

MINUTES
STATE CAPITOL COMMISSION
August 10, 2026

1. Introductions / Roll Call

Chairman Jim Bryson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

State Architect Ann McGauran called the roll and a quorum was established with the following members in attendance:

- Commissioner Jim Bryson, Chairman
- Commissioner Andy Kidd
- Commissioner David Salyers
- Secretary of State Tre Hargett
- Treasurer David Lillard
- Publication Specialist Paige Donaldson, designee for Comptroller Jason Mumpower
- Miranda Montgomery, designee for THC Chairman Sam Elliot
- Senator Jack Johnson
- Representative Chris Todd
- Howard Gentry
- Steve McDaniel

Commissioner Bryson confirmed a physical quorum.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes from April 29, 2025, was made and seconded. The motion passed.

3. Public Comment: No public comment requests received.

4. New Business

A. Discussion and adoption of Capitol Lighting Policy

Secretary Hargett reminded the members that the commission took a pause from lighting the cupola in color. During that time, there were very few requests, which appeared to indicate that organizations aren't asking to light our cupola in color. Secretary Hargett stated that he believes the purity of the State Capitol and the specialness of the building has led him to propose a policy to state that the Capitol Cupola should not be lighted in any color other than white lights and offered a motion to create a new policy, stating:

"In recognition of the unique architectural and historical beauty and significance of the State Capitol building, the State Capitol Commission establishes this Capitol Lighting Policy. The State Capitol (and cupola) shall not be lighted in any color other than white lights. This policy supersedes any prior policy of the State Capitol Commission regarding lighting of the State Capitol (including the cupola)."

Representative Chris Todd asked if there would be a certain color of "white" that would be specified and the Secretary responded that he didn't feel that that level of specificity was necessary. State Architect McGauran shared that the Capitol does have a standard default white

that was selected several years ago to compliment the stone and she understood that that was the color of white light that would continue to be used.

Commissioner Bryson clarified that this is a Capitol Commission policy and as such, the commission could waive this policy in the future if appropriate. Secretary Hargett stated that he would prefer the policy be amended if needed so we don't get back circumstances resembling the previous operations—though not entirely to that extent—since the earlier guidelines effectively presumed approval of lighting the cupola. Mr. Gentry was also concerned about reverting to the prior version and asked if there was any government authority, outside of the Capitol Commission, that could override this policy. Tracy Alcock, General Counsel for the Department of General Services, introduced herself to the commission and stated that she was serving as the advisory counsel for the commission. Ms. Alcock shared that there is no law that speaks to this direct issue and so only the Capitol Commission could waive or change the policy. Commissioner Bryson asked if they could vote to suspend the policy for the subsequent item. Ms. Alcock confirmed that the commission could waive or suspend the policy for a certain event. Secretary Hargett referred to Mr. Gentry's question and asked if there was anyone in state government that could supersede this policy. Could the Governor, Lt. Governor, Speaker, Secretary of State, Treasurer, or anyone else in government decide to have the Capitol lit outside of this policy. Ms. Alcock confirmed that an individual could not, particularly a member of this commission on their own, but the individual could ask the commission to call a meeting to approve. Commissioner Bryson confirmed that a modification to the motion is not required to allow the commission to waive this policy in the future.

Motion: A motion to create a new policy, to be included in the "Tennessee State Capitol Commission Policy For Use of the Tennessee State Capitol Building and Grounds", stating:

"In recognition of the unique architectural and historical beauty and significance of the State Capitol building, the State Capitol Commission establishes this Capitol Lighting Policy. The State Capitol (and cupola) shall not be lighted in any color other than white lights. This policy supersedes any prior policy of the State Capitol Commission regarding lighting of the State Capitol (including the cupola)."

Vote: The Commission voted and the motion passed.

The Chairman thanked the Secretary.

B. Consideration of Music City Inc. reoccurring plans for New Year's Eve Celebration and Request for Use of Capitol Grounds

Ms. Deana Ivey, President of the Nashville Convention & Visitor's Corporation (NCVC) that puts on the New Year's Eve event, stated how much the NCVC loves using the Bicentennial Mall State Park for the event and using the Capitol grounds because it looks beautiful on television. They will once again have the show for 5 hours on CBS this year, which is a great opportunity to showcase our city and state.

