

Minutes

Metro Nashville Arts Commission

Public Art Committee

November 19, 2025

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Metro Southeast Building, Antioch Room

1417 Murfreesboro Pike, Nashville, TN



Committee Members Present: Campbell West (PAC Chair, Commissioner), Evan Brown (Commissioner), Jiliah Kalil (Commissioner), Sara Lee Burd, Stacey Irvin, Cara Robinson, Carlton Wilkinson, Ashley Bachelder, Interim Executive Director (ex-officio)

Committee Members Absent: Shaun Giles

Staff Present: Vivian Foxx, Anne-Leslie Owens, Masonya Osei

A. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Campbell West called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

B. Public Comments

Public comments were received in accordance with the Metro Arts Commission Public Comment Policy. A letter submitted by Commissioner Heather Lefkowitz regarding funding considerations was acknowledged and distributed to committee members in advance. No in-person public comments were presented.

C. Approval of Minutes: September 18, 2025

A motion was made to approve September 18, 2025, meeting minutes with edits by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Carlton Wilkinson. Motion approved unanimously.

D. Action Items

1. Nashville Youth Center for Empowerment (NYCE) – Empowerment Collection Public Art Project

Masonya Osei presented the proposed project details for the NYCE Empowerment Collection Public Art Project. Atilio Murga will be project manager for all NYCE public art projects.

- Total artist budget of \$100,000, allocating \$5,000 per artist
- Commissioning approximately 20 wall-mounted artworks
- RFP open to artists residing in Davidson County or surrounding counties
- Artwork size requirement: 30" x 40" including frame, maximum depth of 1.5 inches
- Custom framing to be completed by Woodcuts
- Installation by Art Up Nashville and managed by Metro Arts

Staff explained the exclusion of photography from the call due to concerns about AI-generated art and the constraints around design development. Committee members advocated that photography should be considered, noting ways to document the photographer's process.

Committee members also discussed:

- Whether the \$5,000 artist fee is sufficient given current economic conditions
- Ensuring the full artist fee is paid directly to artists, not split with galleries
- Potential flexibility in artist compensation, including increasing the per-artist cap to \$7,500 or reducing the total number of selected works

- Targeted release of the call for artists in January 2026.

Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the NYCE Empowerment Collection Public Art Project for wall-hung artwork with a total artist budget of \$100,000 and a site work budget not to exceed \$70,000. The motion was seconded by Stacey Irvin. Motion approved unanimously.

E. Project Updates

1. **Old Hickory Community Center Public Art Project**
Installation is expected to be completed by early December 2025.
2. **Strobel House Public Art Project**
The project is moving into fabrication. Engineering drawings have been approved.
3. **NYCE Lobby Public Art Project**
The project with artist William Massey is in contract negotiations.
4. **Bordeaux Gateway Public Art Project**
Discussions are ongoing with TDOT and NDOT regarding preliminary approvals. A Metro Council resolution will be required, with a goal to complete this in January. The project will involve conceptual design proposals from semi-finalists, including community feedback and technical review.
5. **Arthur Avenue Public Art Project**
Installation is underway. Staff will provide a full status update at the next meeting.

F. New Business / Old Business

1. **Public Art Guidelines Review**
The committee discussed the need for clearer, more adaptable public art guidelines, particularly as project volume increases.
2. **Metro-wide Donated Artwork Guidelines Review**
Staff presented current donated artwork guidelines, which require:
 - Approval by the Public Art Committee and the Metro Arts Commission
 - A formal donation agreement
 - A maintenance fund for artworks valued at \$5,000 or more

Recent donation proposals discussed included:

- *Tennessee Three* by Omari Booker (valued at \$13,000)
- *Moth Orchids* by Courtney Gatewood (valued at \$8,000)

Committee discussion emphasized:

- The need for clearer valuation methods, potentially using professional appraisers
- The importance of defined artwork locations to reduce staff workload
- Challenges created by open-ended donation proposals
- The burden placed on staff due to increasing donation volume

Committee also raised concerns about the need for clearer Metro-level guidance and policies regarding acceptance, placement, and long-term responsibility.

3. **Metro Arts Hiring Update**
Hiring process for the Public Art Manager is underway.

G. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM.