



METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC) MINUTES SEPTEMBER 15, 2025

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held its regular meeting at the Midtown Hills Police Precinct, Community Room, 1441 12th Avenue South, on September 15, 2025, with Chair Linda Wynn presiding.

Attendance

Commissioners: Dr. Clay Bailey, John Bridges, Gary Burke, Dr. Don Cusic, Dr. Erica Hayden, Jim Hoobler, Dr. Jane Landers, Sandra Parham, Dr. Marisa Richmond, Vice Chair Laura Rost, Tom Wood, and Chair Linda Wynn were **present**.

Dr. Bill McKee was **not present**.

Staff Members: Tim Walker, Caroline Eller, Jessica Fitzpatrick, Bryan Gilley, Russell LeSturgeon, Scarlett Miles, and Dustin Summers were **present**. Hannah Zeitlin (Metro Legal) was **present**.

County Historian: position vacant

Guests: Jay Brothers, Historic Nashville, Inc.
Cindy Harrison, PLA, Greenways & Open Space Commission,
Assistant Director, Metro Board of Parks and Recreation
Jeanie Nelson, Greenways & Open Space Commission, Chair, and
Greenways for Nashville, board member

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND WELCOME – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Linda Wynn called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. and verified that a quorum was present after the roll call of attendance. Three commissioners arrived after roll call.

II. REVIEW OF AUGUST MEETING MINUTES – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn presented last month's meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Richmond moved to accept the August 2025 meeting minutes. Commissioner Cusic seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn opened the floor for Public Comment. Jay Brothers spoke on behalf of Historic Nashville, Inc. (HNI). Mr. Brothers is working with Dr. Victoria Hensley on HNI's Advocacy Committee. HNI is currently accepting nominations for the 2025 Nashville Nine endangered sites list. He encouraged commissioners to submit their nominations for the list. HNI hopes to have a list that represents community concerns across the county. The committee is also working to track outcomes for properties previously listed on the Nashville Nine, spotlighting successes and recognizing losses.

IV. DIRECTOR'S VACATION PAYOUT – *Chair Linda Wynn*

This item will determine how to pay out Director Walker's accrued vacation time upon his retirement from Metro Government later this fall. There are two options, a lump sum payout or a day-by-day payout [like continuing to receive a periodic paycheck]. Director Walker stated that he prefers the day-by-day payout, but the MHC must approve it. Previous employees and the former director also chose the same vacation payout process. Commissioner Cusic made a motion to run out Director Walker's vacation pay day-by-day until it is exhausted. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. Commissioner Richmond asked if Director Walker has set a departure date yet. Director Walker said that he is planning to leave at the end of November 2025, and no later than the end of December 2025, depending on the completion of some outstanding projects. Chair Wynn asked for the vote, and the MHC voted unanimously to pay out Director Walker's vacation time day-by-day.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION TO MAYOR ON DAVIDSON COUNTY HISTORIAN - *Chair Wynn*

Chair Wynn reported that she received five nominations for Davidson County Historian: Dr. Lea Williams, Jeff Sellers, Tom Wood, Dr. Tara Mitchell Mielnik, and Dr. Katie O'Bryan. She received seven additional nominations, but those individuals self-selected out of the process for various reasons. The MHC will forward the list of nominees to the Mayor's Office and Mayor O'Connell will appoint one individual from the list to be the next Davidson County Historian. Metro Council must confirm the appointment. But first, the MHC must vote on the slate of nominees. Commissioner Cusic asked if it would be possible to review mini biographies about the five individuals. Commissioner Bridges agreed. Director Walker agreed that staff will send out CVs for the nominated candidates to the MHC. Commissioner Burke asked if Dr. Katie Bryan is the same Dr. O'Bryan who serves as Executive Director of Travellers Rest; yes, she is. Commissioner Wood confirmed that Dr. Williams has agreed to serve as Davidson County Historian if appointed. Chair Wynn said, yes, Dr. Williams has

agreed to serve. All five of the candidates agreed to serve if appointed. With this information confirming Dr. Williams' interest in the position, Commissioner Wood asked to withdraw his name from consideration. Commissioner Wood made a motion to defer the vote regarding nominations for Davidson County Historian until the October meeting. Commissioner Cusic seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

IX. METRO NASHVILLE'S GREENWAYS – Cindy Harrison, PLA, and Jeanie Nelson

Cindy Harrison, Assistant Director of the Metro Board of Parks and Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Commission, and Jeanie Nelson, Chair of the Greenways and Open Space Commission and board member with Greenways for Nashville (non-profit which supports greenways), spoke to the MHC about the history of greenways in Nashville and plans for the 440 Greenway near Sevier Park and Sunnyside.

