees)

University of Miami \$24,017  
(Motion by Ms. Rees; seconded by Councilwoman Julien)

Although the Miami Dade College and Area Performance Gallery, Inc. dba Area Stage Company were not among the organizations seeking funding, it was noted for the record that Mr. Trainer and Councilwoman Julien have a conflict with Miami Dade College and Brian May has a conflict with Area Performance Gallery, Inc. dba Area Stage Company.

Councilor Sigars-Malina noted for the record that she is not on the Board of Trustees for Florida International University but on a different leadership board for this organization.

Director Leslie commended Katherine Revell and the Arts Education team for their exceptional management of the Summer Arts & Science Camps for Kids (SAS-C) Grants Program, noting the program's profound impact on children's lives.

### **FY 2024-2025 Miami Individual Artists (MIA) Grants Program Guidelines**

Director Leslie presented the FY 2024-2025 Miami Individual Artists (MIA) Grants Program Guidelines. Ms. Leslie reported that this would be the fourth year of this significant program and that there are no substantive changes to the grants program guidelines.

A motion was made to approve the FY 2024-2025 Miami Individual Artists (MIA) Grants Program guidelines. They were approved unanimously. (Motion by Mr. Trainer; seconded by Ms. Rees)

### **ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

#### **Requests for Excused Absences for March 20, 2024**

Requests for excused absences for Adolfo Henriques and Commissioner Daniela Jean were approved unanimously. (Motion by Mr. Bierman; seconded by Ms. St. George Castro)

### **REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **Update on the FY 2024-2025 State Arts Budget**

Graham Winick reported that during the final week of the legislative session (budget conference), which ended just under two weeks ago, the budgets were drastically reduced. The total funding for the Florida State Division of Arts and Culture grants, which initially recommended just over \$77 million, ended up at just over \$32 million. Therefore, resulting in only 41% of the total request being funded.

The breakdown of the allocation is as follows:

- Cultural Museum received \$26 million out of the recommended \$54 million, all of the organizations who applied will receive 47% of their recommended funding.

- Cultural Builds Florida, a project-based grant program, that is typically funded annually, received zero funding out of a recommended request of just over \$4 million.
- Cultural facilities received just over \$6 million out of a recommended \$14 million.

For Miami-Dade County specifically, the recommended funding of just over \$15 million was reduced to just over \$6.4 million, representing only 42% of the original recommendation.

## **BUDGET AND PLANNING RETREAT: DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

### **Council Motion Regarding the FY 2024-2025 Budget**

A motion was made to approve the budget and request a 14% increase to the Department's annual budget for the Department's FY 2024-2025 budget, representing \$9.94 million. The goal is to keep pace with the reality of present-day growing costs, inflation and demands for programs and services. The motion passed unanimously. (Motion by Chairman May; seconded by Mr. Brantley)

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Leslie thanked the Council for attending the budget briefing meetings. She noted that the presentation, programs and services, memos, and FY 2024-2025 budget from the budget briefing meetings had been included in the Council's Annual Planning and Budget Retreat binder.

Director Leslie reported that on February 16, 2024, the Joseph Caleb Auditorium held a groundbreaking ceremony for its renovation and expansion project attended by Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, Commissioner Hardemon, and the Joseph Caleb Family. Ms. Leslie commended staff for seamlessly organizing the ceremony, and thanked Marie Denis, Eduardo Vivas, and the Capital team for preparing Joseph Caleb Auditorium for the renovation expansion and recognized Pamela Valles and Christine Jefferson for their role in ensuring community engagement.

Ms. Leslie reported that on March 7, 2024, Chairman Brian May delivered The 2024 State of the Arts Address, emceed by Al Dotson Jr., which provided updates on Miami-Dade County's cultural landscape, including institutions, artists, and the Arts Energize 305 Strategic Plan. Ms. Leslie thanked the Council and staff who reviewed the strategic plan and offered feedback.

