



# METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

## MINUTES

### Metro Arts Board of Commissioners

September 16, 2021 12-1:30 p.m.

#### Metro Southeast Building

*Green Hills Auditorium*

1417 Murfreesboro Pk.

Nashville, TN 37217

**Commissioners Present:** Jim Schmidt (Chair), Matia Powell (Vice Chair), Will Cheek (Sec. /Treasurer), Jane Alvis, Ellen Angelico, Marianne Byrd, Sheri Nichols Bucy, Bonnie Dow, Clay Haynes, Marielena Ramos, and Paula Roberts

**Commissioners Absent:** Dexter Brewer, Hope Stringer, and Campbell West

**Staff:** Caroline Vincent, Emily Waltenbaugh, Janine Christiano, Marysa LaRowe, Van Maravalli, Tre Hardin, and Atilio Murga

**Guests:** Derrick Smith (Metro Legal), Andrea Blackman (Metro Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer), Razel Jones (Metro Human Resources Workforce Diversity Manager), Alan Fey, Erica Ciccarone

### METRO ARTS MISSION:

**Drive an Equitable and Vibrant Community through the Arts**

A. Call to Order & Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.m.

B. Arts in Action

Emily Waltenbaugh presented to the Commission highlights from the previous month. She shared a video created by XPayne to support the Mayor's Participatory budgeting process, an update on the Nolensville Pike transit shelters, details about the Restorative Arts programming underway, and an announcement of two calls for artists about to go out for the new Donelson Public Library.

Chair Schmidt asked if there were any questions or comments.

The Commission asked for clarification of the timeline and scope of the Nolensville transit shelter and utility box project. Staff clarified that due to several contingencies the project has been delayed but that it is in progress.

C. Approval of Minutes: August 19, 2021

Chair Schmidt asked if there were any questions or proposed changes to the minutes.

***A motion to approve Arts Commission minutes from August 19, 2021 was offered by Commissioner Alvis Commissioner Roberts seconded, and the motion passed.***

D. Guests: Metro Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, Andrea Blackman and Metro Human Resources Workforce Diversity Manager, Razel Jones

Chair Schmidt reviewed the role of equity work in the upcoming strategic planning process and Metro Arts history with DEI work. He then introduced guests Andrea Blackman and Razel Jones who are part of a wider Metro Government equity initiative to speak about their roles and how their work connects to Metro Arts.

Andrea Blackman (Metro Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer) introduced her new position in the Finance Department and gave an overview of her role in the Metro Government with the primary goal of driving the city's developing equity mission. Her work covers both the internal and external. There will be a report of her initial forthcoming. She ended with an acknowledgement of past harms and moving towards correcting those harms.

Razel Jones (Metro Human Resources Workforce Diversity Manager), introduced his position in Human Resources and his current work examining what exists, revamping trainings, and offering additional HR resources. He is working with Andrea to pursue organizational DEI with consideration of departmental and outward facing DEI.

The Commission asked for clarification about how Board member interact with Metro HR and the Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer. Razel Jones responded that he focuses on the internal and work-force related equity. Andrea Blackman responded that her work is more external facing, seeking advice and opportunities, and includes collaborating with Metro Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Roberts thanked both guests for attending the CARE meeting. Andrea clarified that that would not be a one-time meeting and that they will be continuing to collaborate.

The Commission asked for clarification about reaching out directly. Both guests invited Commissioners to be in touch.

E. Action Items:

1. FY22 Thrive Cycle 1 Allocations

1) FY22 Thrive Cycle 1 Allocations

Marysa LaRowe presented the Committee with the proposed funding allocations recommended by the community review panel. This year because of COVID-19 the idea of community has been expanded beyond physical location.

Cycle 1 Application Overview:

- **Total Number of Applications:** 17
- **Number of Awards Recommended:** 11
- **Total Amount Requested:** \$155,620
- **Recommended Award Total:** \$101,820

Recommended Allocations:

- **The Blueprint Project: Laying the Foundation for a Successful Career in Music**
  - **Lead Artist:** Rick Johnson
  - **Community Partner:** Nashville Is Not Just Country Music
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Davidson County youth 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade
  - **Request Amount:** \$9,500
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,500
- **Creative Girls Rock Mobile Mural Project (Public Art Project)\***
  - **Lead Artist:** Donna Woodley
  - **Community Partners:** Creative Girls Rock
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** North Nashville, moving to neighborhoods around Nashville
  - **Request Amount:** \$9,500
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,500\*
    - **\*Conditional Award**
- **The Story of Jubilee**
  - **Lead Artist:** Rossi Turner
  - **Community Partners:** Dream 7 Theater Productions, Casa Azafran, Z. Alexander Looby Theater

