



METRO ARTS
NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

MINUTES

Metro Art Board of Commissioners

October 19, 2023, 12 p.m.

Metro Southeast Building

Green Hills Auditorium

1417 Murfreesboro Pk.

Nashville, TN 37217

Commissioners Present: Ellen Angelico (Chair), Rev. Dexter Brewer (Secretary), Marianne Byrd, Diana Perez, Leah Dupree Love, Clarence Édward, Janet Kurtz, Paul Polycarpou, Janet Kurtz, Darek Bell, Will Cheek

Commissioners Absent: Jim Schmidt, Campbell West, Sheri Nichols Bucy, Marianne Byrd, Carol McCoy,

Metro Staff Present: Tessa Ortiz-Marsh (Metro Legal), Lora Fox (Metro Legal), Daniel Singh, Anne-Leslie Owens, Chuck Beard, Mollie Berliss, Marysa LaRowe, Jonathan Saad, Atilio Murga

Guests Present: Valentina Harper

A. Call to Order, Welcome, Land Acknowledgement

Chair Ellen Angelico led the reading of the land acknowledgement. She introduced herself as the new Chair and shared her mission to leave Nashville better than she found it. She shared other sentiments regarding her first meeting as chair and reviewed Robert's Rules of Order, reminding Commissioners that they may only speak twice on one motion.

B. Public Comment

Chair Angelico expressed appreciation for the public's interest and commitment to Metro Arts. No public comment was received through the online portal prior to this meeting. There was a comment in the packet from Commissioner McCoy but that is not considered a public comment. At Chair Angelico's invitation, Robert Jones, an artist in Nashville at Overton Arts. He received a THRIVE grant that was initially approved then rescinded. He expressed his concerns within the arts community about the gap in funding and gap in where the funds are allocated.

C. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve July 20, 2023, Commission minutes as corrected was made by Commissioner Brewer. Commissioner Dupree Love seconded and the motion passed.

August 17, 2023

Commissioner Dupree raised a concern regarding the motions about the rescinding on page 4. She did not recall seconding that motion and requested it be double checked. Chair Angelico moved to table the motion until the end of the meeting so that could be double checked. Commissioner Byrd raised that on page 5 she was addressed by her first name while other Commissioners on other pages were addressed by Commissioner. She also said that on page 8 where it says that Commissioners abstained it needs to include “because of conflicts of interest” and should be a recusal not an abstention. Furthermore, Commissioner Byrd, raised that on the sixth line down where the motion was made it said “Marianne supported scenario scenarios” and requested that it be corrected. Corrections were made on page 4 that the second came from Commissioner Bucy, Commissioner Byrd’s name was updated on page 5, and on page 8 the abstentions were changed to conflicts of interest.

A motion to approve August 17, 2023, the Commission minutes was made by Commissioner Brewer. Commissioner Dupree seconded and the motion passed. A voice vote was taken and the corrections were approved.

D. Featured Artists: Valentina Harper

Organizational & Artist Support Specialist Chuck Beard introduced Valentina Harper, a graphic artist from Venezuela. She shared her story about transitioning from a web designer to a licensing artist. She also shared her different art experiences in the community in the aftermath of the tornado and pandemic and how she wants to continue to create art and share it with the Nashville community.

E. Bylaws Updates for Quorum and Public Comment (ACTION)

The current language states that quorum is not required for committee or task force meetings and decision making other than the Executive Committee. However, the Open Meeting Act is an existing state law that states all meetings need quorum. Because there are two or more commission members on each committee those committees are subject to the Open Meetings Act. The language in the bylaws was updated to reflect this.

A motion made by Commissioner Will Cheek and seconded by Commissioner Dexter Brewer to approve a bylaws amendment to Article VII, Section 9, striking “Except for Executive Committee, a quorum is not required for committee or task force meetings and decision making” and replacing it with “A quorum is required for all committee and task force meetings and decision making.”

The current bylaws do not provide a time limit for Public Comment or create a space for Public Comment in committee meetings. Language from peer bodies has been used to update the bylaws so they are consistent for the commission and committees and provide a limitation for the time (20 minutes total, 2 minutes per person). The person chairing the commission or committee meeting has the discretion to extend the time as needed.

Commissioner Cheek asked if Public Comment was an option or a requirement by state law. According to the Open Meeting Act it is a requirement for each meeting. Further discussion occurred regarding the time limit.

A motion made by Commissioner Will Cheek and seconded by Commissioner Dexter Brewer to approve a bylaws amendment to Article VIII, Section 2, Clause 1. b. and Article VII Committees and Task Forces, insert Section 10. adding “Davidson County residents can sign up for public comments. The public comment period is limited to twenty (20) minutes total. Comments are limited to a maximum of two (2) minutes per person. Persons wishing to provide comment on matters that are germane to items on the agenda must sign up prior to the beginning of the meeting, on the sign-up sheet provided at the meeting. The opportunity to provide public comment is offered on a first come, first served basis. At all meetings, the commissioner chairing the proceedings shall have the authority to manage/limit the number of persons (non-Board members) allowed to speak on an issue and to manage/limit such speakers’ time.

