

**Draft Minutes from the
East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, February 6, 2020
Kraus-Anderson, 501 South 8th Street, Minneapolis 4 Conference Room
Elliot Park Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

Present: Marita Albinson, Carina Aleckson, Marc Berg, Jacquie Berglund, John Campobasso, Chris Fleck, Vanessa Haight, Cyndy Harrison, Julia Lauwagie, Deborah Moses, Beth Shogren, Kelly Stenzel, Carletta Sweet

Staff: Dan Collison, Christie Rock Hantge

Guest: Al Swintek, CenterPoint Energy

Absent: Elizabeth Campbell, Daniel Gumnit, Phil Huebner, Tom Jollie, Varun Kharbanda, Richard Kiemen, Paul Mason, Theresa Pesch

I. Call to Order

President John Campobasso called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m., welcomed the guest presenter, and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

II. Consideration of Agenda

After Executive Director Dan Collison added an update on The Commons by Beth Shogren under Presentations, the agenda was approved as amended (CA/CS).

III. Consideration of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as submitted which included the minutes from the January 9, 2020 Board meeting; Treasurer's report for January which included the F2020 Budget vs. Actual as of January 31, 2020, and Wells Fargo bank statement for the period January 31, 2020; Director of Downtown Partnerships for Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District and Executive Director for East Town Business Partnership and NāLoop Partners' report for December 29, 2019-February 1, 2020; and Executive Coordinator's report for the period 1/1/2020 to 1/31/2020 (CA/CS).

IV. Presentations

A. The Commons Lawsuit. Beth Shogren, Executive Director of Green Minneapolis, explained litigation began in 2017 when former Ward 1 City Council Member Paul Ostrow and former Ward 1 City Council candidate John Hayden filed a lawsuit against the City, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority, and Minnesota Vikings because they believed the City violated its charter in a complicated Commons Park Use Agreement that subsidized The Commons and a nearby parking ramp using \$65 million in bonds.

Subsequently, Hennepin County District Judge Bruce Peterson ruled in favor of Ostrow and Hayden's lawsuit (<http://www.startribune.com/judge-city-of-minneapolis-has-no-authority-to-operate-the-commons-park/483656801/> and <https://www.southwestjournal.com/news/parks/2019/02/judge-gives-city-park-board-until-may-to-resolve-commons-park-management/>) stating the City's charter bars it from doing what the Park Board was intended to do, i.e., govern, administer, and maintain the parks. With its control over The Commons in doubt, the City began the process of transferring operations over to the MPRB (<http://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-seeks-to-transfer-commons-park-to-park-board/507544552/>).

Upon appeal, the Minnesota Appeals Court upheld the original ruling (<https://www.fox9.com/news/mn-appeals-court-rules-city-of-minneapolis-cannot-operate-commons-park/>).

Since Green Minneapolis was contracted with the City to provide services for The Commons, it will now need to contract with the MPRB. However, since the MPRB is able to provide some of the services GM provided, its Commissioners strongly believe it should do so.

As it stands today, GM's contract with the City to operate and program The Commons is extended only through March 31st, at which time the MPRB will assume those responsibilities. Because of the unique nature of The Commons, some of the services were elevated and the MPRB is trying to get a

handle on what they can provide and what they want GM to continue to provide; hopefully this will be resolved in the next 3 weeks.

This is a loss for GM; it performed its primary function to enable The Commons to come into being through fundraising and now East Town has this incredible asset that catalyzed the transformation of the neighborhood. What concerns GM going forward is whether its vision for the park with an elevated standard of care will be maintained, but they're working collaboratively with the MPRB to try and ensure it will. Many of the Board members expressed the same concern.

B. CenterPoint Energy. Al Swintek, Manager of Local Government Relations (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/al-swintek-763aab12/>), noted this is his first time attending an ETBP Board meeting, an organization he considers unique within the city. He appreciates how the organization has grown over the years and noted how exciting it's been to have witnessed all the development that has occurred in the community.

He explained climate change, energy, conservation and pollution are important environmental issues, and as a gas utility, CPE is all about providing safe and reliable energy and ensuring customers understand how to address these environmental issues.

Then he gave an overview of the (1) company; (2) ways in which they're committed to safety, reliability, affordability and the environment; (3) their innovative technologies; and (4) ways to save energy and reduce GHG emissions.

CPE has been ranked as the number one major Natural Gas Marketer in the nation (<http://investors.centerpointenergy.com/news-releases/news-release-details/centerpoint-energy-services-named-number-one-natural-gas>) and along with their electric utility business they operate in eight states (<https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/corporate/about-us/company-overview/where-we-serve>). With 4.5 million customers, they are the second largest in the U.S., and with 119,000 miles of pipe, they are the largest in the U.S.

CPE is the largest gas utility in Minnesota serving 860,000 customers in 260 communities with 1,200 employees, most of whom are with one of three unions: Gas Workers Local 340, Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 12, and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 949.

