

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes from the Board Meeting on Monday, April 27, 2020

Via Zoom

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Pamela McCrea called the Board meeting to order at 5:48 p.m.

Other Board members in attendance were:

Max Erickson
Kevin Frazell, Vice Chair
Tomek Rajtar
Laurie Rice
Joey Senkyr
Carletta Sweet, Secretary
Joe Tamburino
Dianne Walsh, Treasurer

Staff member Christie Rock Hantge was also present.

Guests in attendance included:

Michael Abta
Mark Andrew, Friends of the Lock and Dam
Dan Collison, East Town Business Partnership
Larry Dole
Steve Fletcher, City of Minneapolis Ward 3
Kjersti Monson, Friends of the Lock and Dam
Captain Calvin Noble, Minneapolis Park Police
Shane Stenzel, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

II. Consideration of Agenda

Chair McCrea made note of the following updates to the meeting agenda:

- Management and programming of The Commons update will take place immediately following Council Member Fletcher's Ward 3 update.
- The Police Safety Center update will take place during the DMNA Priorities discussion under the Chair's Report.
- Due to time constraints, removing Outreach and Collaboration Report which can be reviewed via the Board Members Only page on the Website. VC Frazell noted it lists of interest MDC's Webinar *What's Next? Back-to Business for Downtown Minneapolis* on Wednesday, April 29th.

Tamburino moved and Sweet seconded a motion to approve the amended Board meeting agenda. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.

III. The Commons Management, Programming & Security Update

Shane Stenzel, Manager of Permits and Events at the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/stenzel-shane-73276826/>), introduced himself and explained he asked Captain Noble from the Minneapolis Park Police to accompany him to answer any questions related to safety and security. Stenzel reported on the following related to The Commons:

- They took over operations from Green Minneapolis on April 1st, and they continue to work with GM through the transition.
- They had some robust programming ideas they were looking into, but because of COVID-19 and social distancing, they've taken a step back and may integrate new programs as the Minnesota Department of Health allows. They'll continue with the food truck program during the week as restrictions are lifted and incorporate social distancing type programs taken from throughout their park system.
- Most of their external events have cancelled for the year, and X Games Minneapolis 2020 just announced on Friday it was cancelling.
- Other events taking place at The Commons or U.S. Bank Stadium have cancelled through July, and with their Memorandum of Understanding with the Vikings (http://minneapolisparksmn.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegiFile.aspx?ID=4418), nothing was booked for August and September any way. They're waiting on the Vikings schedule to understand what will come in the future.
- Live, work and play are what we do in downtown. They think they've got the work and play figured out and they want to figure out the live aspect moving forward. They're looking forward to working with the DMNA on future programming and events for those who live downtown.

Noble then reported the following:

- Park police are on duty from 7 a.m. until 1 a.m., and then the Minneapolis Police Department covers calls to The Commons from 1 a.m. until 7:00 a.m. Beginning January 1st, they hired a new Power Shift which runs from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m., and is primarily focused on downtown Minneapolis and the northern portion of the 3rd and 5th Precincts where they receive a lot of their highest calls, so 7 days a week they have someone assigned to downtown Minneapolis where previously it was shared from all the other Precincts. Also, starting May 1st, they'll operate some buyback, i.e., overtime shifts for bike officers on Fridays through Sundays, and as it expands, they hope to incorporate some squads as well.
- They're now locking the five public toilets at The Commons nightly to discourage illicit activities. Across the city, they've opened four hygiene stations (<https://www.minneapolisparks.org/news/2020/04/21/four-hygiene-stations-for-people-experiencing-homelessness-to-open-in-minneapolis-parks/>). Fletcher noted that although the MPRB doesn't have one in downtown, the City and DID has deployed four handwashing stations (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/mpls-did-deploys-hand-washing-stations-throughout-downtown/>), and brought in both public washrooms and hand washing stations in front of The Salvation Army Harbor Light Center.

Thereafter, Stenzel and Noble responded to questions from the Board. They have Park Ambassadors who report back on what's going on in the parks and give advice on social distancing practices to encourage compliance with Governor Walz's Emergency Executive Order 20-38. Park staffers continue

to look for ways to have outdoor supervision while the centers are closed and what the needs will be going forward. If kids aren't doing online learning and don't have the sports programs they're normally used to, sometimes they do happen to find criminal mischief, and this drives them to find new solutions as they understand they're the cure to this problem.

