



METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

MINUTES

Metro Art Board of Commissioners

Feb. 3, 2022 12 p.m.

Metro Southeast Building: *Green Hills Auditorium*

1417 Murfreesboro Pk.

Nashville, TN 37217

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

Staff: Ian Myers, Skylar Peterson, Grace Wright, Natalie Alfaro Frazier, Janine Christiano, Chuck Beard, Van Maravalli, Tre Hardin, Atilio Murga, Anne-Leslie Owens, Emily Waltenbaugh

Guests: Derrick Smith (Metro Legal), CM Nancy VanReese, Alan Fey, Rhonda White, Marilyn Rogan, Paige Pfleger, Erica Ciccarone, Joseph Guiterriez, Erika Leslie

METRO ARTS MISSION:

Drive an Equitable and Vibrant Community through the Arts

A. Call to Order & Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 12:07 p.m.

Chair Schmidt gave an overview of Commission reception and response to the January 6, 2022 HR Fact Finder Report. It was stated that the purpose of this meeting is to review and vote on a list of proposed action items in response to the report.

Matia Powell recognized the public comments submitted to the Commission and the submitters. These public comments are available at <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/arts/boards/arts-commission>.

B. Action Items:

1. Metro HR Fact Finders Report Recommendations and Action Steps

Chair Schmidt opened the floor for discussion and proposed moving systemically through the list of proposed action items regarding the January 6, 2022 HR Fact Finders Report.¹

The first proposed action: *The hiring of an outside additional consultant experienced in DEI to work with the staff of the agency to lead the path to reconciliation within the staff and with the community. We will begin the process by reviewing current Metro contractors in this space and if there is not a suitable choice for the agency, then we will work to RFP as needed. We will make this selection in consultation with our CARE group and with our manager of Equity and Restorative Practices, HR equity staff and Ms. Blackman;*

The Commission discussed that this recommendation was in line with requests made throughout public comments. It was proposed to consult the list of vendors compiled by Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in order to incorporate work that has already been done. It was also noted that this action would not be a one-time consult but rather a long-term relationship developed in an ongoing contract.

The Commission also discussed combining work being done in Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with Metro Arts specific work in order to build toward coordinated success.

The Commission asked about the possibility of working with Crossroads and the status the long-term contract with that organization. It was clarified that the Metro-wide contract with Crossroads expired, but staff is reaching out to Crossroads about developing internal trainings that align with Metro Procurement guidelines.

The second proposed action: *Continuing the collaboration with Metro HR equity personnel and with Ms. Andrea Blackman, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for Metro, to lead the internal conversations within the staff of the agency toward healing the workplace. It is important to note that from the start of this complaint process and through the after-effects of the reports they have been engaging with us in this effort. See the additional documentation for the ongoing course of their work;*

Chair Schmidt introduced a summary by Razel Jones, Metro HR Workforce Diversity Manager, of the work he and Andrea Blackman, Chief Diversity Equity & Inclusion Officer, have done thus far with Metro Arts.

The third proposed action: *Reviewing and recommending additional management and leadership training for all management level employees,*

¹ For a more detailed review of the conversation, please contact arts@nashville.gov about a recording of the meeting.

both through Metro's current opportunities, and if needed, specific outside training. Metro HR has provided Metro Arts Commission leadership with a list of current offerings. See additional documents

Chair Schmidt introduced a list of proposed trainings as a starting point for exploring options for the staff. The Commission asked if there were opportunities available to Commissioners as well.

The Commission discussed remaining open to additional ideas and opportunities as well as making sure that accountability is also considered in training development.

The fourth proposed action: Conducting a specific review with Metro HR of the utilization of Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) to ensure they are utilized appropriately-- including specific items that need addressing, measurable goals to end the PIP, and clear communication to the purpose and goals of the improvement tool with employees. We request a representative of CARE to be a part of this process

The fifth proposed action: Utilizing the upcoming strategic planning process for the agency to better define and craft our racial equity and antiracism work for the future to ensure that the community needs are being met. Our selected consultant for that process has specific experience with other local government's planning for this work

Chair Schmidt noted that there had been a delay starting the Strategic Planning process due to Covid precautions and open meeting regulations.

The sixth proposed action: Instituting a review in 3 months of the progress made on these recommendations, including a report from HR/ DEI consultant on their viewpoints of the efforts of the staff to implement these improvements.

The Commission asked about the ongoing nature of this review. It was clarified that this review is intended to be an ongoing process. It was noted that CARE could be a great ally in continuing this review process as well as in implementing restorative practices through out the process.

The Commission is also noted that these updates should not be just to the Commission but also to the community in order to begin the process of rebuilding trust and being transparent about the actions that the Arts Commission and Metro Arts are pursuing. It was also discussed that this process is not just about rebuilding trust but also acknowledging the harm to communities and individuals.

The Commission acknowledged that just because the January 6, 2022 Metro HR Fact Finder report did not identify that rules or laws has been broken that did not mean that harm was not done or repair is not necessary.

The Commission discussed how the body could help support moving this forward and support creative problem solving and how to balance urgency with thoughtfulness.

The Commission acknowledged that they have heard staff and the community and that they are willing and committed to this work.

A motion to approve the recommended actions put forward by Chair Schmidt was offered by Commissioner Alvis, Commissioner Roberts seconded, and the motion passed.

C. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 12:41 p.m.