



Legislation Text

---

File #: 14-2513, Version: 1

---

City of Alexandria, Virginia

---

MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** MARCH 5, 2014

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER/s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration 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:** 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, 2014.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council authorizes 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.

**BACKGROUND:** The City has received the maximum amount of funds awarded through the Virginia Commission for the Arts' Local Government Challenge Grant Program for 34 out of the past 35 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 2015, 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, 2014. 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 Office of the Arts for Fiscal Year 2015. Included in the application is a description of each artist and

organization proposed to receive VCA funding.

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts (ACA) advises the Office of the Arts staff on funding appropriations to grant applicants. The Office of the Arts' grant program is modeled after the Virginia Commission for the Arts grant program.

The Office of the Arts made some adjustments to the Fiscal Year 2015 grant program. The adjustments made were to provide grantees easier access to the online program, to outreach to individual artists and organizations by offering in-person workshops and webinars, and to condense the grant program's cycle for grantees, panel and Arts Commission members, and staff. On January 6, the Office of the Arts' provided online written guidelines to all potential applicants. Grant workshops and webinars were held in January and February. Online submissions are due the last Friday in February. In March and April, 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 hearing of the applications under consideration for funding. At this meeting, they also conduct formal action by awarding conditional grants. After the adoption of the City budget in May, confirmation letters with funding levels are sent to successful applicants. All applicants receiving funding from the Office of the Arts are required to submit a Final Report within thirty days after the project is completed. The Arts 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 Office of the Arts be 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		
American Youth Philharmonic	\$200		
Ambassador Theater			\$200
Arts on the Horizon			\$200
The Art League			\$300
Arts Resource Foundation/Del Ray Artisans	\$200		
Choreographers Collaboration Project	\$200		
Eclipse Chamber Orchestra		\$300	
First Night Alexandria		\$300	
Jane Franklin Dance Company	\$200		
Karen Reedy Dance Company	\$200		
Living Legends of Alexandria	\$200		
MetroStage			\$200
Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association	\$200		
Port City Playhouse			\$200
Quintango			\$200
Virginia Bronze Handbells		\$200	
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 Office of the Arts receives a successful Final Report.

**DISCUSSION:** The Virginia Commission for the Arts’ Local Government Challenge Grant if received is a pass-through grant. The funds represent less than 3% of the total funds available for the Office of the Arts’ grant program.

**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 2015 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.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None.

**STAFF:**

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

Diane Ruggiero, Deputy Director, RPCA/Office of the Arts

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