Given the number of phone calls received and activities observed that weren't in compliance with social distancing, they had to reevaluate closing more of their amenities (<https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/news/2020/04/24/minneapolis-parks-remain-open-but-many-amenities-being-modified-or-closed-for-health-of-community/>), but they're also looking for ways to utilize the facilities without violating social distancing guidelines, e.g., scheduled, supervised, smaller activities in staggered increments.

And it wasn't an easy decision to make to close beaches for the summer, which had a lot to do with the number of staffing required to cover 60 places. They're working with the Minnesota Department of Health, Hennepin County Public Health and Minneapolis Health Department, which are open to suggestions for social distancing, to figure out mechanisms to keep people safe.

Tamburino, who took an 8-hour ride along a year ago on a Friday evening, extended hats off to the great job the Park Police who have a limited force does covering 6,817 acres of parkland and water. Noble advised they have 34 sworn and licensed Park Police Officers from the Chief on down, and 23 Park Patrol Agents. They have a great working relationship with the Recreation staff who are out in the field every day and all other departments to keep a handle on things.

Regarding homeless people sleeping in the parks, at this point, the Governor's Executive Order does not allow police to disband encampments. They can contact St. Stephen's Human Services for street outreach assistance, and the Harbor Light Center on Currie Avenue is open; they've closed the street to allow for more people to social distance and shelter in that area.

Stenzel advised he'll return when things start opening up to discuss programming.

IV. Ward 3 Update

Council Member Steve Fletcher reported on the following:

- Since they're operating under an emergency declaration, they've condensed their Council meeting structure to just a couple committees. A lot of day-to-day decision-making power now rests in the Mayor's Office.
- Spread of COVID-19 at congregate care facilities. He expressed sympathy for those who have lost loved ones.
- Mayor Frey declared a [Local Public Health Emergency](#) related to COVID-19 that is geared toward making sure all of their congregate care facilities are following best safety protocols.
- He spent part of his time last week sourcing cloth face masks; they're trying to be proactive in getting face masks into shelters and low-income apartment buildings. He talked about the success of the recent face mask drive for first responders and thanked anyone who participated.
- Applications are now closed for the first round of housing rental assistance. They received over 7,800 applications for a fund that could support 1,200 and 1,400 people depending upon how much for which they applied. A person must make less than minimum wage to qualify. About 30% of tenants missed their April rent payments.

- The Fed's Paycheck Protection Program run by the Small Business Administration did not properly reach people of color, which is why the City's program targeted the areas that it did. The hope was to fill the gaps left by the PPP.

Fletcher concluded by responding to questions from the Board. McCrea inquired about the DMNA helping to distribute masks; Fletcher suggested it would be ideal to get at least two masks per person to people living in low income apartment buildings. The hope is to prevent them from becoming vectors. Frazell inquired about where the City purchased masks; Fletcher indicated there are several textile-related businesses sewing masks and the City has a list of local sources. Tamburino mentioned the lack of social distancing on Hennepin Avenue and 5th Street, and on the Nicollet Mall near Target and Peavey Plaza. Fletcher stated the City is discussing plans to reorient the assignment of police officers now that the late-night bar scene is nonexistent.

V. Friends of the Lock and Dam Update

Mark Andrew introduced himself and thanked the DMNA for its support over the years. In the last few months, they've undertaken some basic reforms in the organization, the biggest being the change in name to the Friends of the Falls, and another being the diversification of their board by adding people of color. They're actively recruiting members and encouraged anyone who's interested to apply. The organization's work transcends more than the lock and dam itself; it includes the entire historic district. They are working on a new website that will be unveiled around June 1st.

Kjersti Monson gave an overview of the Falls Initiative. She highlighted one of the goals of the initiative is to connect the riverfront, including Water Works Park, the Lock and Dam, Mill Ruins Park and Gold Medal Park with The Commons via Portland Avenue and Gateway Park. She then reviewed the shared vision for the St. Anthony Falls Upper Lock and how Meet Minneapolis, the MPRB, the Minneapolis Downtown Council's 2025 Plan and the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board have incorporated it into their works plans. She highlighted the list of supporters and talked about the history of Spirit Island. She noted the Army Corp of Engineers dismantled it to allow for the construction of the Lock and Dam. She stated the restaurant Sioux Chef at Water Works Park recognizes the history of indigenous people on the riverfront. She also discussed the process for acquiring the land at the Upper Lock.

