

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes from the Board of Directors Meeting on Monday, May 17, 2021 Via Zoom

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/ZYy5UNJZ3DWd2-rbo54XckcWzxlu1tUcB023TK0laWeuJLRG6Hqt9SgHxSXKSLyn.pRgzQMBXYN5zwP-w>)

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Vice Chair Kevin Frazell called the Board meeting to order at 5:47 p.m.

Other Board members in attendance were:

Max Erickson
Andrew Gittleman
Tomek Rajtar
Carletta Sweet, Secretary
Dianne Walsh, Treasurer

Chair Pamela McCrea and Board members Laurie Rice and Joe Tamburino were absent.

Staff member Christie Rock Hantge was also present.

Zoom guests in attendance included:

Jerry Croxdale, Marcy Holmes neighborhood
Susan Field, Humboldt Lofts, Public Safety Task Force
Abby Larson, Sherman Associates
Douglas Pearson, Centre Village
Wendy Rubinyi, Bridgewater Lofts
Elizabeth Schaffer, candidate for the MPRB
Dustin Sprouse, River Towers, DMNA HOA Advisory Group

II. Consideration of Agenda

After Erickson amended the agenda by adding a discussion regarding the future of the Public Safety Task Force under New / Old / Other Business,

Sweet moved and Gittleman seconded a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Frazell called for discussion. The motion passed.

III. Consent Agenda

Erickson moved and Rajtar seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda which included the April 19th Board meeting minutes; F2021 Budget vs. Actual for the period ending April 30, 2021; and the Neighborhood Coordinator / Finance Coordinator staff report for April (Invoice #076). Frazell called for discussion. The motion passed.

IV. Land Use Committee Report

Committee Chair Frazell reported on the following items presented at the May 4th LUC meeting by leading off with the two less time consuming projects:

- A. Hyatt Centric Hotel Annex CUP Application** presented by Erich Heger, Vice President of Design and Construction at Magna Hospitality Group (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/erich-heger-46a37714/>). They purchased the Minneapolis Grand Hotel in 2018, embarked upon a complete renovation, and converted it into the Hyatt Centric Hotel. Then after exploring various uses for the 3-story HCH annex building at 216 South 7th Street that housed the former Lifetime Fitness facility and having received no interest from other developers for some time, they plan to demolish it due to its functional obsolescence and redevelop it into a 20-space parking lot and urban plaza that could be used for hotel activities and expansion space for a local restaurant operator (e.g., Dan Kelly's Pub). Because surface parking lots in downtown conflict with Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan (<https://minneapolis2040.com/>), a CUP is required.

The LUC unanimously recommended providing a Letter of Support for the CUP.

- B. Owamni, The Sioux Chef's Restaurant Liquor License Application** was presented by Sean Sherman (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sean_Sherman) and Alexis McKinnis, Operations Manager (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/alexismckinnis/>). They gave an historical overview of Sioux Chef and how they came to be at Water Works (<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2019/08/28/sioux-chef-eatery-historic-mills-to-anchor-new-mpls-riverfront-project> and <https://mspmag.com/eat-and-drink/foodie/sioux-chef-lands-a-home/>); the modern indigenous food they'll serve to pay homage to their ancestors – it'll be fast casual in the summertime serving BIPOC-sourced beer, wine and nonalcoholic beverages (<https://mspmag.com/eat-and-drink/sioux-chef-owamni-opening-spring-2021/>); and the programs offered through the North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems (<https://www.natifs.org/>).

They also own a food truck (<https://www.facebook.com/tatankatruck/>) and have authored a book (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sioux_Chef's_Indigenous_Kitchen). They hope to be open by the end of this month but it could be pushed to June due to equipment and licensing issues.

The LUC enthusiastically supported providing a Letter of Support for the liquor license application and expressed excitement around the menu and amenities they'll bring to Water Works.

Walsh moved and Gittleman seconded a motion to approve the two above mentioned Letters of Support. Frazell called for discussion. The motion passed

- C. 2021 Scooter Share Program Update.** Because this is the second time the LUC brought this issue forward, the first being at its April 6th meeting, they spent the bulk of the meeting on this topic.

In April, Danielle Elkins, Mobility Manager (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/danielkins/>), and Jacob Brown, Operations Analyst (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jacob-brown-mba-45880124/>) discussed how they were going to regulate and administer the program this year.

