



METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC) MINUTES FEBRUARY 2, 2026

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held a special-called meeting at Sunnyside in Sevier Park, 1113 Kirkwood Avenue, on February 2, 2026, in lieu of the regularly scheduled January 26 meeting which was cancelled due to weather. Vice Chair Laura Rost presided in Chair Wynn's absence.

Attendance

Commissioners: John Bridges, Gary Burke, Dr. Don Cusic, Jim Hoobler, Dr. Jane Landers, Sandra Parham, Dr. Marisa Richmond, Vice Chair Laura Rost were **present**. Dr. Clay Bailey, Dr. Erica Hayden, Kaitlyn Jones, Dr. Bill McKee, Betsy Phillips, Tom Wood, and Chair Linda Wynn were not present.

Staff Members: Jessica Fitzpatrick and Scarlett Miles were **present**. Hannah Zeitlin (Metro Legal) was **present**.

County Historian: Dr. Lea Williams was not present.

Guests: Jill Meese and Menié Bell, Nashville Historical Foundation

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND WELCOME – *Vice Chair Laura Rost*

Vice Chair Laura Rost called the meeting to order at approximately 12:06 p.m. She verified that a quorum was present after the roll call of attendance.

II. REVIEW OF DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES – *Vice Chair Laura Rost*

Vice Chair Rost presented last month's meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Richmond moved to accept the December 2025 meeting minutes. Commissioner Hoobler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – *Vice Chair Laura Rost*

Vice Chair Rost opened the floor for Public Comment. Nashville Historical Foundation president Jill Meese introduced herself, congratulated interim director Scarlett Miles, and reminded the Commissioners of the Foundation's role and desire to support the work and mission of the Historical Commission.

IV. HISTORICAL MARKERS

Jessica Fitzpatrick presented two historical markers, Cecelia Nabrit Adkins and Bass Street neighborhood, both part of the Participatory Budget funding. The Cecelia Nabrit Adkins marker will be located at 1022 Archer Street where Cecelia and her husband lived. Commissioner Richmond moved to approve the marker and asked about how future development in the area would affect the marker. Jessica responded that markers are placed in the right-of-way so there would be no issues with future property owners. Commissioner John Bridges asked if the word “denominational” could be changed to “religious,” referring to the Sunday School Publishing Board. Commissioner Sandra Parham stated she thought either would be appropriate but that the meaning of “denominational” in this context was clear. Vice Chair Rost asked if the address could be added, as well as a statement explaining that she lived here and that is why the marker is located here. Commissioner Jane Landers suggested adding her husband’s name to the title of the marker, and the Commissioners debated various ways to include a reference to the Adkins’ home. Jessica reminded the Commission that they had titled each McKissack marker [discussed at a previous meeting] as “home of...” and that could be an option here as well. The Commissioners continued to debate ways to include their desired information while also cutting characters and ultimately decided to send this marker back to the Marker Committee until next month.

The Commission then began to review the Bass Street Community marker text, which will feature a map and photo with caption on side two. Jessica stated that she has worked with Metro Parks [this marker will be located on Parks property] and the Adventure Science Center [this marker will be located on property that ASC leases from Metro Parks] and that this text will go to the Parks Board for approval if approved by the Historical Commission. She described the location of the marker to the Commission and stated that the location is denoted on the map with a star. Commissioner Parham asked about the name of the church being written as “Bass Street Baptist Church” versus “Bass Street Missionary Baptist Church.” Jessica responded that she spoke with Angela Sutton, who conferred with her contacts from the community, and that the church changed names to “Missionary Baptist” after moving from this location. Commissioner Gary Burke stated that this marker is very close to him as a board member at Fort Negley. He also referred Commissioners to Dr. Sutton’s Builders and Defenders website to learn more about the history of Bass Street. Vice Chair Rost asked if anyone had more questions. Commissioner Bridges moved to approve the marker text as written. Commissioner Burke seconded; the Bass Street Community historical marker was unanimously approved.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

Vice Chair Rost reminded the Commissioners that the Executive Director Search Committee has been formed with Chair Linda Wynn, Vice Chair Laura Rost, and

Commissioner Jim Hoobler, and that the Commission needs to also now choose two additional members from the community at large. Commissioners were asked to nominate citizens for this committee and six people were nominated: Dr. Carole Bucy [former Davidson County Historian], Jill Meese [in attendance and the current Nashville Historical Foundation president], David Paine [a former MHC staff member and Foundation board member], Dr. Mary Ellen Pethel [Belmont professor and founder of Nashville Sites], Sarah Trahern [recently retired executive director of the Country Music Association], and Dr. Lea Williams [recently appointed Davidson County Historian].

Scarlett Miles suggested choosing a backup candidate in case one of the two selected candidates was unable to join the committee. Vice Chair Rost relayed Hannah Zeitlin's [Metro Legal] advice to follow Metro Council procedures and use ranked choice voting. After the first round of voting, Dr. Carole Bucy received a majority of votes and was selected for the committee. After a second round of voting, Dr. Lea Williams received a majority of votes and was selected for the committee, with Jill Meese receiving the second highest number of votes and being named an alternate candidate for the committee.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was announced.

VII. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jessica Fitzpatrick told Commissioners that the February 4 marker ceremony for the Cumberland Heights historical marker has been postponed. She will send more information when the event has been rescheduled. Commissioner Burke announced the Enslaved Memorial Ceremony at The Hermitage will be held again this year, on February 21, 2026. He has been a previous speaker at the event and will be part of the program this year. Everyone is invited to attend. The event begins at 9:00 am. Vice Chair Rost reminded Commissioners that the Nashville Conference on African American History & Culture will be held on Friday, February 13 from 9:00am to 4:00pm at Tennessee State University's Avon Williams Campus. Both in-person and virtual attendance options are available. Registration is still open and she encouraged all Commissioners to register and attend. Vice Chair Rost reiterated that they are keeping in touch with HR about the executive director search, which has now closed, and she feels confident that filling this position is a priority for them. The Commission will be kept posted as the procedures move forward.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Rost adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted Monday, February 23, 2026.

Jessica Fitzpatrick