- **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Jefferson Street Corridor, 37208 and 37228. Casting and participation open to all.
- **Request Amount:** \$9,500
- **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,500
  
- **Gilda's Club's Expressive Arts Cancer Support Program**
  - **Lead Artist:** Jennifer Wilkins
  - **Community Partners:** Gilda's Club of Middle Tennessee
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Individuals with cancer and family members
  - **Request Amount:** \$9,000
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,000
  
- **Where I've Been, Where I'm Going: Voicing Stories Untold While Watching New Ones Unfold**
  - **Lead Artist:** Ashley Mintz
  - **Community Partners:** FiftyFoward (Madison, Knowles, and Donelson locations), Looby Community Center, Watkins Community Center
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** North Nashville, Madison, Donelson
  - **Request Amount:** \$8,220
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$8,220
  
- **Genderbend: The Naughty Tree and Heroic Couplets**
  - **Lead Artist:** Daniel Jones
  - **Community Partners:** Kindling Arts Festival, Woven Theater Company, Defy Film Festival
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** District 20 (West Nashville); women and LGBTQ+ artists
  - **Request Amount:** \$9,500
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,500
  
- **Paragon Mills Elementary and Community Mural (Public Art Project)**
  - **Lead Artist:** Nuveen Barwari, supporting artist Woke3
  - **Community Partners:** Freedom Arts Collective, Paragon Mills Elementary School\*
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Paragon Mills (Antioch)
  - **Request Amount:** \$9,500
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,500
    - *Note: an MNPS teacher will assist in project coordination but all funds will be going to professional artists and related supplies for the project.*

- **Jardines de Color/Colorful Gardens (Public Art Project)**
  - **Lead Artist:** Andrés Bustamante
  - **Community Partners:** Personal Contemporary Artist Collective, Merengue Café
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** South Nashville, Antioch
  - **Request Amount:** \$9,500
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,500\*
    - **\*Conditional Award**
  
- **Let Me Tell You: Stories of Resilience and Belonging\***
  - **Lead Artist:** Kristen Chapman
  - **Community Partners:** Poverty and the Arts\*\*
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Individuals experiencing poverty and unhoused individuals
  - **Request Amount:** \$9,500
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,500 (conditional)
    - **\*Conditional Award**
    - **\*\*Note:** *while Poverty and the Arts is a Metro Arts grantee, no Thrive funds will be going directly to the organization*
  
- **Now and When: Love Letters to Nashville (Public Art Project)**
  - **Lead Artist:** Lindsey Laseter
  - **Community Partners:** Nashville Design Week
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Lower Broadway/2<sup>nd</sup> Ave
  - **Request Amount:** \$9,500
  - **Recommended Award Amount:** \$9,500
  
- **Messiah Immersion Initiative**
  - **Lead Artist:** Patrick Dailey
  - **Community Partners:** Early Music City, W. Crimm Singers, First Lutheran Church, Big Blue Opera Initiatives at Tennessee State University
  - **Community or Neighborhood Served:** Based in Downtown Nashville, this project will connect the following: 1. Youth from Nashville high schools (and possibly some middle schools) and their family members 2. Members of the LGBTQ community via The Table and LaunchPad, programs of First Lutheran Church. 3. Members of faith communities of color that have historically rendered the work. 4. Local Nashvillians and Middle Tennesseans who attend arts events 5. Persons

staying with Room in the Inn, Nashville Rescue Mission, and elsewhere.

- **Request Amount:** \$8,600
- **Recommended Award Amount:** \$8,600

Chair Schmidt asked if there were any questions or discussion.

The Commission asked for clarification regarding the condition for an experienced/licensed clinician to participate in one of the projects regarding art and trauma and how that would impact the budget. Staff clarified that the cost of the clinician would come from the Thrive awardee, but that the condition was left open so as not to mandate a comparable cost. Additionally, staff will help the project coordinators find a suitable partner.

The Commission asked for clarification regarding how the religious contingencies were applied. Staff clarified that they were applied to any project that had religious content even with different types of treatment.

The Commission also asked about how COVID protocols are integrated into these projects. Staff clarified that reviewing COVID procedures was part of the scoring process and that all projects should comply with the Mayor's guidelines. It was also clarified that in the case circumstances change, staff is always open to working with projects to adapt.

The Commission requested that in the future staff provide the scoring rubric so that the Commission can understand the nuances of the review process.

