


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 21, 2012

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE VIRGINIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS FOR A LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHALLENGE GRANT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

ISSUE: City Council consideration of a grant application to the Virginia Commission for the Arts (VCA) for funding, in the amount of \$5,000, for the Local Government Challenge Grant Program. The grant application deadline is April 1, 2012.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the City Manager to:

- (1) Submit a grant application, in the amount of \$5,000, to the Virginia Commission for the Arts' Local Government Challenge Grant Program; and
- (2) Execute all necessary documents that may be required.

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts (ACA) fully endorses the application submission.

DISCUSSION: The City has received the maximum amount of funds awarded through the Virginia Commission for the Arts' Local Government Challenge Grant Program for 32 out of the past 33 years that this program has been in operation. Through the Local Government Challenge Grant Program, the VCA will match funds, up to \$5,000. Independent town, city, and county governments are eligible to apply for funding in this category.

For Fiscal Year 2012, the City is seeking \$5,000, the current maximum permitted in the VCA's Local Government Challenge Grant category. The grant application is due April 1, 2012. These funds, if awarded to the City, are to be allocated to the arts organizations and artists who have submitted requests for funding to the Alexandria Commission for the Arts for Fiscal Year 2013. Included in the application is a description of each artist and organization proposed to receive VCA funding.

The Arts Commission's Grant Program is modeled after the Virginia Commission for the Arts Grant Program. In August, the Alexandria Commission for the Arts provides written guidelines to all potential applicants. Grant workshops are conducted in September and October. Applications are due the third Friday in November and submitted online to the Arts Commission. In January and February, the Resource Panels for Music, Theatre, Dance, Visual Arts, Literature and Interdisciplinary, subordinate bodies of the ACA, conduct interviews with each grant applicant.

The Arts Commission holds a Public Review of the applications and conducts a formal action meeting in March. After the adoption of the City budget, confirmation letters with funding levels are sent to successful applicants. All applicants receiving funding from the Commission are required to submit a Final Report within thirty days after the project is completed. The Commission's Conflict of Interest Policy is enforced to ensure the highest standards of personal integrity and honesty and to uphold the principles of fairness in the decision-making process regarding potential allocation of public funds.

The distribution of the grant award is determined by the history of funding and the size of the operating budget for each organization. Should the full award of \$5,000 be granted by the VCA and should the Alexandria Commission for the Arts recommend funding, distribution to the arts organizations will be as follows:

Alexandria Choral Society	\$200
Alexandria Harmonizers	\$300
Alexandria Singers	\$200
Alexandria Symphony Orchestra	\$300
Ambassador Theater	\$200
The Art League	\$300
Arts Resource Foundation/Del Ray Artisans	\$200
Choreographers Collaboration Project	\$200
Eclipse Chamber Orchestra	\$300
First Night Alexandria	\$300
Friends of the Torpedo Factory Art Center	\$200
Jane Franklin Dance Company	\$200
Karen Reedy Dance Company	\$200
Kathy Harty Gray Dance Theatre	\$200
MetroStage	\$300
Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association	\$200
Port City Playhouse	\$200
Quintango	\$200
Virginia Opera	\$300
Washington Balalaika Society	\$200
Washington Philharmonic Orchestra	<u>\$300</u>
Total	\$5,000

Although the distribution results in small awards to the arts groups, the impact can be much greater. With these awards, arts groups can promote the fact that they are a recipient of funds from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and its funder, the National Endowment for the Arts. This “seal of approval” can often help arts groups leverage additional dollars.

The grant award is provided in two payments. The first payment is 85% of the award and includes a partial amount from the City appropriation and all of the Virginia Commission for the Arts funds. The final payment of 15% of the grant award is released after the ACA receives a successful Final Report.

The Virginia Commission for the Arts’ funds represent less than 3% of the total funds available for the Grant Program of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts.

FISCAL IMPACT: The Virginia Commission for the Arts provides up to \$5,000. The City has identified 100% matching funds as the cash match in the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Fiscal Year 2013 proposed operating budget.

In addition, the City is also responsible for normal administrative costs associated with this grant. These costs include financial and reporting oversight provided by the administering agency (the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities) as well as the Office of Management and Budget and the Finance Department. It should be noted that no monies are available in the City’s Budget to continue these activities once the grant funds are expended.

ATTACHMENT:

None.

STAFF:

James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA)

Alisa Carrel, Deputy Director, RPCA/Office of the Arts

Cheryl Anne Colton, Regional Program Director, RPCA/Office of the Arts