



MINUTES

Joint Meeting

Metro Arts Board of Commissioners and Committee for Antiracism and Equity

June 1, 2022 9:00 a.m.

Howard Office Building

Room: Sonny West Conference Center

700 Second Avenue South

Nashville, TN 37210

Commission Members Present: Jim Schmidt (Chair), Matia Powell (Vice Chair), Jane Alvis, Ellen Angelico (CARE Committee Co-Chair), Sheri Nichols Bucy, Marianne Byrd, Clarence Edward, Clay Haynes, La’Kishia Harris, Campbell West, Dexter Brewer, Will Cheek (Sec./Treasurer)

Commission Members Absent: Diana Perez, Paul Polycarpou

CARE Members Present, Teree McCormick (Co-Chair), Isabel Tipton-Krispin, Ellen Gilbert

CARE Members Absent: M Kelley, Jon Royal, Dr. Robyn Henderson-Espinoza, LaKeisha Thomas, Fathiyah Shepard-Suso

Staff: Natalie Alfaro Frazier, Chuck Beard, Ian Myers, Anne-Leslie Owens, Karissa Coady, Marysa LaRowe

Staff Absent: Atilio Murga, Van Maravalli, Janine Christiano

Guests: Andrea Blackman (Metro DEI), Alan Fey, Erica Ciccarone

METRO ARTS MISSION:

Drive an Equitable and Vibrant Community through the Arts

A. Call to Order and Welcome

Commission Chair Jim Schmidt called the meeting to order at 9:10 am.

B. Introductions

Equity + Restorative Practices Manager Natalie Alfaro Frazier read meeting agreements and shared CARE norms.

C. Discussion of Roles

History of CARE and Commission relationship

- Interim Executive Director Ian Myers gave an overview and short history to the relationship of CARE and Commission as structurally defined. Myers acknowledged that today's meeting is for discussing the relationship between CARE and the Commission.
- Commission Chair Schmidt spoke to the history of CARE and the potential for today's conversation.
- CARE Co-Chair Teree McCormick spoke to the history of CARE from a committee member's perspective—asked by the Commission to examine Metro Arts through the equity statement. She spoke to how messy this equity work is and CARE seeks to provide structure. McCormick reminded everyone that this work is very personal and that many take it with them back to their communities.
- Commission Vice Chair Powell spoke to previous successes of this collaboration.

Communication of needs and wants from each other in CARE and Commission

- Commission Chair Schmidt asked CARE Co-Chair Teree McCormick if CARE has gotten enough direction from the Commission about what they are supposed to be doing. McCormick acknowledged that while they have previously not gotten enough direction, we are in a new place today. CARE asked for more communication from the Commission. CARE has made recommendations that the commission has not responded to which provides some mixed messages.
- Commission Vice Chair Powell acknowledged that equity work is not just systems, it is also individual work. We are all affected by the same systems but have different impacts—we need to understand how we have engaged in these systems.
- Commission Vice Chair Powell reminded everyone of the equity lens, developed by CARE. Some but not all committees of the Commission have tested out the equity lens and we can do more. Alvaro Frazier spoke to the role of the staff in this process and making changes in workflow. She acknowledged that the equity lens is a good opportunity to look at workflow. McCormick stressed that the equity lens is a tool, but a tool in beta mode. This tool should be internalized and not a list of steps. Commissioner and CARE Co-Chair Angelico explained that the equity lens is one in a suite of tools.
- Commissioner and CARE Co-Chair Ellen Angelico stressed that we do not have control of who is on the Commission and when they leave. We need to document the historic knowledge on CARE and pass it down. Alvaro Frazier affirmed the necessity to retain institutional knowledge.
- Organizational + Artist Support Coordinator Chuck Beard asked what people should do if they are afraid of getting the equity lens wrong or find it uncomfortable. Commissioner Angelico said to make mistakes because they teach us to adapt the tool. It is ok to say "I don't know, and then get back to people." Gilbert stressed the importance of those being harmed by mistakes to feel comfortable speaking up about it.

- Commissioners expressed their appreciation for the diversity training and hope for Metro Arts to be an example for the rest of Metro and the world.
- Commissioners asked for clarification as to our ultimate goal. Commission Vice Chair Powell indicated that this is something that the commission needs to talk about with CARE. Commission Chair Schmidt stressed the necessity of goals and achievements because we are spending taxpayer dollars. Commission Vice Chair Powell listed examples of practical tangible things that we can do to measure progress. Commissioner and CARE Co-Chair Angelico asked that everyone look at the 2019 environmental scan.
- Alfaro Frazier stressed that we need to create an environment where we can be honest enough to one another when we are hurt. She indicated that most people are operating under an environment of fear instead. We have to build trust with one another. Gilbert added that we need to challenge the idea not the person.
- Commissioners asked for clarification about the priorities of the Commission. Commission Vice Chair Powell listed several things that the Commission has on its plate. Commission Chair Schmidt added the Executive Director search to the list, and he said that hiring the ED had to come first on the priority list. Commission Vice-Chair said that we need to adjust the structure of our agendas to keep things at the top of the list. McCormick reminded the Commission that the point of this is the community and we need to put them first.

Where is Home and Where do you Experience Art Map Activity

- Alfaro Frazier asked everyone to place stickers on a city map on where they consider home and where they experience the arts in Nashville. She asked everyone to individually share what excites them about the arts in Nashville
- In looking at the map, Chief DEI Officer Andrea Blackman asked what kinds of art the gapped areas are possibly interested in. Commission Co-Chair Powell stressed the importance of meeting communities where they are and what they want for public art.
- Commissioners and CARE committee members made points related to crime and financial limits, and the development of the public art program, all which are reflected in the heat map.
- Alfaro Frazier asked everyone to write down what they want next steps to be and they would be shared at a future joint meeting.

D. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.