

November 15, 2018

Mr. Jinks,

I am writing to express my support of the team of professionals that are running the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, Virginia. I have worked with Brett Johnson and Daniel Guzman for the past year and a half in a professional collaboration between the Torpedo Factory Art Center (TFAC) and the American Geosciences Institute. We embarked on an innovative, community-based partnership to support the nexus between art and science--under the theme of "Earth as Inspiration". Throughout the planning process both of these leaders were instrumental in promoting the needs and interests of the TFAC and the artists that reside there.

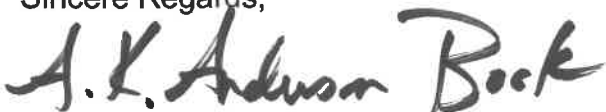
We entered into an agreement that partnered artists with scientists to create new science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) curricula that was used to engage students and teachers from within the Alexandria community. Ultimately this led to a deeper engagement with the Alexandria public schools and to several high impact events at the TFAC. Each event engaged local artists and I was very impressed at how the staff put the needs of the artists and the TFAC at the forefront of every event discussion. They are strong advocates for the art community and Alexandria, while also managing the interests of the TFAC.

As part of our partnership, we commissioned several pieces from the TFAC artists that hang in our newly commissioned building in Alexandria. The TFAC staff were instrumental in connecting us to artists who submitted designs in response to our request for proposals.

The leadership, marketing team and every person we interacted with at the TFAC have been a real pleasure to work with. The staff are professional and courteous, as well as very knowledgeable about every aspect of the TFAC and the onsite artists. We had such a great experience in our yearlong engagement that we plan to continue to collaborate into the future on STEAM-related projects.

I am aware that there is a proposal under review concerning the management of the TFAC going forward. Our experience speaks to the success of the current management structure in place at the TFAC. If one thing were to change, I would strongly advocate for a more sustained funding stream for both the management of the facility, for staff support, and for the overall successful management of a wonderful artist community.

Sincere Regards,



Allyson K. Anderson Book
Executive Director



AIA Northern Virginia

November 11, 2018

Mr. Mark Jinks, City Manager,

I am writing to express my appreciation for the on-going partnership between the Torpedo Factory Arts Center (TFAC) and Northern Virginia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIANoVa).

I am an architect and executive committee board member of AIANoVa. Three years ago I approached the TFAC program director Daniel Guzman about exploring opportunities for partnership between our two organizations. Daniel was immediately receptive to the idea and we found through discussions that TFAC and AIANoVa share many of the same mission goals, including public outreach and engagement towards a greater appreciation of art, architecture, and design. Within a year of our initial discussion we had jointly organized activities at the TFAC for our annual Architecture Week, a month-long Special Projects studio and exhibit featuring local Virginia Tech architecture students and AIANoVa professional members, and an architecture themed activity for the popular, annual TFAC Art Safari family event.

From our perspective at AIANoVa this partnership has been a resounding success. The prominence and high visibility of the TFAC has allowed us to connect with a much wider audience than we could typically reach on our own, engaging people of all ages through both static exhibits and interactive family programs, along with lectures and presentations. Hosting architecture-themed events side-by-side with practicing artists helps make visible the intersection of art, architecture, and design while also building relationships among design professionals and practicing artists. We have discovered, for example, that several artists at the TFAC have backgrounds in architecture and were delighted to support and participate in our programs as a way to merge their interests, experience, and artistic talents.

AIANoVa is grateful for our relationship so far with the TFAC and we look forward to continuing a mutually benefiting partnership. We recognize how fortunate we are in Alexandria to have a nationally prominent resource like the TFAC in our own back yard, especially one that places such importance on building up the community around it.

Sincerely,

Joseph B. McCoy, AIA

1101 Duke Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703.549.9747
aianova@aianova.org
www.aianova.org



November 14, 2018

Mr. Mark Jinx, City Manager,

For the past two years, I have been working with the staff at the Torpedo Factory to provide high quality arts experiences to service members and veterans living, working, and receiving care in the National Capital Region. Through programs in collaboration with the USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and Community Building Art Works, nearly one hundred service members and veterans have exhibited artwork, read poetry, or performed original music at the Torpedo Factory Art Center. These events, not unlike the program featured in the HBO Documentary “We Are Not Done Yet” have been essential to building veteran-civilian dialog and understanding.

