

MEETING MINUTES

Metro Arts Commission

Thursday, July 18, 2024, 12:00pm-2:00pm
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board Room
Nashville, TN 37204

[Meeting video](#)

Attendance at Meeting:

Commissioners: Leah Dupree Love (Chair), Janet Kurtz (Vice Chair), Heather Lefkowitz (Secretary), Timothy Jester, Evan Brown, Tre Hardin, Carol McCoy, Beverly Watts

Metro Arts Staff: Interim Director Dr. Paulette Coleman, Chris Afotey, Jessica Ingram

Guests: Tessa Ortiz-Marsh (Metro Legal), Bill Walker (Internal Audit), Lauren Riley (Internal Audit)

Not present:

Commissioners Campbell West, John Nefflen, Dawana Wade, Jessie Rosenblum

Action Items

- Provide notes and suggestions on bylaw revisions to Tessa Ortiz-Marsh by August 1.
- Support Interim Director Coleman in providing responses to the internal audit findings by agreed upon deadlines.
- Schedule committee meetings for August, including CARE, Nominating committee, and Executive committee.
- Develop monthly financial reports for review by the commission.

Meeting summary

The meeting centered on the approval of the conciliated agreement with MHRC, Metro Legal, and the external complainants. Other discussions revolved around the internal audit report for Metro Arts, with concerns addressed about lack of internal controls, documentation, and proper protocols. Commissioners discussed ways to improve their operations and communication, including coaching and support, scheduling meetings and updates, and organizing retreats.

Agenda and notes

A. Call to Order, Welcome, and Land Acknowledgement

- a. Chair Love called the meeting to order at 12:07PM and read the land acknowledgement.

B. Public Comment

- a. Lydia Yousief
- b. Rev. Davie Tucker, MHRC
- c. Council Member Joy Styles

C. Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve minutes with the necessary changes and correction for May 16, 2024, was made by Commissioner Jester and seconded by Commissioner Hardin.

A motion to approve minutes with the necessary changes and corrections for May 24, 2024, by Commissioner Jester and seconded by Commissioner Hardin.

D. Agenda Items/Discussion

a. Internal Audit

- i. Lauren Riley and Bill Walker from Internal Audit present the findings of the Internal audit of Metro Arts to commissioners and thank staff for their cooperation and assistance.
- ii. Major findings include lack of documentation and financial controls; circumvention of human resource and procurement processes; role confusion; poor communication with Metro departments, and a lack of clearly defined policies and procedures.
- iii. Commissioner Love explains assessed risk ranking matrix, management's role in implementing recommendations. Management provides responses to audit recommendations, and internal audit follows up on implementation.
- iv. Internal audit conducts full follow-up audit after many recommendations have been implemented.
- v. The Commission will work with Dr. Coleman to advance the audit recommendations and assist in implementation.

b. MHRC/Title VI Complaint and Conciliation

- i. Attorney Tyler Yarbo details the conciliation process with artist complainants, Metro Legal, Metro Arts, and MHRC.
- ii. All parties have reached an agreement for settlement, pending

- approval from the commission.
- iii. If approved, Attorney Yarbo and Dr. Coleman will work to finalize the settlement by a July 31 deadline.
- iv. Enter motion and vote details here
- c. FY25 Budget
 - i. Chris Afotey presents FY25 budget documents.
 - ii. More detail on monthly budgeted spending and clarification on some line items (disparity study, grants, etc.) is forthcoming.
- d. Committee reports:

- i. Public Art: Jessica Ingram provides updates on Lending Library event, and Elisheba Israel Mrozik's installation at Kossie Gardner Sr. Park. Staff were congratulated on a successful Donelson Library launch.
- ii. Budget and Oversight: Commissioner Watts discusses the budget oversight committee's plan to review Tennessee Arts Commission's budget and allocate time for onboarding materials.
- iii. Grants: Commissioner Jester discusses grants and funding, mentioning a holding pattern due to paying out fiscal year 24 work and conciliation process. Next grants and funding meeting is scheduled for August 12, with a public meeting to follow for community feedback on new grant process.
- iv. CARE: Commissioner Hardin provides updates on community involvement and makes regular meetings more accessible to involve community members in decision making.
- v. Executive:
 - 1. The Commission plans to review and update bylaws with input from Metro Legal and all commissioners.
 - 2. The Executive Committee will lead the review process and send suggestions to Metro Legal for compilation.
 - 3. The Nominating Committee (Jester, Wade, and Hardin) will meet to discuss the election of chair, vice chair, and secretary, and present names for the commission vote at the next meeting.
 - 4. Chair Love clarifies roles and responsibilities of commission members.
 - 5. Commissioner Lefkowitz explains their decision to write Metro Council in opposition to a bill, citing personal reasons while acknowledging the intent of the bill. Commissioners should be clear that their opinions do not reflect the commission's views.
- e. New Business/Personnel
 - i. Dr. Coleman updates commission on executive director search progress, incorporating staff perspectives. Dr. Coleman emphasizes the importance of changing the narrative around Metro Arts, highlighting their outstanding work and potential for growth. Commission expresses gratitude to Dr. Coleman, acknowledging the challenges of stepping into a new role.

E. Adjourn:

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 2:01PM.
- b.

Submitted for approval by



Heather Eve Lefkowitz, Secretary