



METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC) MINUTES

APRIL 20, 2026

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held its regular meeting at the Howard Office Building, Sonny West Conference Center, 700 President Ronald Reagan Way, on April 20, 2026, with Chair Linda Wynn presiding.

Attendance

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

Staff Members: Caroline Eller, Dr. Adam Fracchia, Russell LeSturgeon, Scarlett Miles, and Claudette Stager **were present**. Hannah Zeitlin (Metro Legal) **was present**.

County Historian: Dr. Lea Williams **was not present**.

Guests: Kelley Sirko, Metro Archivist; Menié Bell, Sandra Shelton, Jill Meese, Nashville Historical Foundation

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

Chair Linda Wynn called the meeting to order at approximately 12:03 p.m. She verified that a quorum was present after the roll call of attendance.

II. APPROVAL OF MARCH MEETING MINUTES – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn presented the March 16, 2026, regular meeting minutes for approval, noting that there were two sets of minutes to be considered – the regular March meeting and a special called meeting. Commissioner Rost moved to accept the minutes. Commissioner Hoobler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn noted that the special called meeting minutes were included in the motion above. The motion to approve both sets of minutes passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn opened the floor for Public Comment. Menié Bell addressed the Commission on behalf of the Nashville Historical Foundation, expressing appreciation for the Commission's work and its staff, and reminding Commissioners of upcoming Foundation events and

fundraising efforts. Chair Wynn thanked Ms. Bell and noted that she could speak for all Commissioners in expressing support for the Foundation and its mission.

V. OVERVIEW OF METRO ARCHIVES – *Kelley Sirko, Metro Archivist*

Kelley Sirko, Metro Archivist, provided the Commission with an overview of the Metro Archives and its collections. Ms. Sirko described the Archives as the primary repository for records of historical value from the old city of Nashville, Davidson County, and Metro Nashville and Davidson County. Holdings include court records, marriages, births, deaths, plats, land records, a small number of manuscript collections, and audio and visual recordings, with records dating from 1780 to the present.

Ms. Sirko noted that the Archives operates under the umbrella of Nashville Public Library and can be accessed through its website. She highlighted several services available to the public, including obtaining copies of marriage licenses, researching the history of a home, conducting genealogical research, and accessing digitized images and video through the Archives' Vimeo page. She described the care taken to preserve fragile materials, including a large collection of photographic negatives, civil rights-era criminal court case files, and blueprints for Sunnyside in Sevier Park.

Commissioner Bridges asked about the Banner Archives and whether those files were held by the Metro Archives. Ms. Sirko clarified that the Banner Archives are located in the Special Collections division of Nashville Public Library, one floor below the Metro Archives, and that Special Collections also holds the associated photographs. Commissioner Bridges also asked about police files. Ms. Sirko noted that the Metro Archives holds some police records, though most files remain with the Central Records Division.

VI. NOMINATIONS TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES – *Claudette Stager*

Claudette Stager presented two nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, both of which are under review for the State Review Board meeting scheduled for May 15, 2026.

- a. African American Residential Districts in Nashville, Tennessee, 1946–1975 (MPDF)
- b. Haynes Heights Historic District

Ms. Stager explained that the African American Residential Districts nomination is structured as a Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF), a document that addresses themes, trends, and patterns of history shared by historic properties within a given context. The project involved extensive research, neighborhood surveys, and community engagement. The Haynes Heights Historic District is one of the associated historic districts documented through that effort.

There were no questions from the Commission. Commissioner Rost moved to approve both nominations. Commissioner Cusic seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – *Caroline Eller*

Director Eller presented the Director's Report. She noted that Metro Council approved the Commission's 4% funding request on March 17, which will provide \$15,000 toward additional renovation work at Sunnyside, specifically addressing a waterproofing need in the basement. Staff is working to obtain quotes and will follow up on the scope of the project. The approved funding also includes \$60,000 toward historical markers – covering both new markers and repairs – as well as an additional \$4,000 for a zero-turn mower to assist at the Nashville City Cemetery.

Director Eller also noted that she would like to highlight that the Commission has received sponsorships for the upcoming Preservation Awards event from the Nashville Historical Foundation, the Preservation Society of Nashville, and Historic Nashville, Inc. Invitations were in the process of being mailed, and an e-blast would follow shortly.

Director Eller reported that Commissioner Phillips has agreed to join the Historical Marker Committee, stepping in for Commissioner Wood, who is stepping down after many years of service on the committee. Director Eller expressed appreciation to Commissioner Wood for his long tenure on the committee and welcomed Commissioner Phillips in her new role.

Chair Wynn asked whether a final inscription had been determined for the Nashville City Cemetery memorial bench for enslaved persons. Director Eller indicated that staff had a near-final version of the inscription and would be happy to share it with any Commissioners who wished to review it. She noted that the bench itself had been ordered but had not yet been engraved.

Commissioner Bridges raised a question about \$5,000 from the Commission's budget that had been mistakenly transferred to the Sports Authority. Director Eller confirmed that the error had been identified and resolved, and that the \$5,000 had been reinstated to the Commission's account, noting that with the fiscal year ending June 30, the timely recovery of those funds was important. She acknowledged that staff was still working to determine precisely how the transfer occurred.

Hannah Zeitlin of Metro Legal provided a brief reminder to Commissioners regarding the Tennessee Open Meetings Act. Ms. Zeitlin noted that the Act prohibits communications between Commissioners regarding Commission business occurring outside of an open meeting, including communications via email. She advised Commissioners to refrain from replying-all to group emails or sending emails to all Commissioners about Commission business, and encouraged them to direct any such communications through staff instead.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was announced.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Bailey announced the Memorial Day Dash benefiting the Nashville City Cemetery. He noted that due to ongoing construction at Fort Negley, this year's event has pivoted to a virtual format. Participants can register at runsignup.com and run or walk anytime on the day of the event. He also noted that a live gathering will take place at the Nashville City Cemetery from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m., including light refreshments and a short ceremony from 11:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Commissioner Hoobler announced that the historic Edgefield neighborhood will hold its second annual Jane's Walk on May 2 at 10:00 a.m. He will be leading the walk, which will begin at the corner of 6th Street and Fatherland Street.

Commissioner Phillips shared that she was recently able to gain access to Renraw, the historic Percy Warner house in East Nashville. She noted that the oldest portion of the house dates to 1853 and that the structure remains remarkably solid, with brick walls inside and out. She reported that the developers plan to relocate the house closer to Gallatin Road but intend to preserve it.

Commissioner Cusic reported that he had finished his lecture series, with the final installment focused on Minnie Pearl.

Chair Wynn reported that the previous day's event at the courthouse in honor of Z. Alexander Looby and Diane Nash was very well attended. She noted that Looby's fraternity brothers were present, as were the Vice Mayor, the Mayor, the county historian, and a number of others. The Mayor signed a proclamation making April 19, 2026, an official commemorative day.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Cusic moved to adjourn. Commissioner Hoobler seconded. Chair Wynn adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted Monday, May 18, 2026.

Russell LeSturgeon