In July 2018, we began the CBAW+TFAC writing workshop series, a monthly community building writing workshop advertised to veterans/service members and refugees and open to local writers. Those workshops have taken place in the beautiful Riverview Room on the second floor of the building, with prestigious visiting writers like NYT Best-selling memoirist Susanna Sonnenberg, NEA Fellow Jeanann Verlee and others.

Daniel Guzman and Brett Johnson have been welcoming, flexible, and professional. They have been innovative collaborators, keen on keeping the Torpedo Factory Art Center a relevant and inclusive part of the evolving Washington DC art scene. I believe that under their direction it will continue to be that and more.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Reza'.

Seema Reza, Chair
Community Building Art Works

Emily Baker

From: Diane Ruggiero
Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 1:33 PM
To: Mark Jinks; Emily Baker
Cc: Brett Johnson
Subject: FW: Artist Support of TFAC Recommendations By Mark Jinks

I wasn't sure if you received a copy of this email to the Arts Commission...

Happy Thanksgiving!

Diane Ruggiero
Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities Department
Director, Office of the Arts
1108 Jefferson Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703.746.5590
diane.ruggiero@alexandriava.gov
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#artsalx

From: Christopher Erney <chrisherney@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 12:57 PM
To: mstensrud@gmail.com
Cc: Diane Ruggiero <diane.ruggiero@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: Artist Support of TFAC Recommendations By Mark Jinks

To Matthew Stensrud,
Chair, The Alexandria Commission for the Arts

CC Diane Ruggiero
Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, Office of the Arts

I am writing to show my support for the recommendation made by Mark Jinks for the City to remain the managing entity for the TFAC. I have been an artist at the Torpedo Factory for 14 years, in fact, 15 years ago I moved to Alexandria specifically to try to get into the TFAC. I value my studio space. I am a small business owner who makes my living using this studio, so I really appreciate the stability Mr Jinks' lease extension provides my business while TFAC management issues are debated and worked out.

I care deeply about this City and am excited at the thought of a new, more energized TFAC taking its place on the new Alexandria waterfront. I served in 2013-14 as a TFAA (artist association) president in an attempt to bridge the ever widening gap of cooperation between the artists and the City. Unfortunately, since then, the TFAA has taken a much more unreasonable, rude and hostile

tone with the City. In fact, their actions made me so embarrassed to be a member of their organization that I (and a few others including another past president) left the TFAA organization.

From my dozen years as a member as well as my role as president, I know the TFAA well. Because of that, I fully understand why the TFAA -at least in it's current form, is not the right choice for the leadership/management role of the Torpedo Factory Art Center facility. The TFAA is unable to enforce any rules, unable to form a viable strategic vision, unwilling to make any tough decisions needed for positive, meaningful change, and also lack the funds and staff needed to maintain our facilities -much less improve them in the future.

I am sure you will hear from and about the "poor artists" and how they deserve one more chance. Well, to be blunt, they had many chances (for about 40 years) unfortunately, due to their own inaction and lack of vision, the TFAC became increasingly stagnant. The TFAC, though well worn from public use, has in it's art center mission markedly improved under the recent City management. The Torpedo Factory now has more programming, seems to have become more culturally diverse and has experimented with expanded hours to reach new audiences.

Unlike most of the other TFAC artists you will likely hear from, I truly appreciate the commitment the City has shown to the TFAC in the past, and I am very excited for the future evolution of the TFAC that begins with this first step -Mark Jink's recommendation that will be discussed by City Council on Tuesday, November 13, 2018. I congratulate the Office of the Arts for their accomplishments so far, and I urge The Alexandria Commission for the Arts to support the direction for the continuation of City management that was recommended by Mark Jinks.

Best Regards,
Chris Erney

Christopher Erney

The Torpedo Factory
Studio 33
105 N. Union Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

phone (703) 362-4416

web www.ChristopherErney.com

email chriserney@yahoo.com

Brett Johnson

From: Mark Jinks
Sent: Thursday, November 15, 2018 8:24 PM
To: Ann Dorman
Cc: Emily Baker; Diane Ruggiero; Brett Johnson
Subject: Re: Torpedo Factory

Thank you Ann. So far the email and letters are running positive about the recommendations.

