



# METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

## MINUTES

### Public Art Committee

August 10, 2023, 10:00AM-12:00PM

### Metro Office Building

### Davidson Room

800 President Ronald Reagan Way/800 2nd Ave S

Nashville, TN 37210

## METRO ARTS MISSION:

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

**Members Present:** Campbell West (Chair), Paul Polycarpou (Commissioner), Shaun Giles, Donna Gilliam, Stacey Irvin, Daniel Singh (Executive Director, *ex-officio*),

**Metro Arts Staff:** Anne-Leslie Owens, Atilio Murga, Jesse Ross, Nyamal Tuor, Vivian Foxx

**Others:** Ellen Angelico (Commissioner and CARE Chair), Justin Laing (Hillombo Consulting, by teleconference)

A. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair West called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Meeting was moved across the hall to the Davidson Room when it was learned that Nash Room is no longer available and will be transitioning to office space.

B. Public Comments

No public comments submitted.

C. Approval of Minutes: July 6, 2023

***Shaun Giles made a motion to approve the July 6, 2023 minutes. Paul Polycarpou seconded and the motion passed unanimously.***

D. Reframe on Equitable Practices: Justin Laing, Hillombo

Consultant Justin Laing of Hillombo Consulting led a conversation on the importance of equity and fairness in decision-making. Committee members expressed their support for the idea that decisions should be made with a clear focus on equity and justice. It was emphasized that the rationale behind decisions should be transparent and convincing. The need to include race as a factor in decision-making was also highlighted, even though it had not been included in recent guidelines. There was a consensus that having a clear process to achieve equity and justice in decision-making is essential.

The impact of public art on the community was a major point of discussion. Attendees talked about the importance of considering the population served by public art projects. Questions were raised about how the community is affected by public art and how different communities are represented. The need to evaluate the output and effects of public art projects on diverse communities was recognized as a valuable metric for assessing equity.

Funding considerations were also addressed during the meeting. Attendees discussed the relationship between funding and equity, particularly in the context of organizations serving different demographics. The discussion highlighted the need to assess the funding allocation and its impact on the communities served.

#### E. Action Items

##### 1. Main Library Gallery (Location, Budget, and Recruitment)

Public Art Collections Manager Anne-Leslie proposed a new partnership project. The Nashville Public Library staff approached Metro Arts to see if we would consider partnering with them on exhibits for the mezzanine gallery at the main library branch. The Library doesn't have the funding or staffing and Metro Arts doesn't have access to a gallery space. This provides opportunities to showcase the work of local artists at a location with security and high visibility. The space is 62' long and 44' long and is open in the middle to the circulation desk area below. The flexible gallery space offers significant space for wall-hung artwork as well as sculptures and suspended artwork. Staff are proposing doing three temporary exhibits a year featuring work of local curators and artists.

***Donna Gilliam made a motion to approve Nashville Public Library Main Gallery Temporary Art Exhibit proposal for 2024 open to Davidson County curators and artists and with a project budget not to exceed \$50,000 (temporary funds). Stacey Irvin seconded and the motion passed unanimously.***

##### 2. Lending Library (Locations, Budgets, and Recruitment)

Public Art Collections Manager Anne-Leslie Owens shared a short video highlighting Phase 1 of the Lending Library launched in 2021. Metro Arts, in partnership with Nashville Public Library, used Percent funds to purchase wall-hung artworks for the city's collection. A total of 60 artworks are currently available for checkout at Madison and Southeast branches. The lending library has been well received by the public and Vanderbilt medical students were even inspired to launch their own program for patients. In a proposed Phase 2 of the Lending Library, artworks would be purchased from local artists for placement at East, Edgehill, Edmonson Pike, Green Hills, Hermitage, and Old Hickory branches. Staff proposed an acquisition/framing/installation budget of up to \$120,000 based on a \$1,000 maximum price per artwork. After committee discussion, there was interest in expanding the acquisition/framing/installation budget to \$200,000 which would allow for \$2,000 maximum price per artwork.

