



METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

Minutes

Metro Arts Board of Commissioners
January 25, 2024, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
MNPS Board Room
2601 Bransford Ave. Nashville, TN 37204

Commissioners: Leah Dupree Love Acting Chair (Vice Chair), Diana Perez (Secretary), John Nefflen, Heather Lefkowitz, Tim Jester, Dawana Wade, Beverly Watts, and Arlene Nicholas-Phillips, Daniel Singh (Executive Director, ex-officio)

Absent Commissioners: Darek Bell, Will Cheek, Janet Kurtz, Carol McCoy, and Campbell West

Metro Art Staff: Anne-Leslie Owens, Atilio Murga, Asia Pyron, Claudia Lawhon, Christiana Afotey, Chuck Beard, Daryn Jackson, Jesse Ross, Jessica Ingram, Josiah Golson, Jonathan Saad, Marsya LaRowe, Mollie Berliss, Masonya Osei, Skylar Peterson, and Vivian Foxx

METRO ARTS MISSION:

Drive an Equitable and Vibrant Community through the Arts

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| A. Call to Order, Welcome, and Land Acknowledgement | 12:00—12:05 |
| 1. Acting Chair Commissioner Dupree Love called meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. | |
| • Commissioner Dupree Love introduce all new commissioners and all of staff to each other as well as the public. | |
| B. Public Comment | 12:05—12:25 |
| 1. Lydia Yousef | |
| 2. Michael Lacey | |
| C. Approval of Minutes | 12:25—12:30 |
| <i>A motion to approve October 16, 2023 minutes made by Commissioner Leah Dupree Love made by common consent.</i> | |
| <i>A motion to approve November 16, 2023 minutes made by Commissioner Leah Dupree Love made by common consent.</i> | |
| Arts Spotlight: Aisha Abu-Asaba and Em Berkey | 12:30—12:45 |
| 1. Artists gave beautiful performances. We are grateful for their time. | |
| D. Cultural Planning Introduction | 12:45 - 12:50 |

- Daniel provided an update on the cultural planning process. He mentioned that the process was restarted in the fall due to several community members being left out. The steering committee was reconstituted, and a meeting scheduled for February was rescheduled due to weather conditions. In February, the steering committee will convene, followed by a week-long community engagement process in March. Surveys will be conducted for approximately 45 days, along with focus groups and listening sessions. A draft plan is expected to be released around September or October of the next year for public comment, with finalization anticipated by January.
- E. Metro Human Relations Commission Update: Rev Tucker 12:50—1:00
- Reverend Davie Tucker provided an update on the Title 6 complaint received by the Metro Human Relations Commission on October 16th. The complaint pertained to the allocation and disbursement of grants. Interviews were conducted with past and present commissioners, staff, consultants, and affected artists. The commission is in the final phases of compiling a report, with outside counsel assisting in addressing final questions. A preliminary report is expected within the next two to three weeks.
- F. Committee for Anti-Racism and Equity (Commissioner Perez) 1:00—1:15
- Commissioner Diana Perez presented updates on the Committee for Anti-Racism and Equity (CARE). She mentioned the review of applications and the recommendation to appoint Lydia Yousef and Camille Greer as committee members. Lydia was confirmed to be present at the meeting. Congratulations were extended to the appointed members.
 - *Commissioner Leah Dupree Love officially appointed Lydia Yousef and Camille Greer to the committee.*
 - Commissioner Perez also discussed plans for anti-racism training facilitated by Alternate Rootes and Justin Laing scheduled for May. All commissioners, staff, and committee members are expected to participate, with a follow-up joint meeting in the fall. Additionally, revisions to the current application form were discussed to align it more closely with Metro grants and other application processes.
- A. Public Art Committee (Anne-Leslie Owens-Public Art Collections Manger) 1:15—1:30
1. Temporary Art on Metro Property Guidelines Amendment Recommendation (ACTION)
 - Anne Leslie provided background information on the proposed amendment to the temporary art guidelines. She highlighted the collaboration with the Nashville Department of Transportation (NDOT) and their exploration of tactical urbanism and artistic interventions. The proposed amendment aims to streamline the review process for temporary art projects on metro property, aligning it with NDOT's tactical urbanism guidelines.