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 15, 2018, at 6:06 PM, Ann Dorman <adorman@meetingsandeventsofdistinction.com> wrote:

All:

I have just read the article in this week's Alexandria Times about the City Manager's recommendation for the City to permanently assume management of the Torpedo Factory. I applaud this recommendation. As someone who was on the original board when the non-profit was established by the City some year's ago, and as someone that has had regular interaction with both the artists and staff, better management was sorely needed. The artists at the Factory are great at what they do. They have no business sense and certainly cannot manage the building.

Prior to the City's management of the building, it was in sad disrepair. Even an attempt of the board to help the artists clean up the building and do some painting fell on deaf ears.

As a resident and business owner in Alexandria, I have enjoyed the Torpedo Factory for more than 30 years. Please listen to your City Manager and continue managing that building.

Ann Dorman, CMP
President & CEO



adorman@meetingsandeventsofdistinction.com
(703) 626-1266

Brett Johnson

From: Michael Fischerkeller <desertfish01@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 15, 2018 7:39 PM
To: Brett Johnson
Subject: Fwd: Call.Click.Connect. #161391: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council Dear Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor,...

And, from the Vice Mayor ...

Begin forwarded message:

From: Justin Wilson <justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov>
Date: November 11, 2018 at 8:56:06 PM EST
To: "desertfish01@gmail.com" <desertfish01@gmail.com>
Cc: Nancy Lacey <nancy.lacey@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: Re: Call.Click.Connect. #161391: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council Dear Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor,...

Dr. Fischerkeller,

Thanks for the note and offering your perspective on the path forward for the Torpedo Factory.

I will keep you updated as the Council works through this issue.

Have a great week.

Justin M. Wilson, Vice Mayor
Alexandria City Council
Office: 703.746.4500
Home: 703.299.1576
justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov

From: Michael Fischerkeller via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>
Sent: Sunday, November 11, 2018 10:00 AM
To: City Council; City Council Aides; Alexis Lacy; Call Click Connect; Gloria Sitton
Subject: Call.Click.Connect. #161391: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council Dear Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor,...

Dear Call.Click.Connect. User

A request was just created using Call.Click.Connect. The request ID is 161391.

Request Details:

This is a "public" request. Information may be provided to anyone who requests it.

- Name: Michael Fischerkeller
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 703-869-0792
- Email: desertfish01@gmail.com
- Service Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council
- Request Description: Dear Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor, and members of the City Council,

I'm an artist leasing a studio in the Torpedo Factory Arts Center. Note that I am NOT a member of the Torpedo Factory Artists Association (TFAA). I'm writing to express my great joy in seeing that the City Manager has recommended to the City Council that the City retain control over the Arts Center. I have been very impressed by the staff the City hired to manage the center and by their efforts to increase the diversity of both the artist pool and the programming that is offered. I could not disagree more strongly with adversarial perspectives and approaches taken by the TFAA immediately after (and continuing to this day) the City's assumption of management of the Arts Center, which is a primary reason why I disassociated from that group. I can assure you that the TFAA's stance does not reflect the values and viewpoints of all of the artists in the Arts Center. I, personally, am grateful for the City's leadership and have enjoyed working with your staff in scheduling programming during Late Shifts and other events and look forward to continuing such collaborations. Such activities, and the City's support thereof, is indicative of the bright future the Arts Center can enjoy with your continued support.

Thank you for your commitment to the arts, in general, and the continued operation of the Arts Center, specifically. If you are interested in having a conversation around or about this note, please don't hesitate to contact me at: desertfish01@gmail.com

Respectfully,

Dr. Michael Fischerkeller
Studio 5

- Expected Response Date: Friday, November 16

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the Call.Click.Connect. staff interface.](#)

If you need assistance with handling this request, please contact CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.HELP.

This is an automated email notification of a Call.Click.Connect. request. Please do not reply to this email.