Andrew and Monson concluded their presentation by responding to questions. For community engagement opportunities, they'll start with virtual as opposed to face-to-face meetings, and will share these opportunities on their new Website and inform the DMNA's Neighborhood Coordinator to help distribute information.

VI. Consideration of the Consent Agenda

After Treasurer Dianne Walsh advised she reviewed all the financial documents received from Hantge and found no issues,

Sweet moved and Rice seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda as amended which included the February Board meeting minutes; F2020 Budget vs. Actual for the period ending February 29, 2020; F2020 Budget vs. Actual for the period ending March 31; and the Neighborhood Coordinator / Finance Coordinator staff report for February (Invoice #062) and March (Invoice #063). McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.

VII. COVID-19 Fund

The Board had a conversation about the possibility of establishing a fund to address the COVID-19 crisis in the downtown community, i.e., using the dollars previously committed to Pianos on Parade in the amount of \$10,000. Hantge noted that at this point, Pianos on Parade is not scheduled to take place until late summer or in the fall, and indicated there are plenty of NPP funds to cover both Pianos on Parade if it takes place and a COVID-19 fund. One of the ideas discussed was a mask give away for residents at The Commons and/or Gold Medal Park. Tamburino, who has a local source for face masks, suggested getting estimates on masks and make a decision thereafter. Thereafter, it was decided the Branding Task Force could take up the project and bring back a recommendation at the May meeting.

Frazell added we received from the Neighborhood & Community Relations, the Neighborhoods Respond to COVID-19 Fund (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/>) which includes Elliot Park ???

VIII. Land Use Committee Report

Board liaison Kevin Frazell reported on the following projects:

- **Renaissance Square.** The Board of Adjustments approved the sign applications for this renovation project.
- **240 Park Avenue.** Sherman Associates appealed to the City's Business, Inspections & Zoning Committee for conditions the Planning Commission placed on the CUP related to building materials and curb cuts.
- **200 12th Avenue South.** Reuter Walton has revised their plans and decided to increase the number of floors from 11 to 12 stories which raised concern with adjacent property owners. Hantge will invite them to provide an update at the next meeting.

The Land Use Committee meets again on May 5th, 6 p.m. via Zoom.

IX. Chair's Report

During McCrea's report, the Board established the following task forces to work on the strategic priorities identified at the January 21st Board meeting:

1. Police Safety Center Build Out and Grand Opening Celebration

Chair: Joe Tamburino

Members: Pam McCrea and Dianne Walsh

2. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

This may include public realm improvements, greening projects, art projects (on hold until the Neighborhoods 2020 Guidelines are formerly approved by the City Council)

Chair: Joey Senkyr

Member: Carletta Sweet

3. Urban Issues/Livability (on hold)

Members: Laurie Rice and Tomek Rajtar

4. Increased Collaboration with Other Downtown Groups That Work in the Neighborhood
(increase the presence / visibility of the DMNA with East Town Business Partnership, Minneapolis Downtown Council, Mill City Farmers Market, North Loop Neighborhood Association, etc.)

Chair: Kevin Frazell

Members: Max Erickson, Joey Senkyr and Carletta Sweet

5. Increased Outreach to Diverse Populations (on hold until the Neighborhoods 2020 Guidelines are formerly approved by the City Council)

Members: Max Erickson, Kevin Frazell, Laurie Rice, Joey Senkyr

6. HOA/Building Managers

Co-Chairs: Laurie Rice and Pam McCrea

Members: Max Erickson, Joe Tamburino and Dianne Walsh

7. DMNA Brand Promotion (this can be integrated across the task forces; will help with Website refresh project)

Chair: Dianne Walsh

Members: Max Erickson

The task forces will meet between now and the May 18th Board meeting at which time they'll report on goals and initiatives.

X. Old / New / Other Business

- **Annual meeting on October 27th.** McCrea asked for volunteers to help plan it.
- **Website Update.** Hantge will work with Vivid Image to get a proposal to do a refresh of the Website with a budget of up to \$3,000.

XI. Next Board Meeting

Monday, May 18, at 5:45 p.m., via Zoom.

XII. Adjournment

There being no further business,

Frazell moved and Erickson seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. McCrea called for discussion. The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2020

Chair

Secretary