The Commission asked for clarification about the living wage standard condition for one of the projects and how it will affect the project budget. Staff clarified that participants were originally getting the stipend, but that staff wanted to be sure that participants were being compensated at a living wage for the full number of hours they would need to participate.

The Commission asked for clarification about the process for if conditions are not met. Staff clarified that if a project declined the conditions then the allocations for their project would return to the Thrive funding pool.

***A motion to approve the FY22 Thrive Cycle 1 Allocations was offered by Commissioner Cheek, Commissioner Angelico seconded, the motion passed.***

## 2. Donelson Library Public Art Selection Panel

Van Maravalli gave an overview of the Donelson Library public art projects approved by Commission in August and presented the Committee with the proposed community selection panel.

Commissioner Alvis added that the Public Art Committee supports this proposed approach.

Chair Schmidt asked if there were any questions or discussion.

The Commission asked for clarification about the standard call timeline and whether it would allow enough time for applicants. Staff clarified that a month to a month and a half is typical with significant communications preparation. However, staff is also open to extending a deadline if there is a lower number of applicants or there are other concerns.

***A motion to approve the Donelson Library Public Art Selection Panel was offered by Commissioner Alvis, Commissioner Roberts seconded, the motion passed.***

### 3. Temporary Art Guidelines

Van Maravalli presented the proposed Temporary Art Guidelines for Metro Property created in partnership with several Metro departments. She reviewed the significant changes in this new document including streamlining the order of the document, clarified key contacts and departmental responsibilities, criteria for review and approval, and access to a variety of temporary art. The goal of the guidelines would be to encourage art that reflects the community, is safe, and is in relationship with their environment.

Chair Schmidt asked if there were any questions or discussion.

The Commission noted the use of “underrepresented” terminology and suggested specifically naming communities as they want to be named to avoid oppressive or offensive language. Staff thanked the Commission for the input and will incorporate into the updating process.

The Commission suggested that CARE could review these guidelines from an equity perspective.

The Commission asked for clarification about the funding of these programs. Staff clarified that these projects would be community generated, and Metro Arts would just be involved in the approval process because it is on Metro property.

At the request of the Commission, Metro Legal clarified that the Commission could adopt these guidelines as an interim process subject to CARE review. The Commission also proposed that guidelines and policy documents should be reviewed by CARE as a part of the process.

***A motion to approve the Temporary Art Guidelines as an interim policy subject to review by CARE was offered by Commissioner Cheek, Commissioner Dow seconded, the motion passed.***

The Commission requested that the document be sent to CARE and that they prioritize review within the next month or two.

4. Fairgrounds Public Art Concept

Atilio Murga reviewed the Fairgrounds Project details and presented the Commission with the first stage of the public art design concept. Blessing Hancock, the artist, will be developing additional elements to the concept through continued community engagement and with the help of her local mentee, Miriam Speyer.

Chair Schmidt asked if there were any questions or discussion.

***A motion to approve Blessing Hancock's design for permanent public art at the Nashville Fairgrounds was offered by Commissioner Dow, Commissioner Ramos seconded, the motion passed.***

5. 2021-2022 Officers and Committee Slate

Commissioner Alvis presented the Nominating Committee's recommendation for Officer's Slate: Jim Schmidt, Chair; Matia Powell, Vice Chair; and Will Cheek, Treasurer/Secretary.

Chair Schmidt also reviewed a recommendation from the Executive Committee to create a funding subcommittee made up of Commissioners and community members. There will be more details to come as this is developed.

Chair Schmidt asked if there were any questions or discussion.

***A motion to approve the 2021-2022 Officers and Committee Slate was offered by Commissioner Alvis, Commissioner Dow seconded, the motion passed.***



F. CARE Report

Chair Schmidt gave an update on the Human Resources investigation related to recent allegations. The Commission has been promised a thorough investigation and will decide next steps when the report is finished. The Commission will deal with the allegations seriously and with transparency.

Commissioner Roberts let the Commission know that CARE was working on a statement for the Commission, and it will be shared as part of the Committee's work alongside the Commission once they have gotten full input. She also updated the Commission on CARE's current work.

Chair Schmidt thanked the Commissioners on CARE and encouraged any Commissioner interested to ask about being involved. Additionally, he asked that Commissioners share any community member names that might be a good fit on the Committee.

Chair Schmidt recognized that a public comment related to this agenda item was submitted to the Commission. The letter was distributed, and Chair Schmidt encouraged Commissioners to review the comment.

G. Executive Director's Update

Caroline Vincent let the Commissioners know that there is an upcoming 1-day Crossroads training available to them if they are interested.

H. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 1:47 p.m.

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Will Cheek (Secretary/Treasurer)

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Date