Their roots run deep and they're heavily invested in Minneapolis. This year they will have been in Minneapolis for 150 years originating at 1240 West River Parkway across from the American Red Cross in 1870 as Minnegasco. They're headquartered at 505 Nicollet which they purchased from United Properties, the interior was designed by HGA and built out by RJM Construction. They have over 725 employees, 932 miles of gas main, and serve 133,600 homes/businesses.

They pay a fair amount of taxes, i.e., \$3.3 million in 2019, and in 2018 collected \$8.8 million in franchise fees that went to the City's operating fund and supporting the Clean Energy Partnership projects (<https://mplscleanenergypartnership.org/>).

As an example of their commitment to reliability he noted last year during the solar vortex, CPE, which does not service the entire state of Minnesota, delivered more energy than the entire nameplate capacity for Minnesota and it takes a lot of investment to accomplish this, i.e., over \$200 million annually for the past 6+ years and they expect that trend to continue. Ten years ago, they were more in the order of \$70 million annually; a lot of this increase is due to Public Works street replacement projects when they're able to go in and replace aging infrastructure by deploying innovative state-of-the-art technologies. As a result, they have reduced methane emissions from their operations by 20% over the last 10 years and are reducing carbon in the electric grid.

Charting Minneapolis' Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) by citywide activities indicate collectively they made the 2015 target of 15% reduction, but they're not on track to reach the 2025 target of 30%

reduction, so there's much to be done to reach the 2050 target of 80% reduction. From their perspective, conservation is the cheapest, quickest and most efficient way to reduce GHG. When compared to other peer cities and organizations such as the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), they're more efficient and cost effective.

Even though the trend for Weather Normalized Natural Gas Consumption has gone in the right direction, they have figured out ways to reduce GHG even further, e.g., Renewable Natural Gas (<https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/inyourcommunity/pages/renewable-gas-faq.aspx>), Carbon Capture (https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/Documents/200409_MN_Clean_O2_Factsheet.pdf), and this morning they filed the Natural Gas Innovation Act (<http://www.biomassmagazine.com/articles/16833/minnesota-bill-aims-to-encourage-alternative-fuels-including-rng%20target=> and <https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/InYourCommunity/Pages/Natural-Gas-Innovation-FAQ.aspx>).

Lastly, Swintek apprised the audience what they could do, individually and as a business, to reduce GHG emissions and costs. For more information, visit <https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/business/save-energy-money/efficiency-programs-rebates?sa=mn>.

- C. Executive Director Succession Plan Addendum.** Carina Aleckson explained when presenting the FY2020 Budget back in November, the Executive Committee proposed giving an annual cost of living increase of 5% to Dan Collison and 3% to Christie Hantge. Because discussions ensued about the perceived inequity by those unfamiliar with the history behind and rationale for this difference in compensation, Carina drafted an Addendum to the Executive Director Succession Plan (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Addendum-to-Succession-Plan.pdf>) to memorialize why this is the case.

The Addendum also notes the ETBP's vulnerability with respect to membership renewals. Dan's 2020-2021 Work Plan will identify strategies to connect key ETBP partners relationally with other leaders in the organization.

V. Action Items

None

VI. Updates

- A. Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District.** Dan reported on the following:

- 1. Chameleon Shoppes.** Last night he sent everyone an email regarding applications being accepted for the May-June pop-up in the ground floor and skyway spaces of the IDS Center and encouraged them to pass it along to their local and diverse business owners. The Gaviidae is currently open.

Also, they're back in the food and beverage business because the City changed its ordinance to allow for more than 10-day pop-up permits; they can have a confectionery license as long as it's prepared in a licensed commercial kitchen, packaged, and brought to the site.

- 2. Proposed Food/Hospitality Task Force.** Given we're in the post big-event stage (e.g., erection of U.S. Bank Stadium, Super Bowl LII, NCAA Final Four), and several restaurants have recently closed (Sanctuary, Erik the Red, McKinney Roe), we should pull together and highlight all our food and hospitality and discern how best to promote them. He wants to be attentive and put some volunteer time into this effort.

Jacquie Berglund noted she's very concerned; it's a trend that's not good. In a neighborhood it's important to have places for people to gather, access to food and drink and create community. January has been brutal and they're not seeing the trend they hoped for in this neighborhood. They're building everything for people to come, but there's a lack of activation. When she spoke to

the GM of HQ she was told people get into an Uber and go to the North Loop. She doesn't think it's their immediate reflex/response to go somewhere here in the neighborhood. It's going to take a community to get hospitality on track and be at risk of losing it.

