



Jeanne Eickhoff
106 Mason Court
Yorktown, Virginia 23692

Honorable Supervisors,

Thank you for continuing your long legacy of supporting the Arts. It is my privilege to address the question of what might be accomplished if the Arts Commission were granted additional funding. Please allow me first to summarize our current position.

For fiscal year 2018/2019, the York County Arts Commission is considering thirty-nine grant proposals. The requested funds for these proposals totals to the amount of \$70,300.

In fiscal year 2017/2018, the Arts Commission considered thirty-seven grant requests that totaled \$64,250. Last year the Commission was honored to recommend the allotted \$40,000 in York County funds that combined with a reduced *Local Challenge Grant* of \$4,500, equaled \$45,500 in total grant awards.

As a historical note – when Supervisor Ken Bowman appointed me to this Commission in 2007, the Arts Commission budget was \$64,000. At the time, the Arts Commission Budget was in accordance with the Virginia Commission for the Arts recommendations of *one* dollar, per *one* citizen, per year. Combined with the Virginia Commission for the Arts *Local Challenge Grant*, the York County Arts Commission then worked with a total budget of \$69,000.

Using a current York County population estimation at 67,837, the Commission for this fiscal year requested \$60,000 in funding. This number would restore the budget closer to the State recommended funding as well as better address the growing need that exists in our community.

Let me provide insight into the \$70,300 total of requested funds. Of the thirty-nine proposals, there are eleven groups requesting funds for returning events that York County citizens and visitors alike have come to expect periodically or annually:

Revolutionary War Museum
Waterman's Museum
Art at the River
Celebrate Yorktown – Summer Concert Series – *nine performances*

Jamestown Yorktown Foundation
Virginia Symphony
The York County Library

The 1781 Foundation
The Yorktown Arts Foundation Arts Stroll
Fifes & Drums of York Town
Pirate's Invade Yorktown – *growing to a two day event!*

Funding requests for *just those programs* amounts to \$25,500.

This years' grant proposal requests that offer arts exposure in the form of theatre, puppet shows, singing and music lessons – all that supplement SOL instruction in our York County Schools – tally up to almost \$25,000.

Additionally, the grant requests offering innovative music therapies and cultural programming for York County seniors and special needs citizens totals to almost \$9,000.

It becomes easy to recognize the costs of the above programming far exceeds the current Arts Commission budget, and yet the remaining grant proposals are worthy of recognition as well. Awaiting decisions are grant proposals for funding heirloom projects like permanently recording the oral histories of our local African-Americans; permanent WWI displays for the Historical Museum and preserving maritime historical paintings.



The Commission is most appreciative for continuing funds through the budget crisis. In the competition for finite County tax dollars, any portion reserved to support the Arts goes a long way and touches countless citizens and visitors. In the Historic Triangle, Arts Tourism – an ever more familiar moniker – is an undeniable benefit to not only our local economy, but also to the quality of life of York County citizens; not only with events that fill the squares of one's calendar, but with impressive programming that instills a real sense of pride of living here.

Arts Commission grant funding remains in York County or benefits County citizens by providing them access or opportunity to attend premier events. Attendance numbers at events like the Virginia Symphony performance proves its' popularity; but funding for the same organization reaches far beyond entertainment when members of the same Symphony synchronize not only on the stage, but behind the scenes with York County music educators providing books, recorders, and lessons throughout the year.

The Commission complies with the details of the grant program. None of our awards fully fund any one particular program. In tandem with grant monies from our neighbors from Norfolk, Hampton, Newport News, James City County, Williamsburg and the Virginia Commission for the Arts, York County's name is noted and recognized as a leading arts supporting member in our community.

Associations, as recently as last year, have been established with two of the world-class museums in our locale, the Virginia Living Museum and the Mariner's Museum. Two enormously successful shows provided entirely new events, one with incredible Lego® Sculptures at the Living Museum and Man & Water Photography Shows at the Mariner's Museum.

York County is earning a respected reputation as a local leader in the Arts. York County now hosts in September, the *Art Stroll* that kicks off the Historic Triangle's collaborative shoulder-season Arts Month Celebration. York County offers a second distinguished juried art show, *Art at the River*, that is now in its' fifth year.

For every \$1 spent in supporting the arts there is a \$12 return on the investment. In addition to sound financial returns on the County's investment, there is intrinsic value of a community supporting the Arts. Funding esteems its' citizens to be associated with such fine arts programs.

Not to ignore the initial question; "What might be accomplished with additional funding to the Arts Commission?" I may offer examples based on expanding any of the above-mentioned programs, or of a new opportunity to help fund an exciting historical-based, *Virginia SOL*, Puppet Show. Hampton based Puppet masters, trained by none other than Jim Henson, will entertain, delight as well as educate children and adults about American History in our York County Libraries.

What could be accomplished with additional funding? The answer might be, what might *not* be done if we don't! Funding has provided countless opportunities for local musicians and artists to utilize their talents and enchant our community. The need for funding clearly exists and the potential for utilizing it is limitless.

Respectively Submitted,

Jeanne Eickhoff, Chairwoman
York County Arts Commission
757.303.7236