But at the May 4th meeting, an extensive discussion was held with Elkins who was joined by

representatives from the two successful scooter license winners, i.e.:

- Elizabeth May, Manager of Government Partnerships at Bird (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/elizabeth-may-751a3160/>)
- Blanca Leborde, Director of Government Partnerships at Bird (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/blanca-laborde-1a72a64/>)
- William Dammann, Government Relations Consultant at Hylden Advocacy & Law who works with Bird and lives in the North Loop (<https://hyldenlaw.com/team/will-dammann/>)
- Chase Ator, Operations Lead for Lyft and Nice Ride (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/chaseator/>).

Frazell stated it's obvious the City continues to be extremely committed to the program as an economically and ecologically responsible approach to transportation around Minneapolis, but the LUC raised the point that in the Mill City district in particular and other parts of downtown scooters are probably used much more for recreation than for transportation, and queried how they're going to encourage/enforce riders to use scooters responsibly and leave them where appropriate once a ride is completed. In response, a lot of ideas were offered, one of which was when you become a subscriber by downloading their app, you must check off that you understand the regulations.

Other matters specifically discussed were geofencing being used to prohibit scooters operating in Gold Medal Park, a speed zone limit on the Stone Arch Bridge and Nicollet Mall, and the ability to deactivate an app when there are violations. The City emphasized that violations should be reported to 311, and the more information provided, such as the scooter's unit number and taking pictures of the violation, the more they're able to figure out who was the perpetrator and which scooter company involved.

Thus far, since the beginning of the 2021 season, Randy Manthey who is on top of this issue (referred to as the good cop), and Jerry Croxdale who used to work with Manthey, helps him out and has been on Steve Fletcher about it for years (referred to as the bad cop), and others have gone out and submitted 340 violations, and they're encouraging others to do the same so that there's a documented database that gets back to the scooter companies.

Then lastly on behalf of Manthey, Walsh inquired whether anyone observed scooters in Gold Medal Park, riding on the sidewalks, or observing bad behavior after 9 p.m. so that she can report back to him.

The next meeting of the LUC will take place on Tuesday, June 1st.

V. Civic Engagement Committee Report

Committee Chair Max Erickson reported on the following two subcommittees that last met on May 13th:

- A. Neighborhood Identification Signage.** This subcommittee has done a lot of meaningful work to date and Erickson thanked Wendy Rubinyi for her leadership. Hoping the Board had an opportunity to review the proposed signage locations demarcating Downtown West and Downtown East as a reminder of the two recognized neighborhoods of the DMNA (<https://www.thedmna.org/wp->

[content/uploads/2021/05/DMNA-location-of-neighborhood-metal-signs-5.12.2021.pdf](https://www.thedmna.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/DMNA-location-of-neighborhood-metal-signs-5.12.2021.pdf) and <https://www.thedmna.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/DMNA-Perimeter-Sign-Locations-for-Downtown-East-and-West-5.2021-UPDATED-scaled.jpg>), he sought their feedback. Walsh thinks it all looks good overall; she likes the locations and concept and thanked the subcommittee for all its hard work as it will tie into the work of the Historic Signage Task Force. While displaying an image of the proposed signage, Erickson noted based on feedback received there may be subtle changes to the color so that it isn't like that of the Minneapolis Area Association of Realtors, but it ties well into the DMNA logo and is a modern take on neighborhood signage. The City is reviewing the signage location and will provide the subcommittee with feedback, and if approved the subcommittee will move forward.

- B. National Night Out.** This subcommittee has also done a lot of meaningful work to date and hoping the Board had an opportunity to review their proposal and budget (https://www.thedmna.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/NNO-PROJECT-PROPOSAL_051421.pdf), Erickson is seeking approval. The budget is up to \$10,000, conditional upon approval by Bob Cooper, Manager of Finance. Because the DMNA may not necessarily have the budget it has now moving forward, the subcommittee is looking at establishing an event that can be scaled and has taken a lot of direct feedback from Erickson about being inclusive as a cornerstone of the event. Walsh commented she likes the location at The Commons because it goes a long way toward inclusivity as was the case when it was held there in 2019 which was well attended by a diverse representation of the downtown residential community.