Executive Director Singh provided an update that the Advocacy Committee is a standing committee and no longer an ad-hoc committee.

F. Nominating Committee

Officer Recommendations (ACTION)

Commissioner Dupree has been nominated as Vice Chair and Commissioner Perez has been nominated as Secretary.

A motion to approve Commissioner Dupree as Vice Chair was offered by Chair Angelico. Rev. Brewer moved, Commissioner Byrd seconded. A voice vote was taken and Commissioner Dupree has been approved as Vice Chair.

A motion to approve Commissioner Perez as Secretary was offered by Chair Angelico. Vice Chair Dupree moved, Commissioner Kurtz seconded. A voice vote was taken and Commissioner Perez has been approved as Secretary.

G. Committee on Anti-Racism and Equity (Ellen Angelico/Diana Perez)

Chair Angelico reported that there were not enough members to hold a meeting last month but that there has been public interest and hopefully new members will roll on soon. She also reported that a goal of the C.A.R.E. committee has been to weave what they do into all committees and that she has been attending Public Art meetings to raise issues of equity there. Her hope is to implement that into other committees as well.

Pending mayoral appointments, new commission members will start in January. Onboarding will be in February. Metro Arts staff is having a retreat 12/4-5 that is open for all to attend.

Executive Director Singh provided an update regarding commission members that are rolling off. Commissioner Schmidt is term limited and Chair Powell has resigned. Commissioner Brewer and Commissioner Byrd have resigned as of January 1. Chair Angelico raised that if people have recommendations for new commission members to email Executive Director Singh.

H. Public Art Committee

1. Looby Mural Public Art, Semi-Finalist Recommendations (ACTION)

Public Art Project Manager Anne-Leslie Owens gave a brief recap of the project and presented the Public Art Committee's semifinalist recommendations from the pool of eligible applicants. The Public Art Committee recommends Creative Girls Rock, James Threalkill, and Omari Booker as artist semifinalists for Looby Community Center Public Art Project.

Chair Angelico called for a motion to approve Creative Girls Rock, James Threalkill, and Omari Booker as artist semifinalists for Looby Community Center Public Art Project.

A motion to approve Creative Girls Rock, James Threalkill, and Omari Booker as artist semi-finalists for the Looby Community Center public art project by Commissioner Dupree moved and Commissioner Kurtz seconded. A voice vote was taken and the semifinalists were approved.

2. Bordeaux Gateway Public Art, Semi-Finalist Recommendations (ACTION)

Public Art Project Manager Anne-Leslie Owens gave a brief recap of the project and presented the Public Art Committee's semifinalist recommendations. Creative Girls Rock, James Threalkill, Omari Booker and Stephen Hutchins, Prado Studio, and Shabazz Larkin were recommended as the artist semifinalists.

Chair Angelico called for a motion to approve Creative Girls Rock, James Threalkill, mari Booker and Stephen Hutchins, Prado Studio, and Shabazz Larkin as artists semifinalists for the Bordeaux Gateway project.

Commissioner Byrd asked if the winner from the Looby project would be precluded from this project. Anne-Leslie said that according to the Public Art Guidelines, the artist would be ineligible.

Commissioner Edward asked if the artists that were not semifinalists, would receive feedback. Anne-Leslie stated that if they requested feedback that could be given.

A motion to approve Creative Girls Rock, James Threalkill, Omari Booker and Stephen Hutchins, Prado Studio, and Shabazz Larkin as artist semi-finalists for the Bordeaux Gateway public art project by Commissioner Byrd, seconded by Commissioner Edward. A voice vote was taken and the semifinalist were approved.

3. Permanent Supportive Housing, Semi-Finalist Recommendations (ACTION)

Public Art Project Manager Anne-Leslie Owens gave a brief recap of the project and presented the Public Art Committee's semifinalist recommendations from the pool of eligible applicants.

The Public Art Committee recommends Detour Norf, Marlos E'van, Omari Booker, Persona Company, and Queen Bee Ink as artist semifinalists.

Chair Angelico called for a motion to approve Detour Norf, Marlos E'van, Omari Booker, Persona Company, and Queen Bee Ink as artist semifinalists for the Permanent Supportive Housing project.

A motion to approve Detour Norf, Marlos E'van, Omari Booker, Persona Company, and Queen Bee Ink as artist semi-finalists for the Permanent Supportive Housing public art project by Commissioner Brewer motioned and Commissioner Cheek seconded. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. Commissioner Bell recused himself due to a conflict of interest.

4. Temporary Art on Metro Property Proposal Recommendation (ACTION)

Public Art Project Manager Anne-Leslie Owens gave a brief recap of the project and presented the temporary project team that NDOT and the Civic Design Center brought forward. The lead artist would be Ozzy Orozco.

Chair Angelico called for a motion to approve the Temporary Art Project.

A motion to approve Civic Design Center's Temporary Art on Metro Property Proposal for Arthur Ave at 11th traffic triangle by Commissioner Dupree moved and Commissioner Kurtz seconded. A voice vote was taken and the project was approved.

