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Dallas Arts Commission Discusses Delayed Funding for Black Dance Theatre

The Dallas Arts and Culture Advisory Commission met Thursday to address the delayed release of funds in city funding for the Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT), a longstanding institution in the city's arts community. The council also considered plans if the delay continues into 2025.

The funding, part of the annual budget, has been delayed due to a labor dispute currently under review by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The commission outlined three potential outcomes: approval if the dispute is resolved by April 15, 2025, reallocation of the funds to other organizations, or settlement approval if an agreement is reached.

"The arts are a lifeline for our community," said commission member Clyde Valentin. "This funding delay impacts not just DBDT but also our city's broader efforts to support cultural equity."

Several commissioners expressed concern about the delay's impact on DBDT, which has relied on city funding for decades. Vicky Meek, a longtime arts advocate, highlighted the theater's cultural and historical significance to Dallas.

"This isn't just about dollars," Meek said. "It's about acknowledging the role DBDT plays in uplifting the voices of our diverse communities."

In addition to the funding issue, the commission reviewed plans for a new public art installation at the Dallas Police Academy.

The delayed funding sparked broader discussions about equity in arts funding. The commission emphasized the importance of ensuring resources reach underrepresented communities and mentioned

potential reallocation to programs like ALANNA, which supports Latinx, African American, Native American, and Asian artists, if DBDT’s funding is forfeited.

“This process highlights the challenges we face in ensuring equitable arts funding,” said Valentin.

The meeting ended with commissioners stressing the importance of resolving the labor dispute to ensure DBDT can continue its programming.

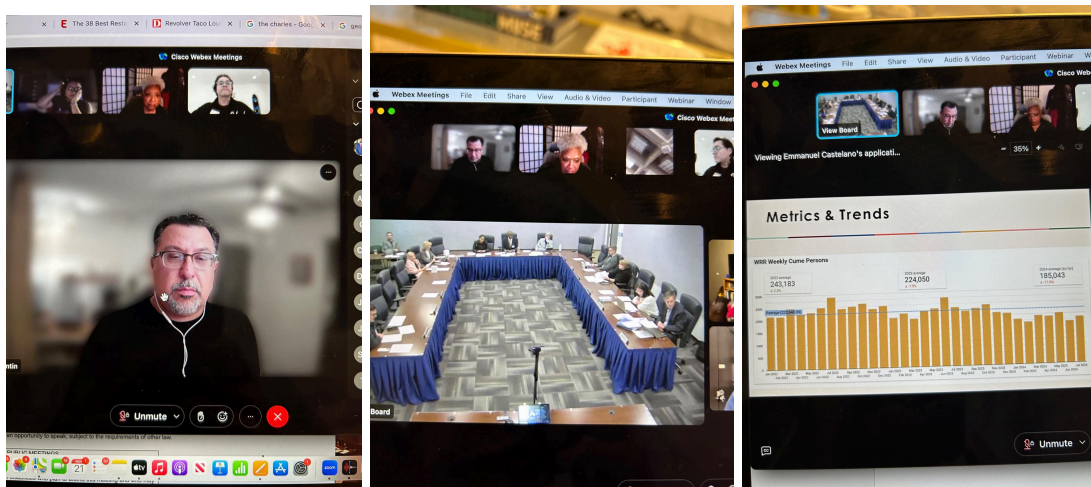
The next Arts and Culture Advisory Commission meeting is scheduled for Dec. 11, where the funding issue will be revisited.

<https://dallasculture.org/cac/meetings/>

Source List

1. Clyde Valentin, Dallas Arts and Culture Advisory Commission member
2. Vicky Meek, arts advocate
3. Dallas Arts and Culture Advisory Commission public agenda
4. Jo trizila

Photo:



Clyde Valentin speaks during Monday’s Dallas Arts and Culture Advisory Commission meeting, where commissioners discussed funding delays, metrics, and trends affecting local arts programs.

Credit: Mia Verrochi