



**METRO ARTS**  
NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

Minutes

Budget and Administrative Oversight Committee

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

12:30PM-2:30PM

Metro Southeast Building

Commissioners: Beverly Watts (Chair), Campbell West, Heather Lefkowitz, John Nefflen, and Timothy Jester

Metro Legal: Macy Amos & Tessa Marsh-Ortiz

Metro Staff: Vivian Foxx

**METRO ARTS MISSION:**

Drive an Equitable and Vibrant Community through the Arts

- A. Welcome and call to order.
  - a. Commissioner Chair Watts called meeting to order at 12:35 p.m.
- B. Public Comment
  - a. No public comments in person or emailed.
- C. Update on Meetings & Discussions with Finance:
  1. Commissioner Watts gave an update on the following items.
    - Director Crumbo Meeting (Thursday after last Commission meeting)
    - A memo from Director Crumbo was given to the Commissioners.
    - Discussed payment schedules for artists.
    - At the time, it was unknown when artists would be paid due to pending list finalizations of known artists and amounts.
    - Some resolution achieved, but ongoing issues remain.
    - Legal department sending out letters regarding payment updates.
  2. Grant from Tennessee Arts Commission:
    - Grant has been progressing.
    - Involvement of ABC (Arts & Business Council).
    - Memo detailing ongoing finance work and unknowns.
    - Weekly updates promised by Director Crumbo.
    - Information on projected expenses and budget availability is fluid.
  3. Contractor Issues:
    - Uncertainties about contractors serving in staff roles.

- Committee members encouraged to submit questions by Friday to facilitate answers for the next meeting.
- Importance of halting activities until future plans are decided.

#### 4. Payment and Letter Dispatch:

- Letters informing artists about payment to be mailed by tomorrow.
- Payments can be made via ACH or check depending on artists' preferences.
- Finance central will issue checks post-verification.
- Deadline for payments is no later than April 15, 2024.

#### 5. Ongoing Review and Budgeting:

- Continuous review of outstanding payments.
- Collaboration between staff and finance to identify and process outstanding payments.
- Developing future budget and grants-making processes for the year 2025.
- Grants Committee working on the grants-making process to be reviewed for oversight.

#### 6. Questions and Discussions:

- Internal Freezes and Contracts:
- Several internal projects and contracts have been frozen.
- Concern over halted projects funded by percent funds, not operating funds.
- Clarification requested on frozen contracts and project management tools.

#### Basic Operations:

- Staff unable to procure basic supplies (e.g., water) due to frozen credit cards.
- Issue to be addressed in the next meeting.

#### D. Legal/HR topics Updates: Metro Legal

- No new HR updates from Legal.
- Concerns about the adequacy of staff leadership in the absence of an executive director:
- Interim or permanent leadership status remains unresolved.
- Chair to meet with HR to discuss leadership and staffing gaps.
- Acknowledgment of staff filling gaps but recognizing the need for stable leadership.

#### E. Questions & Answers: Committee members

##### Authority for Signing Contracts:

- Discussion on contract signing authority due to the executive director's absence.
- Legal and public art staff, along with procurement, met to resolve outstanding questions.
- Delegation of authority on an interim basis considered:
- Traditionally, the executive director signs public contracts.

- Legal and finance departments to determine if finance director and legal sufficiency can authorize contracts in the current extraordinary circumstances.
- Final yes/no answers expected by end of the week.

#### Public Fund Allocation:

- Clarification on the separation of personal funds and operational budgets.
- Current budget process discussed with timelines and responsibilities:
- Staff members Chris and Sydney coordinating with finance to ensure budget process moves forward.
- Meeting with finance scheduled within the next week.

#### Bylaws and Operational Issues:

- Review and comparison of bylaws with enabling ordinance:
- Need to address employment, supervision, and removal of professional staff.
- Clarity on procurement processes related to Thrive.
- Definition and equitable distribution of funds if the council resolution passes.
- Discussion on the authority of the executive director versus the commission regarding staff issues.
- Consideration of appointing the grants committee chair to the executive committee for better oversight and functionality.

#### Care Committee Update:

- Commissioner Love appointing a new chair of the Care Committee due to Commissioner Perez's resignation.
- No meeting in April; new chair to lead the May meeting.

#### F. Next steps: Beverly Watts & Committee Members

##### Clarification and Next Steps:

- HR process review in relation to bylaws.
- Grants management issue to be addressed.
- Ensuring leadership stability and operational efficiency within the commission.
- Committee to follow up on reimbursement policies and internal procurement issues.
- Legal and Finance departments thanked for ongoing support and cooperation.
- Questions on financial data and updated reports to be sent to Director Crumbo.
- Ensuring one-way communication to gather necessary information without deliberation.
- Future discussions on committee processes and aligning them with bylaws and enabling ordinances.
- Ongoing work expected to continue into the summer, with a potential timeline ending in August.
- Commissioner Jester brought that the Grants Chair should be added to the Executive Committee and that it should be brought to the Chair of the

Commissioner to add that person as the 6<sup>th</sup> voting member of the Executive Board.

G. Adjournment

*Commissioner Chair Watts adjourned the meeting at 1:45 pm*