Consideration of greenways and open spaces in park planning in Nashville began about 35 years ago under the administration of Mayor Phil Bredesen. Members of the Greenways Commission and concerned citizens established Greenways for Nashville just three years later. Since the creation of the Greenways Commission in the early 1990s, Nashville has established over 100 miles of greenways. The original focus was property along waterways but now the goal is to connect public places (schools, community centers, etc.). Ms. Harrison described the section of 440 Greenway currently under development near Sunnyside. The greenway will connect Sevier Park to Gale Lane Community Park via Lealand Lane, then run along the excess right-of-way between houses fronting on Gale Lane and I-440, travel along Craig Avenue under the I-440 overpass, then run along additional excess right-of-way along Battlefield Drive to Brown's Creek Park. Metro has a license agreement with TDOT for use of the excess right-of-way. The team anticipates the greenway being used for more than exercise and recreation, but also to get from place to place, and described some of the safety features of the project. Funding is paired with another 440 Greenway section. Although they are a little shy of funding, they feel they are in a good place. They hope to bid out the project in late 2025/January 2026 and hope to be in construction later next year. Construction will take about 18 months.

Greenways also works with developers, through the SP rezoning process, to consider greenways easements as part of their projects. Ms. Harrison provided updates on other greenways across the county, from Belle Meade to First Horizon Park. Ms. Nelson concluded by demonstrating the online map feature.

X. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – *Tim Walker*

Director Walker reported that he and Bryan Gilley finished the in-person interviews for the City Cemetery Maintenance Worker. While the candidates were capable of the work, they did not meet the qualifications, so they decided to repost the position and increase the salary to a figure above \$50,000 to encourage more applicants.

The Nashville Parks Foundation's annual Picnic in the Park will take place this coming weekend. NPF donated a table for the MHC and there are six seats left. Please let Director Walker know if you would like to attend.

Director Walker introduced Gary Burke, newly appointed commissioner. Vice Chair Rost expressed that it is great to have Mr. Burke on board. She asked about the two remaining openings on the commission. One vacancy will be filled through a vote by Metro Council. The other vacancy will be appointed by the mayor and confirmed by council. Correct? Yes, Director Walker confirmed this. Regarding the election of Commissioner Hoobler to serve as the MHC's representative on the MHZC, Commissioner Hoobler received a call from the administration that his nomination had been pulled. Director Walker was not notified about this. In the past decades, this is not how it has been done, but the Mayor's Office has appointed Kaitlyn Jones (former MHZC member) to the MHC and the MHZC, with the intention that she serves as the MHC's representative to the MHZC. Ms. Jones has an interview with Metro Council's Rules, Confirmations, and Public Elections Committee tomorrow. Hannah Zeitlin, Metro Legal, explained that this change came from a rereading of the code and a reinterpretation that the mayor appoints "all members." The change was made to align with the ordinance and not the practice.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business presented for discussion.

XII. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Wynn thanked commissioners for attending the Nashville Historical Foundation's "Celebrating Two Great Ladies: Two Rivers Mansion and Ann Roberts" at Two Rivers Mansion last weekend. She also thanked Mr. Brothers for sharing the call to action from HNI.

Commissioner Richmond asked about the date for the 2026 Nashville Conference on African American History and Culture. Chair Wynn confirmed the conference will be held on Friday, February 13, at TSU's Avon Williams Campus.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Bridges moved to adjourn; Commissioner Cusic seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted Monday, October 20, 2025.
Scarlett C. Miles