5. Arthur Avenue/ I-65 Bridge Underpass Public Art, Finalist Recommendations (ACTION/Update)

Public Art Project Manager Anne-Leslie Owens gave a brief recap of the project and presented the finalist recommendations. Commissioner Edward, the chair of the panel, shared his thoughts and experience in choosing the finalist.

The Public Art Committee recommends Alex Braden as finalist and Cliff Garten and Ebony Payne-English as alternate.

Chair Angelico called for a motion to approve Alex Braden as finalist and Cliff Garten and Ebony Payne-English as alternate.

A motion to approve Alex Braden as finalist and Cliff Garten as alternate for Arthur Avenue I-65 Bridge Underpass Public Art Project by Commissioner Polycarpou moved and Commissioner Edward seconded. A voice vote was taken and the finalist and alternate were approved.

Executive Director Daniel Singh provided notes stating that the artist had concerns regarding the timeline and the project may be completed after June 2024 and that legal had concerns regarding the Project Return contact and NEA grant specifics. There will be an MOU between NDOT and Metro Arts.

Commissioner Kurtz asked who will be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the lighting system. Collections Manager Anne-Leslie said she would like a lighting contractor to do the routine inspections and upkeep.

Commissioner Cheek asked about a warranty. The artist did provide technical information that the lights do come with warranties.

Executive Director Daniel Singh wanted to note the exceptional workload and stated that due to the scope of the Participatory Budget project, Metro Arts will not be participating next year. Commissioner Perez asked for clarification on how Metro Arts receives Participatory Budget projects. Executive Director Singh stated that information given in the requests were not aligned with Metro Arts and the maintenance costs were not considered.

I. Grants and Funding Committee

Current Restorative Arts Contract Extensions (ACTION)

Executive Director Singh provided updates regarding staff capacity and asked the commission to extend the current contracts of Nashville Repertory Theatre, Southern Word, Global Education Center, and From the Heart International Education Foundation to June 2024.

A motion to approve the extension of Arts Programming for Court-Involved Youth contracts to June 2024 by Commissioner Byrd and seconded by Commissioner Polycarpou. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved.

Commissioner Kurtz has recused herself from that vote.

FY24 Operating Grant and Thrive current updates

Executive Director Singh said they are hoping to open the grant applications by the end of the month.

The MHRC document was shared. Commissioner Kurtz asked if questions could be emailed to Executive Director Singh. He replied yes

FY24 Operating Grants are almost at the contracting stage. There have been changes made in the contracting process.

Correction to FY24 Thrive awards (ACTION)

Correction on three awards that were not included on the initial approval.

A motion motioned to approve funding for the additional Thrive awards by Commissioner Brewer and seconded Commissioner Dupree Love. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed.

Appeals Process

FY25 grants opening soon

J. Communications Updates (Mollie Berliss and Daniel Singh)

Mollie highlighted the nFocus Magazine features, the radio interview with Daniel and Jamaal Sheats on “News from the Community” on WENO, and the radio interview with Daniel and Erica Perry on “Straight Talk” on WENO

Daniel gave information and played a video regarding the social media collaboration with influencer Michael Schneider.

Mollie also highlighted the blog and the public art piece at Mill Ridge park and said that it is her last meeting as Communications Manager and the new Communications Manager will start 10/30.

Daniel talked about relationship building in the community and meetings they have had.

K. Chair’s Updates and Appointments

Chair Angelico wanted to acknowledge the August meeting and thank the commissioners and public for participating and engaging in a challenging but valuable conversation.

Regular Executive Committee meetings to have discussion between Committee Chairs before presenting things to the Commission. Potentially a short morning meeting once a month.

Commissioner Cheek raised that he was marked as present and absent on the minutes. Chair Angelico entertained a motion to rescind the previous vote on the minutes.

A motion was raised that Commissioner Cheek that he was marked as present and absent on the minutes. Chair Commissioner Angelico entertained a motion to rescind the previous vote on the August 17, 2023 minutes by Commissioner Byrd moved and Commissioner Brewer seconded. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Chair Angelico entertained a motion to strike Commissioner Cheek's name from the absent list and insert a parenthetical on the present list that he left after Item L.

A motion to strike Commissioner Cheek from the absent list and insert a parenthetical on the present list that he left after item L by Commissioner Byrd moved and Commissioner Brewer seconded. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

L. Executive Director's Report

6. Hiring

Skylar is leaving the Finance/HR department. The budget has not been adequately representative of a fully staffed budget. Finance and HR are asking questions regarding the adjustments. The office has not been fully staffed for 5 years. Daniel has let the commission know that approximately \$252,000 has been moved to staffing.

7. Project Delays

8. Capacity Issues

Executive Director Singh wanted to thank staff for operating at about 50% capacity.

9. Cultural Planning

The lease on the current building will be up in 2 years. The downtown option was not ADA compliant and the parking would have cost \$20,000-\$40,000 a year.

M. New/Old Business

N. Adjourn Meeting

Commissioner Chair Angelico adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.