

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting  
Virtual Meeting  
Agenda Item I-7  
July 14, 2020  
City Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli  
Vice Mayor Vince Lago  
Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.  
Commissioner Pat Keon  
Commissioner Michael Mena**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias  
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos  
Interim Director, Historic & Cultural Affairs Department, Kara Kautz  
Arts and Cultural Affairs Specialist, Catherine Cathers  
City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Mark Hart, Executive and Artistic Director of the Community Arts Program**

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Agenda Item I-7

A Resolution approving Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Cultural Grant recipients and setting in place a funding mechanism contingent on the City's approved budget. (Unanimously recommended by the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 7 to 0).

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I-7.

City Manager Iglesias: Kara Kautz will address I-7.

Interim Historic Preservation Director Kautz: Okay, I am sorry, it was on mute. And again, this is to approve the funding for the Cultural grants for next year. Catherine has more information on it. If you go ahead and unmute her, please. You are still muted, Catherine. There we go.

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Art and Cultural Specialist Cathers: Thank you, Kara. Thank you, Mayor, Vice Mayors, Commissioners. One of the responsibilities of the City's Cultural Development Board is to recommend to the City Commission the annual allocation of cultural grant funding to qualify non-profit and 501(c)3 and 50(c)4 groups that produce meaningful cultural experiences for the betterment of the cultural, the Coral Gables community. These experiences must take place within the City of Coral Gables and be open and accessible to the public. In February, the Commission approved moving this process forward to greater align with the City's financial approval of process beginning with the traditional arts program season and with the intent to follow similar State, Regional and Municipal grant programs. Therefore, on June 11<sup>th</sup>, the Cultural Development Board reviewed and scored 39 cultural grant applications. One application was required by the Coral Gables Museum, which is funded separately, and proposed funding of 34 applicants and their scores including the museum were attached to the resolution and available to the public. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic certain funding streams for non-profit cultural arts organizations have been reallocated cut for this year pending our decision to do so. Despite this reality, organizations quickly mobilized and shifted their existing and planned programs to online and virtual experiences. Many of these are listed on the City's Cultural Grant webpage at [www.coralgables.com/culturalgrants](http://www.coralgables.com/culturalgrants). We are also following the County's position of proceeding with cultural grant funding recommendation. Michael Spring is the Director of the Miami-Dade County Cultural Affairs responded to our request for comment and stated that the objective is to provide non-profit arts and cultural ... with the resources essential to help with their survival and to work collaboratively to ensure that the best and safest cultural experiences are available for the public. This morning we just received a notice that Mayor Gimenez has recommended renewing full funding for the County's Cultural Grant program, and we were really excited to get that news this morning. We have Cultural Development board member Dr. Fernando Alvarez-Perez who is appointed by the board to speak on their behalf regarding this recommendation to the City Commission. If you can please unmute, Doctor... there he is. Go ahead, Doctor.

City Clerk Urquia: Dr. Perez, your microphone is turned off.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No.

Art and Cultural Specialist Cathers: It's still off.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I can't hear a thing.

City Clerk Urquia: He is connected with video, but the audio is not coming through.

Art and Cultural Specialist Cathers: Okay. I am going to send him a text here.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, in the meantime, we do have someone from the public on this...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: It is Mr. Mark Hart has requested to speak on this item.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Hart.

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Mr. Mark Hart: Yes, good afternoon Mr. Mayor, Mr. Vice Mayor and members of the Commission. My name is Mark Hart, Executive and Artistic Director of the Community Arts Program housed within the historic Coral Gables Congregational Church across from the Biltmore Hotel. I wanted to take this moment to say, thank you. Thank you for believing in and supporting culture. This year especially, its most appreciated as we provide the community arts program virtual summer conference series, our thirty-fifth consecutive year, and for obvious reasons our first virtual year. It began last Thursday and continues every Thursday and continue every Thursday evening through August 13<sup>th</sup>. Over six weeks of concerts employing local musicians and technicians we are engaging audience from across Coral Gables, the United States and around the globe. So again, thank you Mr. Mayor, Mr. Vice Mayor, Coral Gables City Commission, the Department of Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Department and Cultural Development Board for helping us all to tell to the world a Coral Gables story, because when we return to some semblance, a better new normal, more people from all over will for the first time and again choose Coral Gables as a destination to visit, to eat within its restaurants and to enjoy cultural offerings from the City that remembered them during this time. That is the City Beautiful. Thank you again, Mr. Mayor, Mr. Vice Mayor and members of the Commission.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Hart, thank you very, very much.

Mr. Hart: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Can we try with Fernando again?

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, he has no audio turned on.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, Catherine.

Art and Cultural Specialist Cathers: Okay, well I know he was going to just share the thoughts of the board, and as you know, they already voted to fund the 34 applicants. They discussed the importance this year, even more so than usual providing cultural support for cultural grant programs, they noted the quality of the cultural grant applications from last year. Every board member read and reviewed each application and used the scoring rule \_\_\_\_\_ to support a fair and scoring process. Each of the applicants was discussed by the board and the scores were read out loud and confirmed for the board members. The board agreed on distributing the funds based on scores with the highest percentage of the funds this year going to the Coral Gables based cultural anchors. The board also discussed how the proposed programs may change based on the new closures due to COVID-19 and agreed that it is in the best interest of the City for the residents and visitors for the cultural programs to continue online or virtually. A majority of the cultural grant programs for the cultural fiscal year have moved online and virtual programs and those are available to all residents and reach audiences far beyond Coral Gables. The board unanimously recommended that cultural grants funding be maintained and funded at the amounts provided to the City Commission. It was also made very clear, that the funding would only move forward after the new budget goes into effect in October. But this way, we could release the funds quicker for the organizations in October, right away.

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Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much. This was a change from the last procedure of the past, and I think it is a good change. Thank you very, very much.

Art and Cultural Specialist Cathers: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Are there any comments on distribution?

Commissioner Keon: No, I think it is all...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Motion.

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Vice Mayor Lago: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, please.

City Clerk Urquia: Commissioner Keon.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Fors, Jr.: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Alvarez-Perez, I am sorry that we didn't get to hear you, but your picture is on the screen, thank you.

Art and Cultural Specialist Cathers: Thank you.