**School of Art
Art and Design Building**

4400 University Drive, MSN 1C3, Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Phone: 703-993-8898; Web: soa.gmu.edu

November, 10, 2018

Mark B. Jinks
City Manager
Alexandria, Virginia

Dear Mr. Jinks,

I've heard the good news about the city's support for continuing its role with the Torpedo Factory. I want to lend my support and sincere appreciation for the robust relationship that has grown between the George Mason University School of Art and the Torpedo Factory.

Our faculty and students been very enthusiastic about the programs that we have been engaged in for the past two years, including exhibitions, residencies and educational outreach. I want to reiterate our commitment to a continued partnership, with appreciation to Brett Johnson, Dan Guzman, Leslie Mounaime and the rest of the staff for their good will and good work.

GMU and the Torpedo Factory are each dedicated to education and moving the place and practice of the arts further, and hopefully we play a vital role in our communities. I'm excited that we will be able to grow our relationship in service of our community and the visual arts.

Please feel free to share this with your colleagues, and extend my thanks to them.

Sincere regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Peter Winant", set against a light blue rectangular background.

Peter Winant
Director

Dear Mayor Silberberg and City Council Members,

I am writing to offer comments in advance of the Council's November 17, 2018 meeting to discuss the long-term management of the Torpedo Factory Art Center.

I learned about the Council's upcoming meeting from a November 12, 2018 article in the Zebra on-line newsletter which implied that the management of the Torpedo Factory had forced a printmaker out of her studio "with expansive river views" so that it could be turned into a conference room and administrative space, and that the artist "does not appear to have been relocated in the art center." I am the printmaker in question and the reason I was not "relocated" is that, when I decided to retire, I vacated my studio space in accordance with the rules stated in the lease. After 24 years as a resident artist at the Torpedo Factory, I am now happily enjoying retirement and working in my home studio. I was certainly not forced out of my studio space.

It's not really my concern but, as far as I know, the City, as the owner of the Torpedo Factory, had a right to convert the space I vacated into administrative space. My studio was located adjacent to the main staff offices, so it seems logical that if any studio was to be converted to a conference room for staff use and programs, it would have been my former studio. Contrary to the Zebra article, I was not unfairly treated and, in fact, my interactions with the Director of the Torpedo Factory and his able staff were always cordial and professional. I understand that the new conference room is frequently used for both internal management meetings and meetings with community members and arts programs, so it must be filling a need.

All of this leads me to offer some further observations. First and foremost, over the course of my long career as a Torpedo Factory artist – which included service on the Board and on several committees during the era of artists' "self-governance" – I concluded that, through no fault of our own, we TFAC artists were no longer well qualified to manage the facility effectively and handle all the administrative and associated personnel details, let alone conduct effective outreach and marketing campaigns. At a time when the Torpedo Factory urgently needed to evolve to meet new challenges, the number of artists who had the experience, energy, time and passion to provide the necessary leadership dwindled.

I believe professional management by the City has been a good thing for the stability of the Torpedo Factory and allows artists to focus on being artists, not administrators. I don't see any viable alternative to management by the City, particularly in view of the requirement for capital funding on the order of \$10 million over the next ten years to bring the Torpedo Factory building's plumbing, electrical, heating and climate control systems, and security up to acceptable standards. With all of the economic challenges that TFAC artists now face in a changing retail art market, it seems unlikely that they could--or would want to--finance these necessary improvements.

If the Torpedo Factory is to regain its past vibrancy as a magnet for members of the public who are genuinely interested in the arts, the artists need to commit to actually being present, with their studios open to the public, and to doing artwork on-site. This was Marian Van Landingham's original and wonderful idea--that gifted and juried artists would be in residence, not as shopkeepers but as artists working in their chosen media in studios that the public could visit most days of the week. As the Zebra article noted, "numerous studios are dark" at prime time in prime locations and others "are open at best infrequently." If the Torpedo Factory is to thrive as an "art center" and as the "major creative engine" to which Mr. Jinks' letter refers, the artists have to be willing and able to put in more time in their studios than is currently the case with many TFAC artists.

I was surprised that the Zebra article overlooked the successes of the Art League, another tenant of the Torpedo Factory building. The Art League is a vibrant dedicated space that is always open and welcoming, has a diverse membership, exhibits members' work in a wide variety of media in juried shows, supports community programs, employs professional managers, and consistently attracts interested members of the public. The Art League bears closer study as a model for the kinds of changes that could restore the Torpedo Factory to its former status as a thriving art center.