Ms. Ivey requested the following:

- Lighting the Capitol cupola red which she would appreciate if approved but stated she understood why this may not be approved after listening to the prior discussion;
- Permission to shoot fireworks for less than 5 minutes with approximately one thousand 3-5" shells being shot from the observation deck on Capitol Hill at midnight; and
- Reservation of the Capitol grounds for the time frame as appropriate for the set-up, tear-down, and the event to ensure limited access on Capitol Hill and protection of Capitol property using the same measures as last year. (Dec 30th to January 1st)

- NCVC is prepared to repair and replace any necessary items.

Secretary Hargett stated that last year there was an issue for employees that park around the Capitol who were told, on a state workday, that they had to vacate their parking by 2 pm due to the New Year's Eve preparations even though the state workday extends until 4:30 pm and the last business day of the year is particularly critical to staff that handle business filings. Secretary Hargett wanted to confirm that no approval is intended to or authorizes limiting state employees working any day that state offices are open for business. Ms. Ivey stated that she understood. Secretary Hargett shared that some communication may come about an expectation that employees work from home, but that not all state government employees have the option of working remotely. Ms. Ivey stated that she did not recall what happened last year, but she would make sure this was addressed in the future.

Motion: Approval of the Music City Inc. request for Use of Capitol Grounds concurrently with the TDEC license agreement for New Year's Eve Celebration including shooting off fireworks from the observation deck, and reservation of the capitol grounds.

Vote: The Commission voted and the motion passed.

Motion: Approval of Music City Inc.'s request for lighting the cupola red concurrently with the TDEC license agreement for New Year's Eve Celebration.

Discussion: Treasurer Lillard asked why red lights are being requested. Ms. Ivey stated that is because red is the color of the Music City Note that drops, the note in their logo is red, and it shows up better on television because sometimes white doesn't show well on television. Commissioner Salyers stated that he was supportive of the red lights for this important event.

Vote: The Commission voted by roll call and the motion failed.

Commissioner Bryson stated that the failure of this item to pass was likely due in a large part to the prior discussion and thanked Ms. Ivey.

B. RFP for the Anne M. Davis Bust

State Architect McGauran introduced and presented a request to issue the RFP for artist selection for the Anne M. Davis Bust contingent on SBC approval. She shared that this bust had been included in a Senate Joint Resolution that was approved in the prior legislative session and there was also \$83,000 in funding approved for the creation of this Bust to be located in the alcove outside the Senate Chamber.

Commissioner Bryson received confirmation from State Architect McGauran that this is an item that came from the General Assembly.

Motion: Approval to issue the RFP for artist selection for the Anne M. Davis Bust contingent on SBC approval.

Vote: The Commission voted and the motion passed.

5. Old Business

A. Capital Project Update

Mr. David Plummer with Centric Architecture presented two items.

1. State Capitol Window and Roof Repairs (SBC #529/005-01-2022)

Commissioner Bryson commented that he was pleased for future state leaders that the gutters were being addressed. Treasurer Lillard stated that he was pleased to see the new doors because they were in very bad shape and thanked Mr. Plummer for his

efforts. Representative Todd stated that he was confident that our citizens would appreciate the work being done and the preservation of such an important historic structure for our community and state. He appreciated all the work that has been done by the team doing the tough part out in the heat and the cold. Representative Todd stated that all the improvements make a lot of sense and he wasn't even aware that some had been done prior to this presentation.

2. David Crockett Commemorative Statue (SBC #529/005-01-2024)

Commissioner Bryson shared his excitement about this project and asked for the timeline. Mr. Plummer stated that the base is expected to be completed in October with the statue delivery in November. It will be fully installed prior to the inauguration. Once the statue arrives, it will be covered until the dedication.

Deputy Commissioner John Hull with the Department of General Services gave an update on four capital projects. The projects included were:

1. State Capitol Landscape Upgrades and Retaining Wall Repairs (SBC #529/005-01-2013)
2. War Memorial Building Exterior and Interior Renovations (SBC# 529/090-01-2021)
3. Legislative Plaza Renovations (Capitol Visitor Center and Motlow Tunnel) (SBC # 529/045-01-2022)
4. Old Library and Archives and Supreme Court Building Renovation (SBC #529/074-01-2023)

Commissioner Bryson stated that this is an historic renovation and update of the entire Capitol Complex and that in one hundred years, folks will look back and reflect on all the work being done today to assure it lasted that long and he wanted to thank Mr. Hull for leading this, the administration and the Governor that supported it, the State Architect's Office for their work, the General Assembly that helped to get the work funded and had the vision, the historical commission, and probably many others he wasn't thinking of that helped to make this possible. As Commissioner Bryson transitions out of office in the upcoming months, he considers this to be a phenomenal update, and he is very proud of projects that have been outlined to this commission and thanked the team.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

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