

**Draft Minutes from the East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting**

**Thursday, February 4, 2021, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

**Via Zoom Conference**

(<https://zoom.us/rec/share/6899QituLBsvdZYkdGR88kyPPZbETLMOxwISOukKmmAmmCgU3II727MVXyvRejA.Kd1a-L9PEjEKwwd5>; Passcode:  
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Present: Carina Aleckson, Jacquie Berglund, Charlie Boeckenheuer, John Campobasso, Amy Carlson, Vanessa Haight, Cyndy Harrison, Brent Hanson, Tom Jollie, Julia Lauwagie, Brian Maupin, Deborah Moses, Michael Noble, Rinal Ray, Reid Struck, Carletta Sweet  
Staff: Dan Collison, Christie Rock Hantge  
Absent: Richard Kiemen

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**I. Call to Order**

President Carina Aleckson called the meeting to order at 11:31 a.m., and held a moment of silence space to remember Kelly Stenzel (<https://obituaries.mankatofreepress.com/obituary/kelly-stenzel-1081483675> and <https://www.mankatomortuary.com/obituary/kelly-stenzel>) who passed away since the last Board meeting.

**II. Consideration of Agenda**

The agenda was approved as submitted (JC/CS).

**III. Consideration of Consent Agenda**

The consent agenda was approved as submitted which included minutes from the January 7, 2021 Board meeting; Treasurer's report for January which included the F2021 Budget vs. Actual as of January 31, 2021, and Wells Fargo bank statement for January; Director of Downtown Partnerships for Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District and Executive Director for East Town Business Partnership and NūLoop Partners' report for January 3-30, 2021; and Executive Coordinator's report for the period 1/1/2021 to 1/31/2021 (JC/AC).

**IV. Presentations**

**A. Merger of House of Charity and St. Stephen's Human Services (<https://ststephensmpls.org/merger>)**

For the uninitiated, Executive Director Dan Collison explained he was introduced to House of Charity through its Executive Director search process in 2018 (<https://www.houseofcharity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/House-of-Charity-Search-Brief-with-edits-2-17-18.pdf>), and he had the privilege of speaking at the new ED's welcoming event held at the then newly opened Elliot Park Hotel. As Lead Pastor at First Covenant Church and Director of Downtown Partnerships at the Minneapolis Downtown Council, Dan has been personally and professionally engaged with St. Stephen's Human Services for many years doing a lot of street outreach and consulting. It's a privilege to have this exceptional leader who is now over the merged organization on our Board.

Deborah Moses, CEO and Executive Director of St Stephen's Human Services doing business as House of Charity (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborah-moses-dpa-mph-054b0620/>), first posed what do you do after the hardest work year in your life in the dual pandemics of racism and COVID and third unspoken pandemic of depression and suicide? As it's been one of the hardest years for staff and many of the people they serve, of course they work harder, and they merged. The positive side is this was a merger of strength and opportunity, not a merger of need for either organization which makes talking about it and being in the midst of it much more exciting.

Then, while using a PowerPoint presentation, she gave an overview of the merger describing how it benefits the clients, staff, community, and supporters. The case statement developed for supporting their mission covered service integration; comprehensive continuum of care while aligning missions of both organizations; greater opportunities for staff advancement and development; improved range of benefits; reengagement of long-term donors; strengthens ability to raise funds; diversification of revenue portfolio; and greater organizational stability.

Unfortunately, they expect 2021 to be worse than 2020 for people experiencing hunger and homelessness, but they are prepared to meet those needs for the community in an agency that has a strong foundation and not at risk of going anywhere as they go through whatever next crisis they encounter.

Dan thanked Deborah for her leadership, and highlighted to understand the lanes in which she's working in relationship to

the other partners, we're privileged to have as the topic at the February 18th business forum, *Safety Net Innovators Tackling Poverty and Homelessness* (<https://easttownmpls.org/5215-2/>) with Deborah; Rinal Ray, CEO of People Serving People; and Laurie Ohmann, Executive VP and COO of Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis (<https://www.cctwincities.org/our-organization/our-people/leadership/> and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/laurie-ohmann-7563445/>).