Erickson commented he actively and aggressively pushed the subcommittee on the location; he has an issue hosting a taxpayer funded event in a private park funded by some of the most expensive real estate in the city and calling it inclusive. Also, when looking at Neighborhoods 2020, the DMNA as it currently exists might not be an organization moving forward so the Board and Committees need to look long and hard at what their proposing and if they value the DMNA to take into consideration voices that may not be around the table when making choices going forward.

Walsh moved and Rajtar seconded a motion to approve the design of the neighborhood identification signs for Downtown East and Downtown West, as well as the 2021 National Night Out proposal and budget. Frazell called for discussion. The motion passed.

The next meeting of the CEC will take place on Thursday, June 10th.

VI. Strategic Planning Task Forces

- A. Branding.** Walsh provided an update on the following projects:

- **Historic Signage.** This project is moving along and they're able to do 15 buildings versus the original 10; the goal is to do all within the Mill District for the first year. They're continuing to write the histories, seek permission from building owners, and search for photos and graphics. The highlight of the Thursday, May 13th meeting was Wendy Rubinyi gave a presentation on downtown signs so that they can coordinate with the historic signage. Walsh is deferring the final sign design to Randy Manthey, and then they'll meet with Scott Woller who leads the North Loop Neighborhood Association's Community Engagement, Communications, and Business

Engagement Committees.

- **Mill City Farmers Market Day.** They are still looking for volunteers for Saturday, June 12th. There are DMNA branded spatulas, water bottles, and masks available to hand out to attendees.

B. HOA Advisory Group. In the absence of McCrea and Rice, Gittleman advised they meet next on Thursday, June 17th at which they'll elect new leadership and develop a charter.

VII. New / Old / Other Business

A. Consideration of Contribution to Men Against Destruction Defending Against Drugs and Social Disorder. John Turnipseed, the interim executive director of MAD DADS presented to the DMNA Board at the April 19th meeting. Subsequently, MAD DADS and the Minneapolis Downtown Council submitted a funding request to expand the Violence Interrupters Program to weekends. Bob Cooper, the City's Manager of Finance, is comfortable with the funds coming from the DMNA's Neighborhood Priorities Plan, Crime and Safety Strategy which currently has \$30,879.00, with the stipulation that the contract would run through the Downtown Improvement District. After Hantge responded to questions,

Gittleman moved and Walsh seconded a motion to approve a \$25,000 contribution to MAD DADS to expand the program to weekends. Frazell called for discussion. The motion passed.

Hantge will work with Cooper to get the dollars contracted with the Minneapolis Downtown Council.

B. Charter for Change Discussion. Frazell explained when they received a request from this group to give a presentation by September (<https://www.thedmna.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Charter-for-Change-November-2021-Election-Understanding-the-Charter-Commissions-Proposed-Amendment.pdf>), he reached out to Kathleen O'Brien, an old acquaintance from her days as a former City Council Member and City Coordinator, to learn more about them and what their position is. They are a private 501(c)(3) (<https://www.charter4changempls.org/>) largely aligned with the Charter Commission and the proposed amendment, and the presentation explains what the structure of the Charter Commission is and what the proposed amendment is; it'll take about 45 minutes and then they'll take questions.

The DMNA talked earlier about what interest the Civic Engagement Committee has in taking responsibility for conducting forums to educate residents on all charter issues coming before it and the CEC said it was within their purview but they're really busy, and Frazell and Erickson agreed they need to hear from both sides of the issue. Erickson reminded the Board that the CEC will be conducting candidate forums once the deadline for filing is reached in August and view this as an extension of that work. The CEC is in favor but they're all currently engaged in one or both subcommittees with deadlines that run through August; however, Erickson is happy to ensure it moves forward and asks the Board and other constituents to raise their hand and get involved. Hantge indicated her willingness to help behind the scenes but would like a volunteer to facilitate.

After several Board members indicated support, Frazell suggested partnering with the other downtown neighborhood associations. During the discussion, it was revealed that the NLNA is

ahead of the DMNA in educating its constituents, and that both EPNI and CLPC are interested in collaborating. Hantge will reach out to them to find out their level of interest in collaborating on election related forums.