Cyndy Harrison agreed with Jacquie, and noted it's doubtful restaurateur Kim Bartmann, who came before the ETBP in May 2019 regarding her proposed restaurant at 205 Park Avenue, will now open it. But if she does and Pinstripes opens (<https://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/news/2020/01/24/pinstripes-will-open-in-old-spaghetti-factory.html>), they will be a great hug for her business. There's a lot of things that can contribute to more activation, but people just don't come here.

Christie advised the DMNA would like to be actively involved because the Board and Land Use Committee has discussed this over the past year and they've seen the writing on the wall. From someone who's been involved with the DMNA, ETBP and NuLoop Partners, the North Loop Neighborhood Association has a very visible social media presence that attracts a young crowd. The demographics for those living in the North Loop is much younger than in Downtown East and Mill District and she suggested hiring someone like former WCCO news anchor Mike Binkley (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/binklevmike/>) who produces informative video vignettes of North Loop businesses and its history (<https://northloop.org/video/>) on a pro bono basis.

Deborah Moses, a life-long resident of Minneapolis, added she's been going to the North Loop for entertainment her entire life so it's not just the young who go there; it's an established entertainment area that has brought a lot of diversity to the community.

After others weighed in and offered suggestions on neighborhoods to study that have rejuvenated/rebranded themselves, e.g., Northeast (<https://www.minneapolis.org/neighborhoods/northeast/>), and who should be involved, Dan advised he'll send out an invitation to join a Food and Hospitality Task Force that will meet for an hour each month to be more intentional about raising awareness of East Town's amenities.

3. **Citizen, Real Time Safety Alert App.** Shane Zahn, Director of Safety Initiatives, recommended this to Dan (<https://citizen.com/> and <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/citizen-protect-the-world/id1039889567>) and for better or worse it's picking up steam in downtown. If property owners, businesses and residents want to know and be aware of what's happening in downtown, it gives you immediate access. When police are responding to a call, they check this App; it's what informs surveillance and provides a more accurate narrative.

Vanessa commented because there's a narrative around Elliot Park being unsafe and dangerous, they're trying some initiatives to combat it and eliminated the committee focused on reporting the crime stats because it instilled fear and made people think there was more crime than it actually was.

- B. **Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association.** Carletta Sweet referenced her report for February on the Board Members Only page.
- C. **Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.** As a follow on to their Food Solutions Town Hall discussions, Vanessa Haight reported it appears within the next couple months Twin Cities Mobile Market (<https://www.wilder.org/what-we-offer/twin-cities-mobile-market>) will be coming to Elliot Park. It's a Metro Transit bus converted into a market that goes into food desert areas – in this instance they're looking at Minneapolis Public Housing Authority's parking lot at 1515 Park Avenue – usually every other week for about an hour and a half. They also considered having it go to Alliance Apartments at 719 East 16th Street as there's a large concentration of lower income people in that area, approximately 1,000, who have money to spend on groceries. Since this falls under their short-term, easy-to-implement solution, it doesn't fulfill their longer-term solution to have a grocery store such as Hampden Park Food Cooperative (<http://www.hampdenparkcoop.com/>), and nonprofit Good Grocer (<https://goodgrocer.org/>

and <https://www.facebook.com/goodgrocer/>).

VII. Committee Reports

- A. Executive.** Campobasso referenced the Addendum to the Succession Plan above.
- B. Board Development.** BDC Chair Marc Berg advised they have three candidates for the three positions to be filled: Brian Maupin, General Manager at Allied Parking (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/brian-maupin-21329223/>); Kelly Rice, Director of Housing at Cassia; and Brent Hanson, VP of Corporate Properties Group at Wells Fargo (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/brent-hanson-a48a558/>). They will be part of the slate of candidates presented at the annual meeting in April.
- C. Business Forum Development.** Dan advised they continue to refine topics and shape the 2020-2021 season, in collaboration with the MDC, which will kick off in September at Thrivent's new corporate headquarters.

John reminded everyone to RSVP for the **Wednesday, February 26th** joint forum on *What You May Not Know about the Federal Reserve Bank*, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., U.S. Bank Stadium Club Purple, featuring Neel Kashkari, President and CEO.

For future BFD Committee meeting dates, reference page 2 of the Board agenda.

- D. Membership, Marketing and Communication.** MMC Chair Chris Fleck first thanked Christie for pulling together the monthly report which she posted on the Board Members Only page at <https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ETBP-Membership-Report-02-06-2020.pdf>. Then he thanked both Dan and Christie for all the follow-up calls made particularly to the platinum sponsors and those who had not renewed, and Jacquie who has taken an active role in bringing in new members. And he thanked Dan for elevating NCU's membership to platinum in exchange for their College of Business and Technology's assistance in promoting ETBP's mission and work through social media marketing

Then while reviewing the report he noted two new members: FINNovation Lab, and Jeff LaFavre at IAG Commercial (<https://www.iagcommercial.com/jeff-lafavre>).

For future MMC Committee meeting dates, reference page 2 of the Board agenda.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m. (MB/CS).