In response to Michael Noble's inquiry about how people in business and the community can assist in supporting their services and efforts, Deborah advised because they lost the majority of their volunteers due to COVID, they're not asking for volunteers unless people are interested or feeling confident in their ability to work in person. They've done extreme COVID mitigation and have not had one staff member become infected at work. They feel it's a safe place to volunteer if anyone is interested. Both websites are still running; they haven't been combined yet. There are many funding, donation, and volunteering opportunities without being in person. They're always in need of hygiene kits, and the volunteer coordinators have put together a way that people can do fun things on zoom together. This coming week they're opening the Food Center for warming (<https://ststephensmpls.org/get-help>), so any blankets, hats, gloves, and snacks can be dropped off there.

**B. ETBP Member Survey Review.** Dan explained because of the Executive Committee's recent review of the 5-Year Strategic Plan, in combination with all businesses and organizations' desire to return to a safe environment, as well as the lapse in time since conducting a member survey, he drafted some questions based on general sentiment of the EC and the form used in the previous survey.

Thereafter, the Board offered its comments/feedback to the draft questions. Executive Coordinator Christie Rock Hantge will take the questions and place them into SurveyMonkey, a link to which will be sent via eblast to the approximately 400 email addresses. Amy Carlson suggested, if using SurveyMonkey for the calculation of the results, it would be more efficient having a drop-down list with some options for the top questions, and we could always have the write-in field. Tom Jollie noted he's willing to work with the EC on the survey and perhaps get some of his research people to look at it as well.

Dan would like the survey to be finalized within the next week and for Christie to send it out to the membership in the following week so that information can be collated, and a strategic response be prepared in advance of the annual meeting. If something should strike anyone after today's call, Carina encouraged them to send them to Dan.

## V. Action Items

None

## VI. Updates

**A. Executive Director Monthly Overview.** Dan reported on:

1. **Redleaf Center for Family Healing.** He congratulated Amy Carlson and Hennepin Healthcare for its key turnover ceremony (<https://www.hennepinhealthcare.org/hennepin-healthcare-foundation/campaign-for-redleaf-center-for-family-healing-2020/news-and-events/> and <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNHENNE/bulletins/2bdcbbe>) at which he participated yesterday. Amy added they'll have a grand opening ceremony on May 4th (<https://www.hennepinhealthcare.org/hennepin-healthcare-foundation/fundraising-events/>).

### 2. Meet Minneapolis

a. **Monthly Webinar on the Tourism and Hospitality Industry.** They are doing a good job of tracking narratives and data related to the East Town district, a leader in hospitality and events, and upon which its economy is related. According to Destination Analysts (<https://www.destinationanalysts.com/>), CivicScience (<https://civicscience.com/>), and Northstar Meetings Group (<https://www.northstarmetingsgroup.com/>) data presented at the January 27th monthly webinar where the focus was on Minneapolis City Coordinator Mark Ruff:

- Most American travelers (52-65%) expect to be vaccinated by June 2021.
- More (51%) are comfortable attending a live event or festival if a vaccine is required.
- More than half (61%) are now feeling comfortable about going back to work.
- COVID vaccines bring hope, but not new meetings.

- Few planners are planning hybrid events.

Charlie Boeckenheuer explained the Minnesota Vikings messaging started in mid-January when they shut the books on 2020 and started looking ahead to 2021. They went out with their 2021 renewal campaign, so all season tickets member accounts, suite accounts, etc., were delivered and in their messaging their intent and focus are to reopen the stadium safely this football season filled with people. Obviously, there are many questions and uncertainties as he sits here today, but they'll do their best to educate people on the policies and procedures, and temperature of the current environment. They hope to be that entity that can reintroduce people to large scale entertainment; that's their mindset as they sit here at the beginning of February and they'll keep us collectively informed.

Dan commented an interesting and important set of metrics for the stadium is operational. It impacts hospitality partners and those who rely on union level hourly wage jobs, and he knows that James Farstad, Executive Director at Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/james-farstad-71a64019/>) is working hard to stay engaged and provide relief and support for the 2,300 stadium employees.