- C. Public Safety Task Force Discussion.** Erickson advised at the April Board meeting, a deadline was set for the PSTF to come back with a proposal, 1 week prior to tonight's meeting, on how they plan to advance the Minneapolis Downtown Council's five guiding principles for police reform and public safety that the DMNA adopted in July of 2020 moving forward. Since at this point nothing has been received from the PSTF, Erickson proposed two actions: (i) suspend the PSTF as a sponsored task force of the DMNA until such proposal is brought forward, and (ii) as a courtesy to the PSTF, extend the deadline to submit its proposal to 1 week before the June Board meeting. Because he feels we've been dragging our feet and he's heard from constituents they want some action and we don't have much to show, he's asking the Board to consider these two actions.

Discussion ensued wherein it was noted an email from Tamburino indicated they would be submitting a proposal at the June Board meeting so give them until 1 week in advance; this is just kicking the can down the road another 30 days because they were already given 1 week before tonight's meeting; clarification is needed on what the Board intends to do if it doesn't hear from the PSTF or doesn't accept their proposal; since PSTF members have been admittedly too busy to come forward with a proposal we should disassociate ourselves from it and the Board should decide what it wants to do going forward.

Frazell commented as he's watched this whole public safety debate in Minneapolis as recently as 3 o'clock this afternoon at a press conference with the Mayor, it continues to get more controversial, provocative, political, and one of the major things that's happened since we last met was the decision of the U.S. Department of Justice to do its own investigation of the MPD, so it has left him wondering what's the niche and role of the DMNA in all of this. He doesn't see us starting to second guess what the DOJ recommends or getting into all kinds of operational procedures, he thinks our legitimate niche is what matters to downtown, and in what way is downtown a unique community that has its own needs so if someone comes forward with a proposal, we put our emphasize on its impact on downtown. We can do that through another committee or through the Board via forums on the Charter Commission changes or actions taken to contribute to MAD DADS and the MDC's social worker outreach strategy. He likes Erickson's proposal because we're down a third tonight and is reluctant to vote to suspend them until we get their report back. If it comes back at the June 21st meeting, he wants a conversion with the whole task force because he's not sure they have the people power anymore.

Erickson moved and Gittleman seconded a motion to suspend the Public Safety Task Force as a sponsored group of the DMNA and extend the deadline to submit a proposal regarding their path forward to 1 week prior to the June Board meeting. If nothing is received by June 14th, the PSTF will be permanently disbanded. Frazell called for discussion.

For clarification of her role as staff, Hantge asked how much assistance she's allowed to render the PSTF if it's suspended. It was determined that the limit to her assistance is setting up a Zoom call to facilitate their meeting.

Thereafter, the motion passed.

D. Additional Scooter Discussion. Douglas Pearson from Centre Village asked whether there's an open forum where questions or suggestions can be brought forward at the end of this meeting. Frazell advised it hasn't been set up as a standard part of the agenda, but they're happy to hear what he has to say. Pearson, revisiting the scooter issue, said he can see the bike paths all around the city are clearly marked with spray-painted bicycle signs on them and thought maybe a lot of the issues with the scooter people is that they're uneducated about where they're suppose to be riding and how difficult is it to add a spray-painted scooter sign next to the bicycles.

Walsh believes they may have asked that a couple years ago but doesn't remember the reply; maybe it was a cost issue because it would take hundreds and hundreds of stencils around the city. She and Manthey explored 4'x4' signs (she has a sample) that the NLNA uses on sidewalks for directional purposes, and when they asked Scott Woller what process they went through he advised the City told them to just go ahead because they didn't want to go through an official process. The NLNA has been using them throughout the North Loop and there's no official ruling that they can use them. If we want to get one, they're about \$1 a piece wholesale and it'll be at our own cost.

Rajtar would prefer to, rather than marking the sidewalks where scooters shouldn't be riding, place the signs next to the bicycle lanes.

Pearson commented a good thing the DMNA could do is to give great suggestions to the City, e.g., while painting the bicycle sign just add a scooter sign next to it.

Walsh said they did ask the City if the DMNA could put up signs at its own expense and was told no, so Hantge suggested having a conversation with City staff before proceeding.

VIII. Next Board Meeting

Monday, June 21st at 5:45 p.m. via Zoom.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business,

Sweet moved and Walsh seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed at 7:11 p.m.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2021

Chair

Secretary