

Nashville Music, Film, and Entertainment Commission Ad Hoc Job Description Committee

MINUTES

March 3, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
NECAT Network
120 White Bridge Road
Nashville, TN 37209

Commissioners Present: Jeff Gordon, (Chair), Mo Sabri, (Vice Chair), Michael Montgomery, Peter Kurland, Dave Pomeroy, Erika Nichols

Staff: Derrick Smith (Metro Legal), Jamari Brown (Metro),

Guests: Solomon Smith (guest public), Commissioner Joy Styles

1. Call to Order:

Chair Jeff Gordon called the meeting to order at 9:00AM.

2. Public Comment Period:

Opportunity for public comment was offered.

3. Contacts and Disclosures:

Nothing that impacted the rules

4. Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Kurland moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Montgomery seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Discussion

Commissioner Sabri brought it to attention that he was in the committee (vice-chair) but was not included in the email list.

An email was sent to the Ad Hoc committee members outlining the response from both legal aspects of reopening the Executive Director job search and from Metro HR. Note that at the past meeting, after discussion, the committee agreed to explore reopening the job description and ask HR to reopen the search with a revision to define the job description as not requiring a four-year degree. Reopening the search would require full Commission approval. If the search is reopened, it will likely push out the final hiring date 30 days. Commissioners received an email from Mr. Brown that there are no legal issues in doing so, but both the legal response and the response from HR recommended not reopening. The response from HR was that reopening would be a setback that would extend the hiring process and potentially we would lose candidates that saw the application process bring reopened.

Mr. Brown reminded the committee that at the last meeting, there was a request for review by legal and by HR, while noting that Metro legal department only submitted their review on Friday, 2/28, that allowed little time between the email sent and the Ad Hoc Committee meeting/Commission meeting on Monday, 3/3.

Additional discussion proceeded with regards to funding for the ED position. The question was raised that reopening the job search could potentially jeopardize the funding set aside for the position. Commissioner Styles does not suggest reopening posting and referenced that the full commission might question the funding since hiring for the Executive Director has already been a long process. She referred to the fact that the money for the Executive Director's salary was set aside under Mayor Cooper and has been sitting awaiting action since 2022.

Questions arose about the financing of the Commission and whether, if it became a free-standing entity, how would that affect funding going forward. Concerns about hiring timeline and whether not having a director in place by May would eliminate the money set aside for the position. Commissioner Styles noted that a similar situation happened with the Parks Department in the past and in her opinion, reopening was a risky endeavor. She also noted that she found potential office space to house the Commission.

Commissioner Kurland brought to the committee's attention and to both Jamari Brown and Derrick Smith that, at the last meeting, the committee had approved reopening the job posting. The original listing, as noted at the previous meeting, specified that applicants were required to have a four-year degree. This requirement was determined by the committee to be unnecessary and could potentially eliminate some candidates with significant experience who do not hold a four-year degree.

Commissioner Kurland voiced frustration at the recommendation to not reopen the application process, noting that the commission had voted to reopen and expressed additional frustration with the commission's decision being overridden.

Additional discussion proceeded with questions about how the Office of Music, Film, and Entertainment Commission would function; as a division of the Mayor's office or as an independent, free-standing entity. The consensus is that a free-standing commission is the best choice as it allows the Commission to maintain consistent operations despite changes in the Mayor's office. Commissioner Styles said that she was trying to clarify a bill that would allow the commission to choose the Executive Director and added that no mayoral involvement is the goal.

Commissioner Sims asked about what happens if the Commission generates revenue, whether that money would be designated specifically and directly to the Commission or be allocated to the General Fund and then distributed by the Metro Council. Apparently, leftover funds are directed to the General Fund.

This committee addressed some metrics for the position. Those initial metrics suggested at the meeting include:

- 1) Has the candidate held similar positions, successfully?
- 2) Does the candidate have broad experience that includes all fields that the Commission covers? (Film, Music, other aspects of the Entertainment Industry)
- 3) Do they have a public presence, (forward facing) enough to reach out to members of all pertinent communities, creating broad engagement connections?
- 4) Do they have experience in logistics of the Commission's operations such as permitting?
- 5) Are they a self-starter?
- 6) Are they a good problem solver?
- 7) Are they forward thinking, in tune with current industry developments and changing culture?

- 8) Experience in working with government?
- 9) Consideration of diversity and inclusivity.

Further metrics were asked to be forwarded to Jamari.

Commissioner Smith noted that diversity efforts are under fire currently. Commissioner Styles noted that diversity was still important, although not outlined as such.

Commissioner Styles recommended reviewing film and entertainment offices in other cities, specifically mentioned Tulsa and Memphis.

Commissioner Kurland added that we didn't want to candidate to view this position as a stepping stone, but rather in it for the long haul as this office needs not only a visionary leader but also one with real investment in the future of the commission.

Commissioner Kurland stated that if the reopening the search had no legal issues, then there didn't appear to be a need to delay until the next meeting.

Mr. Smith said that the effect of any resubmission of the job description must be considered which includes a potential delay in both the application reviews and ultimately in the hiring timeline.

9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting:

Review metrics

10. Next Meeting:

TBD

11. Adjourn Meeting:

Motion to adjourn by Chair Gordon at 10:20am. Commissioner Kurland seconded. All in favor.

APPROVED, this day 19th of March, 2025.

Signature on file
Jeffrey Gordon, Chair

Signature on file
erika wollam nichols, (ad-hoc Secretary)