Charlie noted they are also surveying their stakeholders to understand some of the concerns they need to address for their comfort level because inevitably, stakeholders are ambassadors for Vikings football and introducing downtown Minneapolis to a widespread of ticket holders on gameday who may be coming to our area for the first time.

- b. **Minneapolis 2020: A Journey of Rediscovery and Appreciation** (<https://www.minneapolis.org/blog/2020-rediscovery-appreciation/>).
- c. **Q1 2021: Get Away Without Going Far** (<https://www.minneapolis.org/downtown-hotel-deals/>).

### 3. New Businesses in East Town

- a. **The Greenery Mpls Plant Shop & Mercantile** (<https://www.thegreenerympls.com/> and <https://www.facebook.com/thegreenerympls/>) in the former Faribault Woolen Mill space at 1029 Washington Avenue South.
- b. **Boludo** is opening a second location in the former McKinney Roe space at 530 South 4th Street (<http://millcitytimes.com/news/small-business-spotlight-boludo.html> and <https://www.startribune.com/boludo-a-top-destination-for-pizza-and-empanadas-is-expanding-to-east-town/600005121/>).
- c. **The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen** (<https://mspmag.com/eat-and-drink/sioux-chef-owamni-opening-spring-2021/> and <https://sioux-chef.com/>) is coming to the riverfront this spring in the Water Works project (<https://mplsparksfoundation.org/Initiative/water-works/>).

- B. **Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association.** Carletta Sweet advised since there was no Land Use Committee meeting this month, she did not submit an update and deferred to Christie, who reported their Public Safety Task Force (<https://www.thedmna.org/dmna-committees/public-safety/>) wrapped up a safety survey with condo owners about 2 weeks ago and are now reaching out to the rental population. When the Task Force met last night, they discussed whether to extend the survey to the business community. Once the results of the survey are available, she'll share them with Dan.

Dan added he reached out to Board member Richard Kiemen (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/richard-kiemen-86520a122/>) because Sherman Associates has some vast development proposals coming fast that he'd like him to present, e.g., the Planned Unit Development at 240 Portland Avenue/500-530 South 3rd Street (<https://lms.minneapolismn.gov/Board/Agenda/CPC-COW/1423>), and the mixed use project on the south half of the Thrivent HQ block (<https://www.sherman-associates.com/uncategorized/sherman-associates-returns-to-thrivent-block/>).

- C. **Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.** Due to technical difficulties, Vanessa Haight reported the following via chat: Safety issues are of top priority in Elliot Park at this moment. They're working to address the safety of residents in an encampment – a propane tank exploded earlier this week and luckily nobody was hurt – and working with a coalition of businesses/residents to address Chicago Avenue issues. They're really struggling with getting any support from the City,

MPD, Office of Violence Prevention, etc.

- D. Minneapolis Downtown Council-Downtown Improvement District.** Dan reported on the Small Business Grant Program (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/?s=small+business+grant>). There were 102 recipients, all eligible small women and/or minority-owned businesses were funded, 4% were venues, 16% were retail, and 80% were restaurants/bars. He thanked the sponsors who participated: Target, Xcel Energy Foundation, Thrivent, and RBC Wealth Management. Dan spent 4 days of distributing flyers and found it fascinating as it served as a bridge to keeping some of these businesses downtown.

## VII. Committee Reports

- A. Membership and Financial.** Christie advised not much has changed since last month and to reference her renewals and nonrenewals reports on the Board Members only page on the website. However, within the last week she and Dan received an email from [former Board member] Varun Kharbanda who is interested in renewing the membership of the Moxy Minneapolis Downtown which would probably bring in \$900, and she's been having conversations with Brenda Langton (<http://millcitytimes.com/news/the-mill-city-times-interview-brenda-langton-founder-and-dev.html>) who is thinking about renewing the membership of the Mill City Farmers Market. If both businesses renew, it will bring the 2020-2021 membership drive up to about \$45,500.

Based on expenses paid to date or checks written, there's about \$23,000 in the bank, and based on monthly expenses that should get us through May into the start of our 2021-2022 membership drive, so we'll be cutting it close. She's still going to do some outreach to a few of the businesses that haven't renewed yet this year, and they may be coming to us sooner rather than in July, but right now things look better than they did in November.

