



METRO ARTS
NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

MINUTES

Committee for Anti-Racism and Equity Meeting

September 1, 2021 4:30-6:30 p.m.

East Park Community Center - Theater

700 Woodland St.

Nashville, TN 37206

If you have any questions, please e-mail arts@nashville.gov.

Committee Members Present: Ellen Angelico, Will Cheek (Co-chair, Commissioner), Aaron Doenges, Ellen Gilbert, Megan Kelley, Teree McCormick (ARTt Co-Chair), Paula Roberts (Co-chair, Commissioner), Jon Royal

Committee Members Absent: Sarah Bounse, Alandis Brassel

Staff: Caroline Vincent, Janine Christiano, Tré Hardin, Grace Wright

Guests: Razel Jones, Workforce Diversity Manager; Andrea Blackman, Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer; Stephen Cain and Keven Palmissano, Metro HR

Community Members: Sarah Woodhull

A. Call to Order and Recognize Group Norms & CARE purpose statement

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

Chair McCormick recognized the group norms and read out the CARE purpose statement.

B. Minutes

A motion to approve the CARE Minutes June 2, June 12, and August 4, 2021 was offered by Ellen Angelico, Ellen Gilbert seconded.

C. Human Resources and Metro Equity Work Q&A [35 minutes]

Chair McCormick recognized the meeting guests: Razel Jones, Workforce Diversity Manager; Andrea Blackman, Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer; Stephen Cain and Keven Palmissano, Metro HR

Razel Jones, Andrea Blackman, and Stephen Cain introduced themselves to the Committee and explained their positions within Metro.

The Committee opened discussion on the Metro Arts Departmental Employee Policy.

Stephen Cain gave an overview of the difference between Civil Service Rules and the Metro Arts Departmental Policy.

The Committee expressed some concern about language in the policy that may restrict employees from having honest and open conversations about antiracism work. Discussion was had about how to better facilitate difficult conversations and feedback. HR confirmed certain claims, like discrimination, must be acted upon and may not be kept confidential.

Some improvements to the policy were discussed such as better definitions within the policy. It was noted that Departmental HR policies are not meant to create new policies and procedures, but further clarify Civil Service Rules and Guidelines. Staff discussed perhaps additional restorative practices could be developed. HR Staff is happy to review the policy with any recommended changes and give feedback.

There was discussion about the possibility of an option for employees to seek mediation through a third party outside of Metro government. HR staff mentioned that currently employees could move to the state level by contacting the EEOC or the Tennessee Human Rights Commission, but that would be different than mediation. Metro HR stated that process already exists within departments and Central Metro HR. HR Staff also stated they are working to provide more facilitation and mediation services within an equity lens for departments.

The Committee discussed the opportunity for Metro Arts to work with an outside vendor for facilitated conversations. Metro Arts staff clarified that it would be possible, but it would also represent a significant lift as far as a procurement process and further

financial resources that may take away from other equity programs. Ms. Blackman added that she plans to build a cohesive structure throughout Metro instead of having individual departments work with different vendors.

D. Metro Arts Departmental Employee Policy [20 minutes]

After discussions, the Committee came to the consensus to deliver recommendations by September 15th for the Metro Arts Departmental Employee Policy

E. FY23 Grant Guidelines

The External Working Group recommended a few language updates, and in response to staff inquiry, recommended the continuation of providing only operating support grants and the 25% match requirement. They also suggested that in the future the lower match threshold be considered a permanent approach for at least the Core grantees.

The Committee suggested in addition to the working group recommendations that staff take a sample survey of grantees to see if this aligns with their needs and to further support the recommendations.

A motion to approve the FY23 Grant Guidelines recommendations for the Grants & Funding Committee with the addition of a sample survey of grantees was offered Paula Roberts, Megan Kelley seconded, and the motion passed.

F. Committee Sustainability

Caroline Vincent presented a proposed Committee term slate for the Committee's review and also asked for recommendations for additional members to join the Committee to fill in vacancies.

The Committee agreed to review the terms. In terms of the additional members, the Committee asked staff to send the original Antiracism Transformation Team application for review and adaptation for a new recruitment process.

G. Antiracism Training Recommendation

The Committee discussed Metro Arts' contractual relationship with Crossroads, the Metro-wide nature of the contract and the upcoming contract expiration. The Training & Inclusion working group presented a recommendation that Crossroads be the vendor of choice for Metro Arts antiracism work. The recommendation was further clarified, and it was discussed that the introduction of a new equity framework could slow progress.

Caroline Vincent clarified that the Metro-wide Crossroads contract does not represent a financial responsibility for Metro Arts beyond departmental purchases. She explained the procurement contracting process in more detail and how Crossroads services or other antiracism trainings can be accessed. She also clarified that departments now have purchasing authority up to \$25,000 so an RFP/contracting process for Crossroads appears to be unnecessary given the average annual expenditures with this vendor. To pursue a new procurement, staff will need to develop a specific scope of work and solicit at least three bids from vendors. The Committee discussed the need for training for new CARE members and Commissioners in the near term.

The Committee asked if given the unique circumstances a sole source procurement would be an option. Staff stated they did not believe this scenario meets the justification for a sole source, but they would clarify with the Metro Procurement Agent and report back.

H. Staff/ED/Commission Report

Caroline Vincent gave the Committee an overview of the current organization chart and the proposed new Racial Equity/Restorative Arts positions and structure. Staff asked for the Committee to review the provided job descriptions and offered to integrate any interested CARE members into the selection process, as is allowable.

The Committee came to consensus that they would provide comments on the job descriptions by September 15th and would further discuss participation in the hiring process at a later meeting.

Vincent reported on the status of the Crisis Communications Policy. She clarified that the Committee input would be integrated into the policy and adopted after further review by the Executive Committee.

Emily Waltenbaugh thanked the Committee for their input.

I. Planning

The Committee reviewed the meeting structure proposed at the June 12th planning retreat. The Committee decided to discuss Caucusing further at the regularly scheduled meeting in October.

The staff and Committee came to consensus on action steps and plans for the October meeting agenda.

J. Adjourn meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

DRAFT