Respectfully,

Viviane de Kosinsky

TFAC former Studio 225

Emily Baker

From: Matthew Johnston <mjohnsto@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, November 12, 2018 3:18 PM
To: Emily Baker
Subject: Artist Support of Recommendations By Mark Jinks for TFAC

MATTHEW JOHNSTON
412 John Carlyle St
Alexandria Virginia 22314
703 549 5017

Dear Ms Mayor and City Council Members

It is my belief that the Torpedo Factory Artists Association (TFAA) is unaware they have become a victim of entropy in art, which suggests that any organization will etiolate without new inputs of energy.

So, as a veteran TFAC artist and longtime resident of Alexandria; I wholeheartedly support the City Manager's recommendation to the City Council regarding the revitalization of the TFAC. I'd like to congratulate the City on four changes which have occurred since they assumed control:

RENT

It's a pure joy to be sending my rent checks directly to the city and no longer to the TFAA. I believe their monetary decisions have been indefensible.

RACIAL DIVERSITY

I have noticed a marked improvement and attendance and attitude toward all visitors. This is something the Torpedo Factory Art Association (TFAA) has struggled with for years. The city's staff changes have been a breath of fresh air for anyone entering the TFAC. The new staff are always pleasant and very helpful. This is a subtle change which sets the stage for the beginning of a wonderful visit.

LATE NIGHTS

Longer open hours for the building have been a welcome improvement. The Torpedo Factory is an ominous shape sitting at the end of King street at night when it is dark. Now with the new functions the building simply glows at night. To anyone floating down the river or on the other side of the Potomac, it must seem as alluring as the green light on Daisy's dock.

STUDIO HOURS

The hours for each studio have been posted. Now they need to be ENFORCED. The artists are incapable of doing this themselves. This is probably, without exception, the issue which causes the most vitriolic response from the TFAA. When I first took possession of a studio here at the TFAC they were mainly, inexpensive studio spaces. The studios still ARE inexpensive, but they have also become, with this growth, COMMERCIAL spaces and with that comes responsibilities; a business attitude. Any lease holder finding the rents too high, dealing with the public to annoying, or putting in less than 40 hours a week should, instead, decide to work from a home studio. What true "artist" has to be forced to go to work in his or her own studio? This point alone proves, to me, that many of the studios in the TFAC are occupied by individuals who are an "artist" in name only. Another more energetic artist could make better use of the space. It is my contention that the City should take a more muscular approach to this issue which I outlined below.

The city and the TFAC have changed enormously since the inception in 1974. Growth and costs have exploded, but the City has bent over backwards to help the artist maintain a lid on these rents. I believe the TFAA's hostile response, to almost any improvement or offer of help, illustrates their lack of gratitude. But to me, this has been greatly appreciated. I would not have this life (a working artist living off his sales) here in Alexandria, without the graciousness of the City I love.

In addition to the management issues of the TFAC, I would like to post this list for the City Council to also consider as they plan for the future of the Torepdo Factory:

A MEASURE OF GROWTH

As everyone knows, being an artist has no barrier to entry. An individual can wake up in the morning, a light bulb goes off, and he or she decides: I want to be an artist. Voila! An artist is born. However, its very difficult to convince anyone with whom you speak, that you are an artist. Some artists have college degrees, like myself, but for many having a studio in the TFAC is their proof that they are an artist. Whether you have a degree or not, putting in the effort and growing artistically throughout the years is the key to being successful.

The TFAA seems to think that any measure put forth for the artists to be rated on their success as an artist is purely an effort to force everyone out of the building. As we dance around this issue, sometimes "term limits" are raised, which is another way to prune the organization by avoiding any efforts of accountability. Rather than rewarding and retaining the best in the building as you purge those not performing, term limits kicks every artist out at some random point in time whether successful or not. This control of who leases a studio and how long they can stay is the essence of the TFAA's entire fight against the City. If the City's goal is to have a building featuring vibrant, active artists, I feel we need to start to measure artistic success and keeping those who are the best and making space for new artists to grow.