Carina thanked everyone who continues to support the organization.

- B. Executive.** Carina advised they haven't met since she shared the 5-Year Strategic Plan update last month.
- C. Board Development.** John Campobasso, who will be terming off, has recruited someone to take his place (see Dan's update below).

Dan, who has been reaching out to other potential candidates, reported:

- Aimee Robertson, Executive Director of Advancement at North Central University (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/aimee-perrin-robertson-33000071/>), has expressed excitement in joining.
- He has a meeting with Kirsten Walstein, Manager of Finance and Business Development at Kraus Anderson (<https://www.krausanderson.com/people/kirsten-walstien/?back=214>) who John recommended, and she's enthusiastic.
- Lynn Burn, Realtor at Cynthia Froid Group (<https://www.cynthiafroid.com/lynn-burn>), who lives in Elliot Park is confirmed.
- There's conversation going on with Cassie Garner, Director of Gamut Gallery (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cassie-garner-034900118/>), thanks to Vanessa Haight.
- Because of the tragic loss of Kelly Stenzel, the executives at Thrivent Financial are in the process of discerning who will serve.

Other Board seats under consideration include Catholic Charities because Carina is terming off; Guthrie Theater; and Green Minneapolis.

- D. Business Forum Development.** Dan advised while working with the MDC, they've changed the topic for the joint forum on Thursday, March 18th to *Nonprofits: Insights and Opportunities in 2021* (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/non-profits-insights-and-opportunities-in-2021/>). For the annual meeting on April 15th, they have Peter Frosch, CEO at GREATER MSP (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/peter-frosch/>), and he's still working with the MDC about what they want to do for May and June.
- E. Food & Hospitality.** Dan advised because the larger coalition has been working across a lot of channels, this task force has not been meeting and has directed their efforts to the larger coalition. They'll do some outreach in the next few months when they can tap into strategies that'll be effective as people return.

Cyndy Harrison thinks it makes sense to reconnect, especially with Sherman Associates and their marketing staff [Valerie Doleman, VP of Marketing & Communications (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/valeriedoleman/>)] if people are thinking about vaccines in June to help spread the word more about East Town to the residents. Then in response to Michael Noble's inquiry about the name of the larger coalition, she said it's just the Downtown Restaurants Group which was formed by Attorney Dennis Monroe (<https://mmlawfirm.com/dennis-monroe-comments-on-mission-of-newly-formed-minneapolis-downtown-restaurant-group/> and [https://www.foodservicenews.net/article-archive/fsn-update-downtown-minneapolis-restaurants-look-for-safety/article\\_673e5550-1dff-11eb-9a07-fbd92aa87db5.html](https://www.foodservicenews.net/article-archive/fsn-update-downtown-minneapolis-restaurants-look-for-safety/article_673e5550-1dff-11eb-9a07-fbd92aa87db5.html)). It split into three subgroups, and she was on the marketing subgroup and they put out a letter to City Hall about public safety (<https://mspmag.com/eat-and-drink/foodie/dear-mr-mayor-save-restaurants/>). Otherwise, they haven't been meeting much recently. Michael tried to become a member of the group by way of the MDC, but nobody ever got back to him. Cyndy offered to do an internal email with Michael and Monroe to try and get him involved.

Michael thinks one of the things that would benefit the profile of Minneapolis as a desirable place for people to experience hospitality would be for City leadership to become involved in promoting it as a fun, safe, and enjoyable place to visit, and it hasn't been addressed.

Dan has reached out to Minneapolis City Coordinator Mark Ruff who talked about these same issues at the January 27th Meet Minneapolis webinar, and he's willing to come and present to the Board.

#### **VIII. New / Old / Other Business**

Michael noted we have a huge event coming up of great significance, i.e., the trial of former MPD officer Derek Chauvin for the death of George Floyd that'll be held at the Hennepin County Courthouse which is part of our community. It's going to be a spectacle and the ETBP should be knowledgeable that there's a great security effort that involves several agencies – he thinks the MDC and First Precinct are points of information – and we'll all be impacted by it.

Dan advised he'll do his best to communicate to everybody as to what's happening and to keep everyone safe.

#### **IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m. (CA/DM).