Commissioner Nefflen suggested deferring the vote to the next meeting to allow new Commissioners time to familiarize themselves with the proposed changes. Anne Leslie confirmed that deferring would not pose any issues and agreed to postpone the vote.
 2. Public Art Guidelines Amendment (ACTION)
 - Jessica Ingram introduced proposed changes to the composition and responsibilities of the Public Art Committee (PAC). She highlighted the need for additional commissioners on the PAC and an increase in community members, along with adjustments to the selection panel composition.

Commissioner Nefflen suggested deferring the vote to the next meeting to allow new Commissioners time to familiarize themselves with the proposed changes. Jessica Ingram confirmed that deferring would not pose any issues and agreed to postpone the vote.

3. Approve Lending Library Panelists (ACTION)

- Jessica Ingram presented the slate of panelists recommended for the lending library selection panel. She emphasized the importance of the lending library project in bringing art to the community.

A motion to approve Martha Morales Purucker, Saiid Lewis, Anne W. Parrish, Cynthia C. Harris, Audry Deal-McEver, and Pratiksha Muir for the Lending Library selection panel made by Commissioner John Nefflen and seconded by Commissioner Tim Jester.

B. Special Election, Acting Chair's Updates and Nominating Committee 1:30—1:45

- Commissioner Love the acting Chair began the discussion by addressing the vacancies and resignations within the Commission. Due to the resignation of the previous Chair, Commissioner Love assumed the role of interim Chair as per the bylaws. However, Commissioner Love clarified that she is ineligible to continue serving as Chair due to not meeting the one-year requirement on the Commission.
- Quoting Article 6, Section 4 of the bylaws, Commissioner Love explained the process for appointing a replacement Chair until the next regularly held election. She announced their intention to appoint Commissioner Perez as the new Chair of the Metro Arts Commission, as she meets the one-year requirement.
- Commissioner Love emphasized that the appointment of the Chair would be effective immediately and that she would step down from the role of Acting Chair after this meeting. Any further duties, including the appointment of a secretary, would be the responsibility of the new Chair Commissioner Perez.
- A question was raised regarding the timing of the elections, to which Commissioner Love confirmed that they are scheduled for September of each year.

C. Executive Director's Report 1:45—1:55

a. Advocacy

- The Executive Director Daniel Singh emphasized the importance of advocacy efforts, particularly regarding budget allocation discussions with the mayor's office and council.

b. Audit

- Mentioned ongoing audit processes initiated to improve organizational processes, including finances, contracts, and invoices.

c. Hiring Update

- Noted the near completion of hiring processes and the impending departure of a staff member, prompting a review of staffing structures.

d. Project Delays / Capacity Issues

- Addressed capacity issues stemming from frozen positions during the pandemic and the need to rebuild staff capacity.

- e. Staff/Commission training and retreat
 - Discussed plans for training and retreat sessions, acknowledging scheduling challenges but expressing commitment to organizing the events.
- f. Recap of few issues
 - Provided a comprehensive recap of various issues raised, including matters related to diversity, legal compliance, grant allocations, and public communication.

D. Commissioner Discussion:

- Commissioners expressed concerns and sought clarification on various matters raised in the Executive Director's report.
- Discussions included the need for transparency, accountability, and respectful communication within the commission.
- Questions were raised about potential conflicts of interest and the appropriate course of action regarding audit findings and ethical considerations.
- New commissioners highlighted the importance of understanding previous meeting discussions and requested access to recordings and public comments for better context.

E. New/Old Business

1:55—2:00

- Commissioner Perez addressed concerns about aggressive behavior by commissioners witnessed during the previous meeting, emphasizing the importance of respectful communication and professionalism within the commission.
- Commissioners engaged in a constructive dialogue regarding the standards of conduct and the need for mutual respect and support among members.

F. Adjourn Meeting

2:00

A was motion was made by Commissioner Nefflen to adjourn was made and seconded by Commissioner Watts leading to the formal conclusion of the meeting at 1:50 p.m.