I believe there are two ways to be successful; through commercial growth or critical growth. (Not all great artists are commercial successes, and not all commercially successful artists get top notch reviews.) However, it is my opinion, that too many lessors here fall into the middle of those two categories; they are neither. Many, even after decades in the building have shown to be successful in neither category yet they are allowed to stay year after year. Those who are not performing in either category are

taking the place of a new artist who deserves their shot at success. I believe the artists residing at the Torpedo Factory, going forward, should at least fall into one of these two groups. The evidence of either category is easily verified.

Sincerely,
Matthew Johnston



Torpedo Factory, Studio 310
105 North Union Street
Alexandria VA 22314

Tel: +1 (703) 549-5017

Emily Baker

From: natalie abrams <natalie@natalieabrams.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 07, 2018 3:44 PM
To: Mark Jinks
Cc: Emily Baker; Diane Ruggiero
Subject: Support of the Office of the Arts Management

Dear Mr. Jinks,

Though we haven't met, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Natalie Abrams and I am both a newly juried in artist as well as new lease holder awarded with a one year residency at the Torpedo Factory. Having been here since May and new to the Torpedo Factory, I felt it was important to contact you and express my wholehearted support for Brett Johnson and the rest of the staff of the Office of Arts currently managing the Torpedo Factory. And while I apologize in advance for the length of this email, the contents I feel are important to say.

I have been a full time practicing sculptor for over ten years, have lived and exhibited all over the country and have been fortunate enough to be awarded a number of prestigious residencies. Being self taught, I have built a solid career and lasting relationships with nationally and internationally recognized artists, curators, and patrons from the ground up. Though not my first career, it is what I am deeply passionate about and fully committed to.

To that end, becoming part of this institution was very important to me. Having shifted my career from a more academic sculpture and fine art practice to a retail and production oriented wearable sculpture and accessories business, the Torpedo Factory is truly a perfect fit. It allows me the space I need to develop work, at a rate I can afford (being the perennially broke stereotypical artist) in a retail environment. How could I possibly do better?

Upon taking space here, I've become increasingly disturbed by the hostile and aggressive position the TFAA board has taken against the city management. The hostility and behavior of certain members of the TFAA towards Brett's office and the city of Alexandria/owner of the building, really upsets me and is in no way representative of my feelings. I've spoken to and worked with all the members of the Office of the Arts and have never found them to be anything other than excited to help and supportive as I grow my business. In all honesty, some of my requests are not the easiest or the most timely. Yet they still listen and do whatever they can to assist.

I applaud the Office of the Arts for experimenting with new opportunities to drive traffic into the facility. This is a constant challenge for any studio space and even more so for a space which is so open to the public. I am so grateful for their efforts as that traffic benefits us all. I also appreciate their continual efforts to work with the TFAA on the operation of the Torpedo Factory. It's unfortunate the TFAA is not more responsive and willing to work with the city.

Thank you so much for your time. Please let me know if I can answer any questions or if I can be of any assistance. My door is always open.

With Regard,

Natalie Abrams

t. 303.408.0120

e. natalie@natalieabrams.com

w. www.natalieabrams.com

fb. www.facebook.com/abramswearable

Leah Landes

From: Sermaine McLean
Sent: Friday, November 09, 2018 5:06 PM
To: Leah Landes
Subject: FW: Support of Office of the Arts

From: rosemarycovey@aol.com <rosemarycovey@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, November 09, 2018 4:21 PM
To: Mark Jinks <Mark.Jinks@alexandriava.gov>; chrisherney@yahoo.com; mjohnsto@earthlink.net
Cc: Emily Baker <Emily.Baker@alexandriava.gov>; Sermaine McLean <Sermaine.McLean@alexandriava.gov>; Diane Ruggiero <diane.ruggiero@alexandriava.gov>; Brett Johnson <brett.johnson@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: Re: Support of Office of the Arts

Dear Mark and Emily,

I was sorry not to have attended the meeting last week. I was very pleased to have received the letter forwarded by Brett Johnson, recommending the continuation of the current system. Just in case you get blow back again, I have written to city council and am forwarding you my letter. I am sure it will be one of many. If you need further support please feel free to call on me.

