

Subject: AED- Arts Challenge Grants

**FY 2018 Proposed Budget
Budget Work Session Follow-up**

4/13/2017

The following information is provided in response to a request made by Mr. Jay Fisette at the work session on 3/16/2017, regarding if Arlington Economic Development's Cultural Affairs division had an additional \$30K, would this be spent on Arts Challenge Grants? Does Cultural Affairs see value in the concept of challenge grants? Could the Arts Commission use some of its existing arts grant funding to facilitate challenge grants?

Yes – staff believes that \$30,000 in additional resources for Cultural Affairs would be best used for reinstating the Challenge Grants program. We believe the concept of the program, which is to provide \$1 in County funds for every \$2 of new corporate or foundation sponsorship to the arts, is extremely valuable both in terms of leveraging public resources for the arts as well as creating and sustaining relationships among arts organizations and the business community in Arlington. Continuing Challenge Grants with ongoing, rather than one-time, funding would be preferred in order to create continuity within the larger grants process and to give the Arts Commission and community in general a sense of commitment toward this program element.

Currently, the monetary component of the Arts Grant program is \$215,810. The grant panels of the Arts Commission have been meeting over recent months to review application materials. These panels provide scoring and award recommendations for consideration by the full Arts Commission, which is scheduled to be finalized on April 22, 2017, the Commission's "Grants Day". If the County Board were to reallocate funding from the base monetary grants program to challenge grants, adjustments to the currently recommended allocations by the Art Commission sub-committees would need to be made, potentially delaying recommendations to the County Board for adoption. Any allocation by the County Board to fund the challenge grant program would be undertaken following the award of the base monetary grants.