



**Minutes**  
**Committee for Antiracism and Equity Meeting**  
**January 24, 2024**  
**9:00 AM – 10:30 AM**  
**1417 Murfreesboro Pike**  
**Nashville, TN 37217**

**Committee Members:** Commissioner-Chair Diana Perez, Teree McCormick, Ellen Gilbert, Fathiyah Shepard-Suso, Daniel Singh (ex-officio)

**Metro Staff:** Josiah Golson, Claudia Lawhon, Chuck Beard, Daryn Jackson, and Vivian Foxx

- A. Call to Order and Recognize Group Norms & CARE Purpose Statement
  - a. Chair Commissioner Perez called meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting and read group norms and the purpose statement of the Committee.
- B. Public Comment
  - a. No Public Comments
- C. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 8/11/23 and 11/15/23
  - a. *A motion was made to approve August 11, 2023 meeting minutes by Community Member Ellen Gilbert and seconded by Community Member Teree McCormick.*
  - b. *A motion was made to approve November 15, 2023, meeting minutes by Community Member Ellen Gilbert and seconded by Community Member Teree McCormick.*
- D. Action/Discussion Items
  - a. Discuss Commission changes since last CARE meeting
    - i. Concerns were raised regarding the recent roster outreach. Two candidates withdrew due to concerns about being asked for free labor and entering into potentially unsafe spaces. Suggestions were made to reconsider the application process to better align with the Committee's values.

- ii. It was noted that Commissioner Love was currently the acting Commission Chair until the Commission meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January, whereas she will appoint a new Chair that has been on the Board over a year. The only three who qualify are Commissioner Will Cheek, Commissioner Campbell West, and Commissioner Diana Perez.
- iii. Discussion ensued regarding recent changes in the Commission. It was noted that there are 13 Commissioners with 6 new appointments and 2 vacant slots.
- iv. Legal clarification was sought regarding the eligibility criteria for serving on the Commission.
- v. The process for onboarding new Commissioners and the need for training, particularly in anti-racism, was discussed.
- vi. The bylaws regarding Committee Chairs and potential amendments were mentioned. It was noted that the acting Chair's appointment of the new Chair would save time and streamline the process.
- vii. Concerns were raised about the emotional labor involved in servicing on the Commission, particularly in discussions around racism and anti-racism.
- viii. The need for clear onboarding materials and processes for new Commissioners was emphasized.
- ix. The discussion shifted towards nominations and the revision of forms used in the selection process.
- x. Concerns were raised about the current selection process and the need to consider both formal training and lived experience in evaluating candidates.
- xi. Feedback from recent applicants was shared, highlighting concerns about the burden of the application process and the emphasis on formal training.
- xii. It was suggested to consider alternative methods of gathering information from applicants, such as interviews or open-ended questions.
- xiii. Legal clarification was sought regarding compensation for Committee Members and potential conflicts with other roles and responsibilities.

- b. Discuss new CARE schedule
  - i. Committee discussed on waiting to set dates for CARE schedules for Committee until next meeting so that the two new Community Members are a part of the discussion.
  - ii. Updates were provided regarding the outreach for new CARE roster Members. It was mentioned that there were withdrawals from two nominees Ariel Bui and Sangeetha Ekambaram, citing concerns about free labor and safety.
  - iii. Further discussion highlighted the need to reassess the application form and consider adjustments to better align with the lived experiences of applicants.
  - iv. Coordinate with trainers for scheduling anti-racism training sessions.
  - v. Draft revised CARE roster application form based on feedback and discussion.
  - vi. Initiate follow-up interviews with nominees to gather additional insights.

***A Motion was made to move forward with the recommendations for the two nominees, Camille Greer and Lydia Yousief, scoring highest by Community Member Ellen Gilbert and seconded by Commissioner Perez and approved.***

E. Staff/Commission Report

- a. Updates on Cultural Planning
  - i. Representation on Steering Committee:
    - It was noted that there was a lack of representation on the Steering Committee, which was selected before the current Staff team took over. The previous selection process was by invitation only.
    - There was a thorough discussion on how to address this issue. Suggestions included conducting an open call for new members. However, it was ultimately decided to follow the same pattern as before and invite the necessary individuals directly.