Warm regards and thank you,
Rosemary

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am writing in support of City Manager Mark Jinks recommendations to city council regarding the future of the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Many of us are grateful to have the Office of the Arts managing the building. They have brought new ideas and programming which have added to a revitalization of the art center. Tonight for example is Late Shift, which brings a young audience to the building on a Friday night. We have found the staff to be accessible and easy to work with. Countless chances have been given for artist input. We are glad to leave management to the professionals and are very happy to work in our studios and greet the varied and fascinating groups of people who visit the art center. I look forward to seeing new plans as the art center continues to evolve.

Like many of the artists, I have deep roots in the factory. I am a homeowner in Alexandria. I have been president of the Artists Association (2009-2010) and elected by the artists to the Torpedo Factory City Board (2012-2015). I was president for two consecutive terms. I founded Morrison House Presents with Pam Cressey, head city archeologist, a collaboration between the Torpedo Factory and the Kimpton Hotel group that lasted over four years. My work is in over forty museum collections worldwide.

I am proud to be part of a city that supports the arts in such a tangible way, renting us space in a key location. A city council who

has continued over decades to understand the value of the arts to the community and to visitors. It is important that the artists are not seen as a monolith represented by the Torpedo Factory Artist Association. Many of us are very happy to see the Office of the Arts continue to manage the center. They are doing a great job. Thank you all for your support.

Rosemary Feit Covey

Dear Mayor Silberberg, Mayor-elect Wilson and members of Council,

I know that this topic is not as sexy as parking and storm water runoff, but I am writing in support of the City Manager's recommendations regarding continued City management of the Torpedo Factory Art Center.

I have been a member of the Art Center since its inception and was on its board more years than not. Additionally, I was on the committee that hired MAI and developed the plan for the interim TFACB, of which I was a member for most of its existence. In the TFAA, I often served as Treasurer and was on the Finance Committee of the TFACB. I am also an Old Town resident and have served on the Arts Commission.

I no longer participate in TFAA governance and have been vehemently, if quietly, opposed to the plan that was put forward for artist management, for a number of reasons.

First, I do not understand why the artists would want to self manage again. It is a difficult job, requiring many volunteer hours and much stomach acid. Most of those promoting the idea are relatively new members, with no real knowledge of its long history, and no concept of the amount of work involved. The argument that "we always broke even" is not a ringing endorsement.

Second, the plan is overly optimistic in its expectations of new revenue gained from partnerships, collaborations, grants, and ticketed events. As an example, when a group performing a Poe play was looking for a venue, *we paid them* for the privilege of hosting, in return for revenue from ticket sales. It was a good idea for evening usage, but not for generating income.

Third, if the TFAA was sincere in building financial partnerships, they should have started already in order to prove that they would indeed produce revenue. Potential collaborators and supporters should already have been identified. The idea that a management company would be paid out of the income that they generated seems highly unlikely.

Fourth, I am ashamed of the comments made by the current TFAA president and others. (What is it with presidents, anyway?)

In my view the City has done a good job with building management, other than a few idiosyncrasies, like feeling the urge to vacuum on a busy Saturday afternoon. The staff are competent, pleasant, and are accommodating when they need to be, plus visitors are no longer permitted to bring snakes. Presumably you agree with the need to maintain high artistic quality in order to advance Alexandria's reputation as an arts destination. And, as stated, the City is the only entity that can invest in the much needed capital improvements, which I understand are already underway.

We (the artists) are grateful to have space to work, and hopefully sell. We continue to welcome the public and allow them a window into our lives and the creative processes we employ. We recommend restaurants, point out bathrooms, give directions and politely identify the Potomac as being a river and not the Chesapeake Bay, and on lucky occasions meet museum curators and gallery directors, precocious children, and interesting people from all walks of life.

Thank you for your consideration,
Susan Sanders

thewashingtonballet

Mary Day, founder / Julie Kent, artistic director

Mark B. Jinks
city Manager
City Hall
301 King Street
Room 3500
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Jinks,

This year we formed a partnership with the Torpedo Factory Art Center to bring high-quality visual art exhibitions to the Fannie Mae Gallery of The Washington Ballet. We were fortunate to collaborate with Brett John Johnson, Discover Graphics, and Print Makers, Inc.