Ms. Leslie reported the Serving the Arts Awards ceremony is scheduled for April 3, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. at the Miami-Dade County Auditorium. This year's event will be an award ceremony accompanied by a coffee and pastelitos reception. Ms. Leslie announced that Mr. Trainer will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award, congratulating him on the 60th anniversary of the Coconut Grove Arts Festival and his dedication to the cultural community. She also congratulated Councilwoman Linda Julien who will be honored with the Elected Official of the Year Award. Additionally, she revealed that the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places team will be honored with the Public Art Award. The Art in Public Places Trust is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

Ms. Leslie reported the Miami-Dade County Auditorium is more than 70 years old and in need of renovation. The facility will be closing at the end of the month for renovations, which will result in a spectacular campus. Briefings regarding the renovations will be provided at the next meeting. While the facility is closed, programming will not stop. Patricia Arbelaez and Javier Siut have instituted a plan where the current staff of the Auditorium, will be working with programming partners and co-producing at other venues such as the Dennis C. Moss Cultural Arts Center and

African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, Westchester Cultural Arts Center, Sandrell Rivers Theater, etc.

Ms. Leslie reported on the Coconut Grove Playhouse project, stating that the 11th Judicial Circuit Court ruling was announced last month, and they ruled in favor of the County. The opposing counsel has requested a rehearing. Last week, the County Attorneys Office filed a response to the opposing counsel's request. Ms. Leslie will provide an update when more information becomes available.

Ms. Leslie reported that on April 13, 2024, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County will host its annual gala, where Theater Director, Marshall Davis of the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center will receive the inaugural Arts Education Pioneer Award. Mr. Davis, who recently celebrated 40 years of exemplary public service, was also recently featured on Good Morning America, receiving a \$50,000 award from the Knight Foundation

Ms. Leslie commended the entire Cultural Affairs staff for their unwavering dedication to supporting artists and cultural organizations, thus driving the mission of the Department.

Ms. Leslie noted the Councilor Assignments for FY 2024-2025 are in the Annual Planning and Budget Retreat binder. The binders will be mailed to Councilors who were unable to attend the Budget Retreat in person.

## **COUNCILOR REPORTS**

Mr. Trainer reported the Coconut Grove Arts Festival was a tremendous success. The economic impact study "#1" foam fingers were enthusiastically embraced at the Miami-Dade County League of Cities event, adorning every table. Interest piqued around the \$2.1 billion figure printed on the foam fingers. Mr. Trainer reported Coconut Grove has increased its engagement with the marina by being more active with the Seminole Boat Ramp which recently celebrated a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Additionally, the New World School of the Arts hosted a successful gala. Mr. Trainer shared his growing involvement in the West Grove community, where he has been appointed by United States Representative Frederica Wilson to spearhead the Little Bahamas Entertainment District project.

Ms. Leslie shared that Miami-Dade County is ranked #1 in arts and culture, generating \$2.1 billion in economic impact based on the economic impact survey conducted, in partnership with Washington, D.C.-based Americans for the Arts. Kelly Allocco and Gisella Rivas-Diaz led the work locally for the study, with input from the community, highlighting the substantial economic benefits of the arts.

Ms. Leslie noted that staff is collaborating with the Thelma Gibson Health Initiative, Inc. to organize facility tours for the Little Bahamas Cultural Center. These tours aim to showcase different facility models as part of the initial planning phases for the center's development.

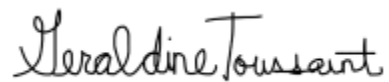
Mr. Bierman encouraged everyone to go see The Lehman Trilogy at GableStage.

Councilwoman Julien shared the success of the 3rd Annual Miami Gardens Youth Music Festival, held on March 2, 2024. The event showcased performances by local students from the Miami Gardens Music Alliance, Guitars over Guns, and Young Musicians Unite. Ms. Leslie noted that Young Musicians Unite performed at the State of Arts Address.

Ms. Sugrañes reported that during her attendance at an opera in Barcelona, Gran Teatre del Liceu, she met with Víctor García de Gomar, who expressed interest in collaborating on an opera production with Miami. Ms. Leslie will work with Councilor Sugrañes to facilitate the connection between him and the Florida Grand Opera.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Geraldine Toussaint". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Geraldine Toussaint