

## Minutes

### Metro Arts Commission Board Meeting

Thursday, November 20, 2025

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Metro Southeast Building

Green Hills Conference Room

1417 Murfreesboro Pike

Nashville, TN 37217



**METRO ARTS**

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

**Commissioners Present:** Campbell West (Chair), Tré Hardin (Vice Chair), Heather Lefkowitz (Secretary), Brittany Cole, Camille Greer, Shawn Knight, Mayra Yu, Ashley Bachelder (Interim Executive Director, ex-officio)

**Absent Commissioners:** Evan Brown, Timothy Jester, Jilah Kalil, & Dawana Wade

**Metro Arts Staff:** Vivian Fogg

**Metro Legal:** Macy Amos, Kelli Woodward

### A. Call to Order, Welcome, and Land Acknowledgement

Chair West called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m., confirmed quorum, and read the Land Acknowledgement.

### B. Public Comment

No public comments were made or submitted prior to the meeting.

### C. Featured Artist – Amanda Ewing

Chuck Beard introduced featured artist Amanda Ewing, a Nashville-based luthier (violin maker), cultural preservationist, and advocate for recognizing the traditions of Black craftspeople. She is a FY26 Thrive awardee. Amanda shared her personal journey into instrument making, her apprenticeship experiences, and her passion for the craft. She is the founder of the organization Black in Luthier.

### D. Approval of Minutes: October 23, 2025

*A motion was made to approve October 23, 2025, minutes by Commissioner Knight and seconded by Commissioner Hardin. Motion passed unanimously.*

### E. Action & Discussion Items

#### 1. Public Art Committee

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

Masonya Osei provided an overview of the second public art project at the Nashville Youth Center for Empowerment. The Empowerment Collection will be a permanent collection of up to 20 wall-mounted artworks installed throughout the NYCE campus. The Public Art Committee recommends a total project budget of \$100,000 and up to \$70,000 for site work, framing, and installation. The collection will have a request for proposals (RFP) open to local professional artists from Davidson and surrounding counties.

***A motion was made to approve NYCE's Request for Proposal the Empowerment Collection – wall-mounted artwork with a total commission budget of \$100,000 and \$70,000 (not to exceed) for project site work associated costs by Commissioner Lefkowitz and seconded by Commissioner Hardin. Motion passed unanimously.***

## **2. Grants & Funding Committee**

### **i. Community Arts Leaders of Nashville (CAL) – Host Site Approval (ACTION)**

Ashley Bachelder provided an overview of the Community Arts Leaders of Nashville program, which places undergraduate college students with local arts nonprofit organizations for paid work experience. She provided an update on host site and student applicants and the matching process. Staff recommends approval of eight host sites for Spring 2026 placement pending successful student matches. The recommended host sites are: WNX Nashville's Music Experience, Oz Arts, Inc., Nashville Repertory Theatre, Nashville Jazz Workshop, Daybreak Arts, The Arts at Center Street, Youth Empowerment through Arts and Humanities (YEAH!), and Turnip Green Creative Reuse.

***A Motion to approve the following organizations as host sites for the Spring 2026 Community Arts Leaders of Nashville program, contingent on a successful student match outcome was made by Commissioner Knight and seconded by Commissioner Lefkowitz:***

***WNXP Nashville's Music Experience***

***OZ Arts, Inc.***

***Nashville Repertory Theatre***

***Nashville Jazz Workshop***

***Daybreak Arts***

***The Arts at Center Street***

***Youth Empowerment through Arts and Humanities (YEAH!)***

***Turnip Green Creative Reuse***

***Motion passed unanimously.***

### **ii. FY26 Grants Updates**

Commissioner Lefkowitz stated that the Grants Committee was not able to meet for its last meeting due to scheduling problems and quorum. Ashley Bachelder provided a staff report for updates on the FY26 grant cycle in lieu of the committee meeting. She stated that 152 of 165 grant contracts are fully executed and 123 grants are paid. She stated that the time from Commission approval on September 25 to first payment on November 4 was faster than previous years and met the goal of having payments disbursed before the holidays. Work is ongoing to complete the remaining contracts and payments. Commissioners viewed photos from the Thrive Reunion event on November 12, noting the high attendance, variety of performances, and overall success of the event.

## **3. Executive Committee**

### **i. Bylaw Updates**

Ashley Bachelder provided an update that the Executive Committee, after several months of discussion, has reviewed and provided recommendations for bylaw updates. Bachelder explained that the Commission will not be able to take action at this meeting due to needing a two-thirds majority quorum and affirmative vote, but only having a simple majority quorum present. She reviewed the recommendations, which include a combination of copy edits and providing clarifying language

throughout the bylaws in addition to more substantive proposed changes. Some of those changes include clarifying the Commission's role in employing only the Executive Director, changing term limits from two to three, inclusion of the standardized Metro attendance policy, reinstating Secretary signature on approved minutes, and removing the CARE Committee as a standing committee. A special called meeting will be held in December to vote on the bylaw changes.

#### **F. Chair's Report**

Chair West expressed gratitude to commissioners and staff ahead of upcoming holiday. She reviewed committee assignments for 2026 and noted efforts to balance workload after transitioning to an 11-member Commission. Commissioners should contact Ashley if there are any questions or comments about Committee assignments. 2026 committee assignments are as follows:

- Executive: Campbell West (Chair), Tre Hardin (Vice Chair), Heather Lefkowitz (Secretary), Shawn Knight
- Public Art: Campbell West (Chair), Evan Brown, Jilah Khalil
- Grants: Heather Lefkowitz (Chair), Tim Jester, Dawana Wade, Shawn Knight
- Advocacy and Engagement: Brittany Cole (Chair), Camille Greer, Mayra Yu
- Nominating: Tim Jester (Chair), Tre Hardin, Brittany Cole

#### **G. Director's Report**

Interim Executive Director Bachelder shared that an offer has been made for the Finance Officer position and starting date details are being worked out. She anticipates the Grants Manager position will be offered by mid-December, and Public Art Manager position by end of January. The staff and Commission are working with a third-party facilitator on an internal organization planning process, which has included recent individual interviews and full day planning session. Metro Arts is searching for a new office space and Ashley requested that anyone who has location ideas or leads should contact her for more information.

#### **H. New Business**

A special called meeting will be scheduled in early December for bylaw approval. December 4<sup>th</sup> was proposed, and staff will follow up with Commissioners and meeting location availability.

#### **I. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:49 pm.