The inaugural exhibit was well-received and has been enjoyed by hundreds of families over the past several months. We were especially excited to have Mr. Johnson and several of the participating artists join us for our first open rehearsal event of the season.

We fully support that the city's Office of the Arts continue to be the managing body responsible for the operations of Torpedo Factory Art Center. We have found the staff to be incredibly professional and responsive.

We look forward, not only to future art exhibitions at The Washington Ballet, but opportunities for dancers from The Washington Ballet to perform in Alexandria.

We would be happy to have you join us for our next collaboration with the Torpedo Factory Arts Center, and will share dates with you as soon as they are available.

All the best ,



Ricki Marion
Director of Development



**Metropolitan
Washington-Baltimore**

November 14th, 2018

Dear Mr. Jinks:

In my capacity as the Senior Manager of Resiliency Programs for the USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore, I have worked with Brett Johnson for almost 6 years. I was elated to discover that Brett would be moving to the Torpedo Factory Art Center. I found the staff at the Torpedo Factory Art Center to be highly professional and knowledgeable about the arts. I was happy to learn of the recommendations put forth by the City Manager to the Council this November. We hope to continue working with the staff from the Office of the Arts and know we can continue to grow programming for a stronger future.

We have since held a number of programs at the Torpedo Factory including a veteran/active military art exhibit, a music and words performance, our Combat2Canvas exhibit and readings, and field trip for service members receiving care in an outpatient program. We continue to find ways to collaborate and bring opportunities to service members and their families.

USO-Metro offers a variety of arts programs at the USO Warrior and Family centers for wounded, ill or injured service members and their families. While we offer programming at our center, it is important to help our service members to transition into the community. Our partnership with the Torpedo Factory Art Center allows us to ease that transition. TFAC serves as a space where service members are able to give back and reintegrate with their community, in particular the Alexandria community as many of them eventually stay within the area.

In working with both Brett and Daniel, it is apparent they value art as a way of healing and transformative tool. I look forward to future collaborations with the Torpedo Factory Art Center.

Sincerely,

Ashy Palliparambil
Sr. Manager, Resiliency Programs
USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore
Ashy@usometro.org
Mobile: 703-483-0214



VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

November 9, 2018

Mark B. Jinks
City Manager
City of Alexandria
301 King Street, Room 3500
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Jinks:

On behalf of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, I am writing to express the museum's great appreciation for our statewide partnership with the Torpedo Factory Art Center.

As you know, the VMFA strives to provide access to all of our resources to every Virginian across the Commonwealth. Our partnership with the Torpedo Factory is an essential part of that mission. With this partnership, we can bring the state art museum to residents of your region.

We have been able to share our programs with your audiences in a variety of ways. These include workshops and seminars that have been attended by people from Northern Virginia but also Maryland. My experience teaching workshops there has been especially meaningful as I met artists from a variety of backgrounds and experience. The partnership with VMFA also offers opportunities for consultations on in a wide range of topics from exhibition design and programming to HVAC controls for museum level exhibition spaces free of charge.

Director Brett Johnson and his staff have always been extremely professional and it has always been a pleasure to work with them. Since Brett became Director, I have seen a lot of new energy and creativity so many areas from exhibitions to programming.

The Torpedo Factory Art Center is a wonderful asset to your community and VMFA supports its mission fully. The Torpedo Factory is truly a creative engine for your region and reaches many lives with meaningful programming and exhibitions.

We are looking forward to partnering with the Torpedo Factory to bring our newest statewide initiative, VMFA on the Road: the Artmobile for the 21st Century to Alexandria.

This will provide opportunities for K-12 schools, universities and the public to tour the onboard exhibition which features nationally recognized artists from the VMFA permanent collection such as artists such as Cy Twombly, Sally Mann, Nell Blaine, Julien Binford and many others.

We look forward not only to continuing our partnership but to expanding opportunities to work with the Torpedo Factory to serve your diverse audience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Allison", with a large, loopy initial "J" on the left side.

Jeffrey W. Allison

Manager, Statewide Programs and Exhibitions

Paul Mellon Collections Educator

Jeffrey.allison@vmfa.museum

804/204-2671