- The voices that were identified as missing from the Steering Committee during the September meeting have been added. These include Shabazz Larkin, Evan Brown, Cynthia Harris, and others. Additionally, a representative from TPAC is also joining to ensure better representation of larger performing arts organizations.
- ii. Meeting Rescheduling:
  - The reconstituted Steering Committee was supposed to meet last week but was postponed due to inclement weather. The meeting is now scheduled for February.
- iii. Feedback on Cultural Plan:
  - Feedback received from the Fall meeting emphasized the importance of ensuring that the Cultural Plan is deeply anti-racist. This was a consensus among all attendees.
  - Justin Laing has been appointed as the independent evaluator for the Cultural Plan, which was seen as a wise decision by all.

#### F. Next meeting & planning

##### a. Dates and CARE schedules for Committee meetings

- i. During the meeting, the following discussion and decisions were made regarding the dates and schedules for Committee meetings:

- Regular Meeting Time:

- a. There was a consensus to find a regular meeting time for the Committee that aligns with the Commission meeting schedule. It was suggested that meetings should occur before the Commission meetings so that any approved items can seamlessly roll into the Commission agenda.
- b. However, it was noted that the availability of the two new members needs to be considered before finalizing the schedule. Additionally, input from Camille Greer regarding scheduling constraints is necessary.

- Frequency of Meetings:

- a. The workload of the Committee was discussed, highlighting the challenges of working every month due to capacity constraints. It was proposed to continue with the pattern of meeting for two months and then having one month off to prevent burnout and maintain efficiency.
  - b. The importance of balancing workload with the capacity of the Committee Members was emphasized. It was noted that unlike other Departments with larger teams, the Committee lacks the resources to sustain monthly meetings.
- Executive Committee Meetings:
    - a. A suggestion was made to have the Executive Committee meet during the off months of the Committee meetings. This would ensure that there is still activity and progress even during the months when the full Committee does not convene.
    - b. The Executive Committee would consist of a subset of the Commission Members and would focus on maintaining momentum and addressing any urgent matters.
  - Training and Onboarding:
    - a. It was agreed that training and onboarding sessions for new Members are essential before making any significant changes to the meeting schedule. The possibility of conducting joint meetings with all new Staff and Members was discussed to ensure alignment on goals and processes.
    - b. The timing of the training session was proposed to be in May, with a joint meeting possibly scheduled for August or September to facilitate collaboration and alignment.

#### G. Old/New Business

- a. During the meeting, the following old and new business items were discussed:
  - i. New/Old Business:

- The need for PowerPoint slides for onboarding new Members was highlighted. The slides would provide information about the Committee's work and expectations for new Members.
- A discussion ensued about the Charter and a grounding statement was proposed to be read. The statement emphasized the commitment to anti-racism and racial equity within the Committee's work.
- Additionally, the importance of onboarding new Members and providing them with information about the Committee's history and goals was emphasized.

ii. CARE Committee Meeting Schedule:

- The scheduling of CARE Committee meetings before the Commission meetings was revisited. It was noted that a formal schedule should be established, considering the availability of new Appointees.
- It was proposed to schedule the CARE Committee meeting for the Friday before the Commission meeting. For the upcoming month, which is an odd month due to the Commission meeting falling on the 15<sup>th</sup>, the CARE Committee meeting would need to be on the 8<sup>th</sup>.
- A tentative time of 9:30 a.m. was suggested, but confirmation would be sent via email after checking everyone's availability.

iii. Recognition of Jon Royal's work:

- Recognition was given to Jon Royal for his contributions to the Committee. It was noted that Jon has been integral since the inception of the Committee and has been selected for a Directorial opportunity in Saint Louis due to his excellence and equitable mindset.
- Jon's dedication and contributions to the Committee were acknowledged, and best wishes were extended for his future endeavors.

H. Adjourn Meeting

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.