***Donna Gilliam made a motion to approve Lending Library Phase 2 at East, Edgehill, Edmonson Pike, Green Hills, Hermitage, and Old Hickory branches, open to Davidson County artists, and with a project budget not to exceed \$200,000 (Percent fund). Paul Polycarpou seconded and the motion passed unanimously.***

##### 3. Bloomberg Grant Funding

Director Daniel Singh reported that we are still awaiting word as to whether Nashville is receiving Bloomberg grant funding. The earliest we can expect any news is in October. On September 8th, Director Singh and Mayor Cooper will meet with Bloomberg officials. Metro Arts requested a delay of one week considering that there will be a new incoming mayor after September 14, but this request was denied. No action required.

#### 4. Mural Design Purchase

Director Daniel Singh shared that there was an unexpectedly high number of Thrive artist services applications for mural projects. It was noted that the demand for such projects was greater than initially anticipated. Staff had considered various funding options for the mural projects. There was a recognition that the available Thrive funds would not fund all Thrive applications. The need for responsible allocation of funds was emphasized.

A proposal to hire a consultant to provide recommendations on a dedicated mural arts project was discussed. The consultant's role would be to identify needs from Metro partners, mural artists, property owners, and general public and to shape a program that provides guidance on possible funding allocations and technical resources. The importance of involving artists in the decision-making process was emphasized. The group discussed the idea of allowing artists to have a say in how the funds are used and potentially setting up new criteria for selection.

Director Singh proposed the use of Percent funds to hire a consultant to begin the process. With a maximum \$25,000 budget, this would avoid a lengthy procurement process. The participants also expressed the need for more information before finalizing this decision.

***Chair Campbell West made a motion to approve the hiring of a public art consultant to guide the development of a mural art program. Donna Gilliam seconded and the motion passed unanimously.***

#### F. Project and Program Updates

##### 1. Mill Ridge Park Public Art: Dedication August 16, 9-10:30

Public Art Project Manager Atilio Murga gave an update on the Mill Ridge Park Public Art Project. The project involved the community in significant ways with the Cane Ridge High School Band providing the music for the interactive art and local artist Robbie Lynn Hunsinger assisting artist collective daily tous les jours. There were some challenges encountered during the project, such as power issues and concrete discrepancies, but they have been successfully resolved. The project is complete, and dedication will be Wednesday, August 16, from 9am-10:30 am at 12847 Old Hickory Blvd. Antioch, TN 37103.

##### 2. Arthur Avenue/ I-65 Bridge Underpass Public Art

Public Art Collections Manager Anne-Leslie Owens gave a progress update on the Arthur Ave. project. When the four invited artists were here in July for the site visit, they expressed concerns about the budget and site work. Nashville Department of Transportation (NDOT), a partner on the project, came through with an additional \$100,000, making the artist's budget \$500,000. Owens indicated that she is expecting more information from local engineering firm Barge Design regarding quotes and recommendations for electrical sitework and engineering services to support the project. The project was temporarily paused until budget and site work questions were answered. The goal was to present the finalist artist to PAC and Arts Commission in either October or November, with a desire to remain on track for project

completion by June 2024. If that is not possible, NDOT may consider requesting an extension to the NEA grant deadline.

3. Bordeaux Gateway Public Art

No update given.

4. Looby Mural Public Art

No update given.

5. Public Art Hiring

Director Daniel Singh shared that Metro Human Resources received 63 applications for the Public Art Manager position. The hiring process will involve a panel review, and Anne-Leslie Owens will be involved in this process. The Public Art Coordinator position received 71 applications.

6. August Commission and all Committees Meeting: August 17, 2023

7. Cultural Planning Process

Update moved to next meeting.

G. New Business/Old Business

No new/old business

H. Adjourn

Chair West adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.